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Speech and Language Impairments

Definition of a Speech and Language Impairment:

- A communication disorder that affects the student’s ability to talk, understand, read, and write.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - There are 5 different types of language impairment.
    - Apraxia of speech- neurological phonologic disorder that shows from difficulty in the capacity to select, program or execute the procedure to produce speech sounds
    - Morphological disorder- struggle with learning and using morphological rules
    - Syntactical deficits- troubles with knowing the rules that govern word order and other parts of grammar
    - Semantic disorder- poor vocabulary development, improper use of word meaning and not being able to comprehend the meaning of words
    - Pragmatic difficulties- difficulties understanding and using language in social contexts
  - There are 3 different types of speech impairments.
    - Articulation Disorders- errors in pronouncing speech
      - Omissions- han instead of hands
• Substitutions- wabbit instead of rabbit
• Additions- footsball instead of football
• Distortions- shlip instead of sip
  o Fluency Disorders- troubles with rhythm and timing in speech
    • Stuttering
    • Cluttering
  o Voice Disorders- problem with the quality of a person’s voice due to a disorder in the larynx
    • Phonation- breathiness, hoarseness, huskiness, and straining
    • Resonance- hypernasality (too much sound coming through the nose air way) and hyponasality (too little resonance coming through the nose)

• Emotional Characteristics
  o Behavior difficulties like hyperactivity and attention difficulties
  o Difficulty knowing when it is appropriate to hide emotions and feelings
  o Difficulty monitoring emotions

• Social Characteristics
  o Show signs of being anti-social (withdrawal, wariness, shyness) that has the ability to affect the initiation of close relationships during adolescence
  o Poor social self-esteem
  o Difficulty maintaining social relationships
  o At risk of being bullying and other forms of abuse

• Mental Health
  o Child could possible become aggressive due to frustration
This aggression could also lead to out-of-control behaviors, suicidal ideation, gestures, or attempts, and even homicidal ideation, gestures, or attempts (in severe cases)

Service Options:

- Speech-Language Pathologist

Useful Strategies:

- Incorporate the student’s interests
- Reinforce the student’s attempts at communication
- Present only one concept at a time
- Use visual cues
Specific Learning Disabilities

Definition of a Specific Learning Disability:

- A disorder in which one or more basic psychological processes in understanding/using spoken/written language. It can also be the inability to listen, think, read, write, spell, or perform mathematical calculations.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - Attention disorders
  - Reading difficulties
  - Written language problems
  - Oral language difficulties
  - Mathematical disorders
  - Lack of cognitive strategies needed to learn efficiently
  - Information-processing difficulties

- Emotional Characteristics
  - Misread other’s feelings
  - Unaware of their behavior on others

- Social Characteristics
  - Difficulty interpreting social behaviors
  - Incorrectly read social cues
  - Not knowing when they are bugging others
  - Can’t put themselves at another person’s perspective
• Mental Health
  o Doing bad in school can affect the students’ self confidence
  o Can develop anxiety

Service Options:

• Interventions that are either additional or different from those provided during school
• Educational psychologist
• Child and adolescent mental health service

Useful Strategies:

• Splitting long tasks into segments
• Only presenting one set of information at a time
• Repetition
Emotional and Behavior Disorders

Definition of an Emotional and Behavior Disorder:

- A disorder that relates to issues of a person’s identity and emotional well-being.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - Students with an emotional disorder can be found on any level of cognitive functioning.
  - Majority of these students have low-average intelligence levels.
  - Most are below the grade level academic achievement level, especially in math and spelling.
  - Many also have a co-existing learning disability.

- Emotional Characteristics
  - Anxiety disorder
  - Mood disorder
  - Conduct disorder
  - Oppositional defiant disorder
  - Schizophrenia
  - Externalizing behavior
  - Conversely internalizing behavior

- Social Characteristics
  - Aggressive
  - Self-injurious behavior
- Not interacting with others
- Immaturity

- Mental Health
  - This disability does include some mental illnesses, like schizophrenia.

Service Options:

- Adult Rehabilitation Services
- Mental Health Services
- Guidance Counselor

Useful Strategies:

- Supporting the students’ academic performance
- Allow all students to pick between classroom tasks
- Consistent and specific praise
Intellectual Disabilities

Definition of an Intellectual Disabilities:

- A combination of deficits in cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - IQ of 50-70
  - Limited intellectual functioning
  - Problems with memory recall
  - Difficulties with task and skill generalization
  - Low motivation
  - Struggle with choice making, problem solving, and goal setting

- Emotional Characteristics
  - Limited adaptive behavior

- Social Characteristics
  - Difficulties with social skills
  - Problems with conceptual skills
  - Low practical skills

- Mental Health
  - Students with an intellectual disability can also suffer from depression, bipolar disorder, or a personality disorder.
These students require higher levels of support.

Service Options:

- Living centers

Useful Strategies:

- Teach one concept at a time
- Teaching one step at a time to help with memorization and sequencing skills
- Teach in small groups or one-on-one
- Provide multiple opportunities to work on skills in different settings
- Using physical and verbal prompts
Traumatic Brain Injury

Definition of a Traumatic Brain Injury:

- An injury to the brain acquired by an external physical force causing total/partial functional disability and/or psychosocial impairment. This does not include congenital or degenerative brain injuries, or birth trauma.

