South Dakota State University

ECE 470: Early Childhood Education Inclusion Strategies

Concepts addressed in this course: *Areas of exceptionality in students’ learning: learning disabilities*

**Students should refer to:**

**Specifically, students should review:**

I. Defining specific learning disabilities – difficult, some past labels included:
   a. Minimal brain dysfunction
   b. Information procession disorder
   c. Central nervous system disorder
   d. Brain damage syndrome

II. Rarely evidence of neurological damage, but behavioral signs are present.
   a. Present are difficulties in storing, processing, or retrieving information.
   b. 30-40% of children who have learning disabilities also have ADD or ADHD.
   c. Specific learning disability: “a disorder of one or more psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations” (Deiner, 2005, pg. 222, IDEA, 1997)

III. Diagnosed evidence
   a. Discrepancy between IQ and Academic Performance Achievement – below 2 years of mental age – diagnosed as SLD.
   b. Virtually impossible to identify young children – when intervention is most needed.
   c. IQ is not a good predictor of phonological decoding ability, a predictor for reading.
   d. Boys are more frequently diagnosed than girls. Yet unsure this is an accurate finding as girls tend to not display the behavioral problems that boys do.

IV. Causes of specific learning disabilities (SLD)
   a. Prenatal exposure to alcohol, drugs, and smoking.
   b. Low birth weight, premature birth, birth stress, low oxygen
   c. Failure to thrive, non-stimulating environments, lead poisoning
   d. Chronic ear infections and weak immune system.
   e. Inborn conditions – genetic connection to dyslexia
   f. Deficient short-term memory, but intact long term memory skills

V. Developmental dyslexia/reading disorder
a. 80% of all SLD
b. Boys more frequently diagnosed (60 to 80 %), many feel this is a discrepancy is identification rather than reality
c. Dyslexia involves problems with decoding
d. Phonological hypothesis
e. Auditory & visual sequencing difficulties
f. Short term memory difficulties
g. Cannot be outgrown.

VI. Dyscalculia/mathematics disorder
a. 1 to 6.5 % of children enrolled in school
b. Inability to understand the processes associated with mathematical calculation or reasoning.
c. Inability to understand the visual-spatial aspects of math and the language of math
d. Does not necessarily affect all mathematical concepts.

VII. Dysgraphia/disorder of written expression
a. Many children who have dysgraphia also have dyslexia.
b. Seldom diagnosed until the first or second grade.
c. Able to associate sounds with meaning – difficulty in letter-sound recognition.
d. Signs of Dysgraphia
   i. Illegible writing
   ii. Inconsistencies, mixture of points and curves
   iii. Unfinished words or letters, omitted words
   iv. In consistent position on the page with respect to margin and lines
   v. Inconsistent spaces between words and letters

VIII. Early identification
a. 0-3 – display clumsy child syndrome
b. 3-6 – pronunciation problems, lack of interest in listening to stories, poor memory for routines, trouble learning numbers, alphabet, or days of the week - may have trouble with tying shoes, buttoning, or getting zippers to work may have problems with directionality and integrating with peers
c. Behavioral characteristics
d. Input problems – visual perception problems, auditory perceptual problems, integration problems, sequencing problems, abstraction problems, and organization problems
e. Memory problems

IX. Instructional strategies & environmental considerations
a. Be consistent and predictable.
b. Keep room orderly and organized.
c. Feedback needs to be frequent.
d. Self-correcting materials can provide feedback.
e. Make directions simple, brief, and clear.
f. If problems learning a particular task, check if child as mastered prerequisite skills.
g. Use concrete objects while teaching.

h. Give time to process information.

i. Use differentiated instructions.

j. Alternate quiet times with hands-on work.

k. Provide many activities that encourage movement.

Helpful websites include:
Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities (ACLD):
http://www.acldonline.org
The Center for Opportunities and Outcomes for People with Disabilities:
http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/oopd/
LD Online: http://www.ldonline.org
National Center for Learning Disabilities: http://www.ncld.org