

## Education for Children with Special Needs

**Dr. Ravikiran.B**

Principal

National B.Ed College Kalaburgi

(Karnataka)

### 1. Introduction:

The community at large is often unaware of the potential of children with special needs.

In the popular mind, special needs are usually identified with very low expectations. Parent should believe in the value of educating children with special needs. The higher the expectations, the higher will be their acceptance in the family.

All the children with special needs must be enrolled in primary schools. After the assessment of their disabilities by a team of a doctor, a psychologist, and a special educator, in schools, the child will be placed in appropriate educational settings. Children with mild and moderate disabilities of any kind may be integrated in normal schools, severe in special schools/ remedial schools, drop outs who have problems in availing benefits of normal schools can join open schools. All the children with learning disabilities alone are first managed in the normal schools. Open and special schools also offer vocational courses also for children with disabilities.

### 2. Formal School

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Secondary and Higher Education) has been implementing a scheme of 'Integrated Education for the Disabled Children' (IEDC) in formal schools since 1982. The main objective of the scheme is to provide educational opportunities for the disabled children in normal schools so as to facilitate their retention in the school system. The disabled children who are placed in special schools should be considered for integration into common schools once they acquire the communication and daily living skills at a functional level.

The following types of children with disabilities must be integrated in the normal school system- formal as well as in non- formal schools.

1. Children with locomotor handicaps (O.H.)

2. Mildly and moderately hearing impaired
3. Partially sighted children
4. Mentally handicapped educable group (IQ 50-70)
5. Children with multiple handicaps ( blind and orthopaedic, hearing impaired and Orthopaedic, educable mentally retarded and orthopaedic, visual impaired and mild hearing impaired)

A three- member assessment team comprising of a doctor, a psychologist and a special educator is formed and their assessment report recommends whether a child can be enrolled directly into a normal school or should receive preparation in a special school/ or a special preparatory class in Early Childhood Education Centre(ECCE) specially equipped for this purpose. Under the IEDC scheme, resources and itinerant teachers are provided. Children are also given certain incentives like book allowance, equipment allowance, transport-allowance etc.

### 3. Special Schools

This is a programme of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Children with severe multiple disabilities who have difficulty in coping with regular schools are referred to such special schools. Most of these special schools are located in urban areas and run by voluntary organizations. A majority of them are residential schools, and boarding- lodging and other services are provided free of cost. At present more than 3000 special schools for the disabled children are functioning across the country. Out of them approximately 900 institutions are specialized for the hearing impaired, 400 for the visually impaired, 1000 for the mentally retarded and the remaining 700 are for the children with physical disabilities. 40 per cent disability of any such particular types is a benchmark for identification and certification for admission in these special schools.

#### 4. National Institute Of Open Schooling (Nios)

The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) formerly known as National Open School (NOS) was established as an Autonomous Registered Society in 1989 with the mission to provide education through an open learning system at the school stage as an alternative to the formal system.

It offers courses like the foundation course, notionally equivalent to class VIII level, secondary education and higher secondary courses and vocational courses. The NIOS also provides the programme of Open Basic Education for Universal Elementary Education (UEE), which includes programme for the disabled children. It offers Open Basic Education courses through the following:

#### 5. Open Basic Education (Obe)

Education for Children with Special Needs

This project is for out of school children in the age group 6-14 and also for adult learners.

The OBE Programme is offered at three levels:

1. OBE level A : equivalent to class I-III
2. OBE level B : equivalent to class IV-V
3. OBE level C : equivalent to class VI-VIII

#### 6. Teaching Strategies For Children With Learning Disabilities

Children with learning disabilities show greater learning when techniques like task analysis, peer teaching, cooperative learning, learning corners and multisensory approach are used. The following strategies would be helpful to both the parents and teachers when trying to teach such children

##### Strategies for reading skills

1. Prepare the student by presenting new concepts and vocabulary
2. Guide the student in to reading a story by asking questions which bring up the purpose or goal of the reading
3. Develop or strengthen skills relating to the material through drills or worksheet activities
4. Assign work in order to apply the skills acquired during a lesson

5. Read aloud to students regularly
6. Devote a few minutes every day to sustained silent reading
7. Use writing activities that provide opportunities for the teacher to model writing strategies and skills.
8. Include journal writing as part of the student's individualised educational programme
9. Provide meaningful printed materials in the instructional setting (e.g. dictionaries, categorised lists of words)
10. Establish a network of communication with other teachers, and thus using holistic techniques in working with such students
11. Let the child read aloud (oral reading). If the child makes mistakes they can be easily identified by the teacher and corrected
12. Reading can be done with peers or with parents (paired reading). This will enhance the confidence of the child
13. Reading in a group (choral reading). Here they get both auditory and visual stimulus to correct themselves
14. Use color-coded textbooks (e.g., green equals start, red equals stop)
15. Have a small group of class read aloud simultaneously