Characteristics:

- **Academic Characteristics**
  - Decreased attention
  - Problems with abstract concepts
  - Memory difficulties
  - Slower information processing
  - Decreased organizational skills
  - Difficultly with problem solving

- **Emotional Characteristics**
  - Aggressive
  - Denial of impairments
  - Problems accepting and responding to change
  - Distracted easily
  - Lack of emotion
  - Worthlessness and helplessness feelings
  - Frustrated easily
  - Impulsive
• Inappropriate reactions (laughing or crying)

• Social Characteristics
  o Struggles maintaining relationships
  o Can’t restrict inappropriate social behavior
  o Not appropriate reactions to the environment
  o Insensitive to others’ feelings
  o Socially isolated
  o Initiation of social interactions are limited

• Mental Health
  o Depression
  o Mania
  o OCD
  o PTSD

Service Options:
  • Acute rehab
  • Sub-acute rehab
  • Counseling
  • Home care services
  • Independent living skills training

Useful Strategies:
  • Don’t use figurative language
  • Keep the classroom as distraction-free as possible
  • Provide breaks
• Teach compensatory strategies to increase memory
• Reinforce lengthening attention periods for appropriate tasks
• Demonstrate new tasks and state instructions
Deaf and Blindness

Definition of Deaf and Blindness:

- Combination of hearing and visual impairments. The combination causes severe communication and other developmental and educational needs.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - Difficulty performing basic academic tasks
  - Inability to perform functional life skills

- Emotional Characteristics
  - Low frustration tolerance
  - Troubles demonstrating age-appropriate behavior
  - Shows problems adjusting to change
  - Shows self-stimulatory behaviors like body rocking, hyperactivity
  - Exhibits inappropriate behaviors like touching and smelling objects/people

- Social Characteristics
  - Difficulty developing communication skills in a meaningful way
  - Troubles bonding with caregivers and creating/maintaining personal relationships

- Mental Health
  - At very high risk for developing mental health problems because of their lack of mobility, access to information, and communication
Service Options:

- Early intervention services
- Special education services

Useful Strategies:

- Touch cues
- Sign language
- Fingerspelling
- Large print
Visual Impairments

Definition of a Visual Impairment:

- Any visual condition that effects a person’s ability to successfully complete everyday activities.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - Learns differently than other students
  - Can learn at about the same rate as other students

- Emotional Characteristics
  - Physical aggression
  - Other physical movements such as kicking or dropping to the floor
  - Signs of distress like crying or yelling

- Social Characteristics
  - Low motivation to initiate social interaction
  - Can negatively impact their social skills
  - Can’t interpret social cues

- Mental Health
  - Depression
  - Anxiety
  - Social Withdrawal

Service Options:

- Orientation and mobility specialist
• Early interventionist
• Para-educator
• Occupational therapist
• Speech therapist

Useful Strategies:

• Having textbooks with braille or recorded media
• Using large print texts
• Placing students with vision problems closest to the board
Hearing Impairments

Definition of a Hearing Impairment:

- An impairment that either causes permanent hearing problems or fluctuating hearing problems that effect a student’s ability to learn.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - Normal cognitive abilities
  - Any difficulties are usually found with speaking, reading, and writing but not the intelligence level

- Emotional Characteristics
  - Lack of emotion control

- Social Characteristics
  - Limits social experiences
  - Limits social competence

- Mental Health
  - Higher levels of anxiety
  - Higher levels of depression

Service Options:

- Working with an Audiologist
- Working with a Speech-Language Pathologist
- Having an interpreter
- Specially trained educators
Useful Strategies:

- Using amplification systems
- Captioned movies and videos
- Favorable seating for lip-reading
Developmental Delays

Definition of Developmental Delays:

- Children between the ages of 3 and 9 that have delays in physical, cognitive, communicative, social emotional, or adaptive development and need special education.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - Short attention span
  - Has trouble logically thinking
  - Can’t solve basic problems
  - Slower in basic reasoning skills

- Emotional Characteristics
  - Becomes unusually frustrated at simple tasks
  - Doesn’t seek love from a caregiver

- Social Characteristics
  - Not interested in other children
  - Difficulty interacting with others
  - Tunes people out
  - Doesn’t show emotional reciprocity

- Mental Health
  - At higher risk to develop mental health problems compared to other children.
  - Can result in less opportunities for a job as an adult.
Service Options:

- Audiology
- Speech and language services
- Counseling
- Medical services
- Nursing services
- Nutrition services
- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Psychological services

Useful Strategies:

- Lesson’s involving their interests
- Using activities
- Using toys the child will like
Physical Disabilities

Definition of a Physical Disability:

- A severe physical impairment that affects a child’s education.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - No cognitive issues
- Emotional Characteristics
  - Aggression caused by frustration
- Social Characteristics
  - Shyness
  - Social isolation
- Mental Health
  - More likely to develop mental health problems
    - Stress
    - Depression
    - Anxiety

Service Options:

- Adapted Physical Education
- Speech-Language Pathologist
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Therapists
• Other therapists (massage therapists, music therapists, etc.)

