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Inclusion by Grade Level

When including students with disabilities in the regular physical education environment, there are many things to consider. It is easier in the elementary setting to introduce inclusion activities because although the activities are organized in a good program, it is not generally as strict or rigid as in middle and high school. They are developmental programs where the student with disabilities doesn't stand out as delayed as they might in a sport class. Behaviors, such as loud voices, running around, talking during directions, rather than motor skills delays present more of a problem. Suggestions for the teacher include having a spot on the floor for the student to know where to stand or sit each time she enters the room. Routines are very calming for students with disabilities since they know what is expected each time they come for that class. They know it is one thing they will do right. When explaining directions to the class, make sure that the para is talking to their student and explaining any questions he may have. Many times these students lack the attention to task necessary for detailed directions. It may take a few times playing a game for a student to understand what to do and where to go. Some concepts are difficult for some children such as running away when a ball is thrown to them, (dodge ball), or when someone is chasing them, (chase). Do I catch the ball in this game or run from it? Do I wait for my friend and run with them or run away? Usually peers at the elementary level play very well with students with disabilities and are not afraid of the disability.

In middle school, students are at an age where they long to fit in. They want to be cool and be in the cool group, etc. It is not generally cool, at this age, to be seen with people who aren't the norm. Hence, students aren't as likely to choose to be with students who are different. It is never a good idea to have kids choose teams. No one wants to be chosen last. Be creative, choose hair color, tall with short, clothes color, whatever, just so students don't have to be in a position to choose. Think about it! Even if a student wanted to choose his friend with a disability, what would the other guys think? Sometimes kids get to this age and really don't want the para around helping so we have to try to get the info to the student discreetly. Be alert especially with the students changing in locker rooms for P.E. Students with disabilities are usually very naïve. They have been protected by their parents and watched carefully and some of them aren't aware of the fact that people might take their belongings or try to touch them. Don't allow them to be unsupervised at any time. This is the age when students might just stop participating in activities altogether just to save face. We need to be sensitive to the pre-teen/teen feelings. Use parents and friends as a resource. Find out if the student has other interests, i.e.: music, art, computer skills. You may discover a talent that even the other students would admire. This is actually a great idea for all of your students especially at the middle school age. They are so self conscious about their bodies, that bringing attention to skills and accomplishments is healthy.

I feel that the high school student is a little easier than the middle school student. The adapted p.e. teacher along with the paras is the key to a successful program. For a student who qualifies for adapted physical education, I would require that a para or

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other adult is with the student when attending physical education class. In an inclusion setting, the student with

disabilities wants to do what the other kids are doing. As I have found, they will perform better in an inclusion class than in a separate class. It seems that the other students are more mature, willing to assist the slower student, offering help and taking time with them. It is a beautiful thing to witness. Again, know the students' abilities, and whether they can handle the locker room. Many of our students change before meeting the others in the gym for warm-up. If there is supervision in the locker room, there might not be a problem. Just Be Aware! The high school P.E. curriculum is still mainly sport, leisure recreation, and fitness. If there are enough activities to choose from, the students with disabilities can usually find one that appeals to them. When there is just one or two choices available, it is up to the adapted p.e. teacher to modify the activity when necessary for the student to have some success.

Teachers remember. Your demeanor in front of your class sets the tone for the class. Students watch you and follow your lead. If you accept the fact that there will be students with disabilities in your class and that it will not be a problem, then your students will react the same way. If you talk to all students the same way, your students will treat the ones with disabilities like everyone else. Respect means treating everyone in a kind, humane way. Everyone deserves respect.

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Suggested activities for the severe-profound adapted physical education

Listed below are activities to be used for sensory stimulation.

Standard: 2

Visual Stimulation:

- ✓ Track bubbles
- ✓ Hit a suspended ball
- ✓ Look for hidden objects. After the student sees the object, cover the object and see if they can find the location where they were hidden

Auditory Stimulation:

- ✓ Response to noises
- ✓ Turn head toward sound
- ✓ Student imitates sounds of animals, tongue, kiss, etc.
- ✓ Play music and look for response
- ✓ Responses can be negative or positive to sound, music, and noise but it is still motor planning

Tactile:

- ✓ Walking, creeping, crawling on various surfaces such as carpet, terry cloth, corduroy, packing materials that pop, grass, leaves
- ✓ Touching objects using various body parts
- ✓ Roll/unroll in sheet, blanket, or tarp

Listed below are activities for kinesthetic stimulation.