##### 7. Strategies For Skills

1. A sufficient amount of time should be allocated for writing. (e.g. four times per week) because students can learn and develop as writer only by writing.
2. Expose students to a broad range of writing tasks. Students should participate in writing activities that present highly structured problem-solving situations as well as activities that involve self-selected and expressive writing.
3. Create a social climate conducive to writing development. Teachers need to be encouraging in as non-threatening environment and should try to develop a sense of community by promoting student sharing and collaboration.

4. Integrate writing with subjects such as language and arts so as to stimulate the writing skills.
5. Help students develop the processes central to effective writing. The composition process of writing can be divided into a series of discrete stages (e.g. prewrite, write and rewrite), and students can be taught appropriate task-specific and metacognitive strategies (e.g. self-instructional strategy training).
6. Help students develop explicit knowledge about the characteristics of good writing. Students should be given exposure to the characteristics of various literary compositions either through reading or teacher presentation of writing or live models that incorporate a specific skill or style.
7. Help students develop the skills and abilities to carry out more sophisticated composing processes.
8. Assist students in the development of goals for improving their written products.
9. Goal setting and having students evaluate their own writing according to specific criteria can help students accurately monitor and evaluate progress.
10. Tape alphabets forms to the floor, Have students walk or hop around the form. Have them reproduce the form with coloured yarn.
11. Have students use a stick (broom handle) and their bodies to form the letters.
12. Spray shaving cream can be used to form large letters. Paper provides a suitable surface.
13. Have students use a torch light beam to trace letters on a chalkboard.
14. Have student's form letters in wet fingerprint/paint/sand.
15. Use colored directional cues such as green arrows and red dots.
16. Help students to form an association for a letter they have difficulty remembering
17. Have students orally describe their movements as the letter is being written. This provides auditory reinforcement.

## 8. General Interventions

1. Show, demonstrate and model.
2. Utilize multisensory learning.
3. Break information down into smaller units.
4. Utilise peer tutoring and cooperative learning.
5. Use a developmentally appropriate approach.
6. Make information as concrete as possible.
7. Provide a small group of instructions.
8. Read test materials to the student.
9. Find out how the student learns best, and utilize this learning channel.
10. Provide opportunity for continuous success.
11. Use consistent vocabulary when teaching a new skill
12. All students should be encouraged and given time to work collaboratively and solve problems upto whatever levels they can attain.
13. Give students a chance to share and justify their thinking in different ways.
14. Make greater use of problem driven tasks and open-ended questions.
15. Increase expectations for student's reasoning, and encourage multiple solution strategies.
16. Lay greater emphasis on inter student dialogue and collaboration.
17. Make less use of teacher directed instruction.

## 9. Role Of The Parents

No one is prepared to be the parent of a handicapped child. The parent(s) primarily learn about their child through an experience of family living, and the professionals working with these parents must focus on their experiences which are unique in every individual case. Although parents may share common problems and reactions; the combinations of possible reactions, the intensity of the reactions, and the duration of the reactions are some factors that necessitate that each family be considered individually.

**Parental adjustment may consist of any or all the following stages:**

1. Awareness of the problem
2. Recognition of the problem
3. Search for a cause
4. Search for a cure, and
5. Acceptance of the child

**The parents should bear the following in mind:**

1. Foster feelings of self- esteem in your child.
2. Do not compare the performance of their child with other siblings.
3. All children have strengths and competencies, and these strengths must be identified and reinforced.
4. Parents who convey hope provide a major force in helping children overcome adversity and become resilient.
5. Parents can help children develop a sense of responsibility and contribution to their family, and the ward in general.
6. Parents can provide opportunities for their child to make choices and decisions, and promote self-discipline.
7. Parents can help the children deal effectively with their mistakes and failures.
8. If possible, parents should attend training programmers along with the community.

**Reference Books**

1. A Handbook for Parents of Children with Disabilities
2. Alena Krzkova and Marta Vohldalova: Parents in the labor market between work and care.
3. ASHA.S.C Attitude of Non-Disabled children towards sensory challenged children in an inclusive school.2007.
4. BUCH.M.B: Survey of research in education.