Useful Strategies:

• Special seating arrangements to encourage useful posture and movements
• Awareness of the child’s medical condition and how it affects the child
• Instruction focused on developing gross and fine motor skills
• Suitable augmentative communication devices
Autism

Definition of Autism:

- Neurodevelopmental disability that has a significant impact on a student’s communication skills, social interactions, and behaviors.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - Visual learners
  - Good imitators
  - Hands-on learning

- Emotional Characteristics
  - Focused interests
  - Insistent on sticking to routines
  - Repetitive body movements
  - Sensory sensitivity

- Social Characteristics
  - Difficulty sustaining friendships
  - Struggles with social and emotional responses
  - Lack of sharing enjoyment of interests and activities with others

- Mental Health
  - Can have other emotional problems
  - Having interventions can reduce anxiety, OCD symptoms and depression
Service Options:

- Social Skills Training and Speech-Language Therapy
- Cognitive Behavior Therapy
- Applied Behavioral Analysis
- Occupational Therapy

Useful Strategies:

- Creating a Communication system
- Structured schedule
- Lesson’s based around one specific theme
Multiple Disabilities

Definition of Multiple Disabilities:

- A combination of conditions that impact a child’s ability to learn and be successful academically. Common disabilities in this area are speech, physical mobility, intellectual disabilities, visual, hearing, and brain injuries.

Characteristics:

- Characteristics vary based on which disability is present
- Academic Characteristics
  - Cognitive development can vary from functional academics to needing to learn basic life skills.
- Emotional Characteristics
  - Limitations can cause emotional problems for the child
- Social Characteristics
  - Harder to create social relationships
- Mental Health
  - Higher risk of developing mental health disorders
    - Stress
    - Depression

Service Options:

- Physical Therapy
• Occupational Therapy
• Special Education

Useful Strategies:

• Peer tutoring
• Practice and reinforce
Other Health Impairments

Definition of Other Heath Impairments:

- This is a broad category with hundreds of types of impairments that is determined by limitations in strength, vitality, and alertness. The most prevalent disorder from this category is ADHD.

Characteristics:

- Academic Characteristics
  - Difficulty with organized activities
  - Doesn’t complete schoolwork
  - Doesn’t pay attention to detail
  - Deficits in executive functions

- Emotional Characteristics
  - Anxiety disorder
  - Low self-esteem
  - Conflicts with parents, teachers, and peers

- Social Characteristics
  - Troubles making social connections

- Mental Health

Service Options:

- Early intervention services
- Special education
Useful Strategies:

• Allow extra time to students to switch activities or finish assignments
• Seat students close to the teacher
• Simply steps for more difficult activities
• Develop objectives to achieve a goal
Physical Therapy

Physical therapy helps all students with a wide variety of disabilities, not just movement and mobility issues. Students with language-based learning disabilities, behavioral disabilities, and autism are recommended to also go through physical therapy. It helps work on gross motor skills like sitting, crawling, standing, walking, jumping, and kicking a ball.

Cognitive Behavior Therapy

This type of therapy helps to improve a child’s moods, anxiety, and behavior by looking into confused patterns of thinking. While working with a cognitive behavior therapist, students learn to recognize when they are having negative thoughts and how to manage these thoughts and turn them into positive thoughts.

Speech-Language Pathology

A speech-language pathologist works with students that have severe communication problems. Sometimes the school provides these services to the students that need them, other times the parents will bring the child to a specialist. While working with the speech language pathologist, the student will work on fluency, resonance, language comprehension, and many other things.
Assistive Technology

Assistive technology is available for all disabilities from cognitive problems to physical impairments. Assistive technology allows the students to use their strengths to try and improve their weaknesses. Some examples of assistive technology are audio books, computers, and talking calculators.
Resources

http://www.projectidealonline.org/v/speech-language-impairments/
https://www.rcslt.org/clinical_resources/mental_health/overview
https://www.asha.org/PRPSpecificTopic.aspx?folderid=8589935327&section=Treatment#Intervention_for_Preschoolers_(Ages_3_5)
http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyoungpeople/parentscarers/specificlearningdisability.aspx
http://www.parentcenterhub.org/emotionaldisturbance/
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2536546/
http://mast.ecu.edu/modules/db_intro/concept/
parents/addressing-challenging-behavior-in-toddlers-and-preschoolers-with-visual-impairments-and-blindness/12345

http://www.uniteforsight.org/community-eye-health-course/module11

https://www.focusonemotions.nl/index.php/deafness


https://www.autismspeaks.org/

https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/content/what-autism


https://www.thoughtco.com/multiple-disabilities-3111125


https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/relatedconditions.html


https://www.cbd.edu/role-physical-therapy-occupational-therapy-working-special-needs-children/


https://www.bcps.org/offices/special_ed/slp.html

https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/assistive-technology-for-kids-with-learning-disabilities-an-overview/