- ✓ Bounce, crawl, creep, roll or jump on foam, inner tube, air mattress or trampoline
- ✓ Push/pull games where the student is pushed or pulled while seated various ways on a scooter board. You can use a sheet, towel, or cardboard in place of a scooter board
- ✓ Push a large cage ball using the hands or feet
- ✓ Tug-of-War with a towel or rope with the child in variety of positions
- ✓ Do all the above activities in a variety of positions such as prone, supine, side lying, or sitting

Listed below are activities for vestibular stimulation: The sensory receptors for the vestibular system are located in the inner ear. Any movement that causes a momentary loss of balance activates compensatory postural adjustments initiated in the vestibular system. Vestibular stimulation is essential to the development of balance

- ✓ Activities on the playground such as merry-go-round, see-saw, slide and swing.
- ✓ Balance boards, trampoline, hammock swings or any surface that causes a loss of balance
- ✓ Log rolls
- ✓ Spinning slowly while prone on a scooter
- ✓ Roll/unroll in blanket/sheet/towel or tarp
- ✓ Rocking in chair, rocking horse or on a therapy ball

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MOTOR CONTROL

Types of motor control:

- ✓ Hypotonic-To little muscle tone with delayed motor development
 - The characteristics are: muscle weakness, lack of strength, flabby soft muscles
- ✓ Hypertonic—Increased or excessive muscle tone
- ✓ The characteristics are: excessive muscle tension and spastic or rigid movement
- ✓ Fluctuating-Muscle tone fluctuates in normal movement patterns. The muscle tone changes in response to the stimulation
- ✓ See page 264 of the DOE Adapted Physical Education (APE) Curriculum Guide for exercises

MANIPULATION

Reaching Sequence:

- ✓ Focus on objects placed within reach
- ✓ Hand to midline
- ✓ Reach for dangling object
- ✓ Reach for object with extended elbow
- ✓ Rake and scoop small objects against palm of hand
- ✓ Reach and grasp objects

Activities for Reaching;

- ✓ Place object in front of student to promote eye focus
- ✓ Hang pictures, shapes or favorite objects at appropriate level to promote reaching
- ✓ Use bright objects such as pin wheels, colored balls or pin wheels to promote arm/wrist extension
- ✓ Use mirror play to focus on body awareness
- ✓ Reach for soap bubbles or balloons
- ✓ Place objects so as to encourage crossing the mid-line
- ✓ Place objects far enough away so student has to reach
- ✓ Pass objects from hand-to- hand across the mid-line

Grasping Sequence:

- ✓ Grasp object placed in the palm
- ✓ Transfer object from hand to hand
- ✓ Poke/point at object
- ✓ Hold object between thumb and 1st two fingers
- ✓ Hold object with index finger and thumb
- ✓ Grasp large crayon/pencil and make scribble patterns
- ✓ Maintain grasp of one object while reaching to grasp a second object

Activities for Grasping:

- ✓ Use different shapes to grasp
- ✓ Use swinging ball in reach of student
- ✓ Roll play dough

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- ✓ Encourage weight bearing on opened hand to extend fingers
- ✓ With older students with tight hands and wrist flexor-apply pressure on back of hand so the fingers will extend and or /release object

Hold and Release Sequence:

- ✓ Hold and release objects voluntarily
- ✓ Transfer an object form hand to hand
- ✓ Drop objects into various containers
- ✓ Stack blocks on top of another
- ✓ Throw/fling a bean bag or small ball
- ✓ Instead of dropping/place objects into various containers

Activities for Hold and Release:

- ✓ Demo voluntary release of objects
- ✓ Hold more than one object
- ✓ Hold a container with one hand and with the other one remove objects
- ✓ Stack and remove rings from tower
- ✓ Stack various size blocks
- ✓ Peel a banana
- ✓ Press a musical instrument
- ✓ Peg boards
- ✓ Place lids on pots
- ✓ Use clothes pins
- ✓ Screw and unscrew jar lids
- ✓ String beads and lace shoes
- ✓ Throw bean bags or balls at targets
- ✓ Roll balls at target
- ✓ Cut forms from paper
- ✓ Turn doorknobs and open doors
- ✓ Place lids on boxes
- ✓ Fold paper and clothes
- ✓ Unwrap candy bar

PLAY AND LEISURE

Standard Three: Exhibits a physically active lifestyle

Standard Five: Demonstrates responsible personal and social behavior in physical activity settings.

Standard Six: Demonstrates an understanding and respect for differences among people in physical activity settings

Play Strategies:

- ✓ Demos interaction to specific aspects of the environment
- ✓ Shows reaction to specific stimuli that are presented
- ✓ Explores objects
- ✓ Demo preference for specific objects
- ✓ Demos awareness of persons nearby without interaction

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- ✓ Plays near others without interaction
- ✓ Demos desire to play with others
- ✓ Roll ball or exchanges toy with another person
- ✓ Participate in small group games

Play Activities:

- ✓ Find sensory stimulation to which child responds favorably
- ✓ Close student's hand around a toy
- ✓ Allow student to select an item
- ✓ Follow levels of developmental play-explore, interact, cooperation

Leisure Strategies:

- ✓ Teacher picks potential leisure activities and determines if modification can be made that will allow student to participate
- ✓ Determine the modifications for the student
- ✓ The level of participation will depend on the level of assistance and/or the instructional cues necessary to perform the skill

Level 1- Partial Participation

- ✓ Observe others participating
- ✓ Attend the activity
- ✓ Perform the activity with physical assistance
- ✓ Perform the activity with physical prompts
- ✓ Perform the activity with jesters
- ✓ Perform the activity with verbal cues
- ✓ Perform the activity with demonstration or modeling
- ✓ Perform the activity based on pictorial cues

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INCLUSION IDEAS & ACTIVITIES

Introduction:

First and foremost in any good teachers mind is the safety of the students. Many times the objections that I have received from the physical education teachers are not because they don't care about or dislike working with students with disabilities, but because of the possibility of injury, insults, and/or fear of what might be said or done between students. Many times the P.E. teacher has had maybe 1 class in adapted P.E. and possibly only a brief exposure to the special student. Their intention originally was never to actually have to "deal" with or teach them. Sometimes students would show up in class and you knew something wasn't "right", but you weren't told "what was wrong" with them. You weren't privy to the confidential information that would have been helpful to know. Now the new state law mandates that students' with disabilities are entitled to attend schools with non-disabled peers and have access to classes in the general curriculum. In short, **THOSE KIDS ARE COMING TO MY CLASS!**

Questions?

What am I supposed to do with them? How do I know if they can do what we do? Am I responsible for their grades? How do I grade them if they can't do the activity because of their disability? What if they get hurt? Who's responsible? What if someone hurts their feelings? How can I teach all my other students and have time to work with them? ??????????????????????????????

Answers:

Get to know your Adapted P.E. teacher really well. He/She is a great resource for information concerning the particular disability. Usually she will be attending your class with her students. Also a para-professional/s will most likely be assigned to the students as well. Depending on the particular school, the A.P.E. teacher or the P.E. teacher could be responsible for the grades. The A.P.E. teacher will be responsible for modifying the lessons if necessary for the student. However, the student is expected to participate, with assistance from a paraprofessional if necessary, with the typical students in class and not alone on the sidelines. Aside from these concerns, most of the others are dealt with just as with typical students.

Communication:

Most important to the success of your classes is communication. Voice your concerns from day 1. I started last year, when the new law was passed, by meeting with the P.E. teachers and making sure that they were aware of the new law. I didn't want them to think that I was putting the "burden" of extra students on them, that I would be dropping them off and leaving them, or that I wouldn't be responsible for them. I told them that I and/or my Para's would always be with them in class. I would modify the lessons for the students, but that they would have to be integrated into the class possibly with assistance from a Para. General class rules applied to everyone and in my school, I was responsible for the students on my caseload. My next step was to speak to the classes that my students' would be attending. On the first days of class, when the P.E. teacher went over rules, I asked for a few minutes. I explained that some

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of the students with disabilities would be attending class with them. I explained that some students depending on their particular disability might have difficulty performing skills that they find easy. I told them that if they wanted to help or play with them in activities that was great, and if they felt uncomfortable doing so that it was okay to feel that way too. They would not be required to do so. I was hoping that they would just be mature enough to not say or do anything that would hurt their feelings or embarrass them, just as they would do for any other person. I told them I would be happy to answer any questions they would have during the year. Their P.E. teacher also added that if a student was headed to the wrong locker room don't make a big deal out of it, just point them in right direction.

Surprise!

Our first year was great and filled with surprises. A few of the students who I originally identified as probably not going to be successful in the inclusion setting participated more than they did the previous year in a separate A.P.E. class. One girl improved her behavior because she wanted to be seen as "normal", so worked to behave as the typical students. Our students would tell the P.E. coaches how much fun they had in the class and that they couldn't wait to come back the next day. The coaches' response, "Its great to hear that again. We don't hear that a lot." Another surprise was the interaction of the typical students with our kids. Granted some of them had been in schools together since they were younger and knew each other, but I observed students in a basketball game, while our students were just running up and down the court, stop playing and pass the ball to our students with autism to take a shot. Others on the volleyball court would give our students the ball to serve. They really included our kids. Even on the football field in a pick-up game, they were observed passing the ball easily so it could be caught, and told the student which way to run.

Considerations:

The **benefits** of the inclusion program are not limited to the student with disabilities. It brought out **leadership and maturity** in students that may not have had the opportunity to show before. It allowed typical students to see that these students are "typical" in many ways and that just because they have a disability doesn't mean that they can't do anything. It brought about a feeling of **acceptance**. Indeed there was always the chance that someone would make a hurtful comment, but others were there that would put that person in their place. We have to realize that the typical students will be the employers of the future. They need to realize that everyone is disabled in some way. No one is perfect. Some of us wear glasses, can't move as fast because we are overweight or out of shape, older, younger, etc. These conditions do not affect everything we do. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. We have to look at the whole person, not just the disability. It brought out feelings of **compassion and empathy**. Consider what they are able to do, not what they cannot do. The benefits of the inclusion program outlined above benefit all of us as human beings.