Fostering Independence and Fading Supports

Lake Travis ISD Professional Development Training
Today’s Learning Objectives

- What is Independence?
- What does it look like for the students you work with?
- Managing academic/behavioral needs.
- Fostering resiliency
Independence

Help me to do it by myself.
Student Independence

What is it?

▪ Freedom from the influence or control of others
▪ Completing a task without undo assistance
▪ Using resources to meet your personal needs
▪ Self-help (a.k.a. Self-advocating)
▪ Making appropriate choices and decisions
▪ Being able to say, “I can do it myself!”
What is it?

- Students...

“need a supportive environment to function successfully in school—and later in the workplace. A supportive environment enables them to capitalize on their strengths and minimize or cope effectively with their weaknesses” (Larkin, 2001)
Student Independence

What is it?

- Builds self-esteem
- Motivates a student to achieve
- Gives student a sense of purpose
- Social acceptance
- Reduces stereotypic labels
- Allows teachers to focus on instruction
Student Independence

What does it look like?

- Use of a planner to write down assignments
- Use of magnification software to read a text
- Using a joystick to manipulate a computer
- Use of pictures to guide task completion
- Use of an orthopedic device for walking
- Taking the elevator rather than the stairs
- Tying ones own shoes
Student Independence

What is my role in building student independence?

- Build your knowledge about strategies
- Help only *when they cannot do it themselves*
- Teach independence
- Offer support, as needed
- Build independence throughout the day
My role is ___ -
What’s Your Learning Style?

Visual

Auditory

Kinesthetic

Let’s find out!
What’s Your Learning Style?

**Visual Learners**

- Take detailed notes
- Tend to sit in the front
- Often close their eyes to visualize and remember
- Like to see what they are learning
- Benefit from illustrations

How can I work with students who are visual learners?
What’s Your Learning Style?

**Auditory Learners**

- Sit where they can hear but needn’t pay attention to what is happening in front
- Hum or talk to themselves or others when bored
- Acquire knowledge by reading aloud
- Remember by verbalizing lessons to themselves

How can I work with students who are auditory learners?
What’s Your Learning Style?

**Kinesthetic**
- Need to be active and take frequent breaks
- Speak with their hands and gestures
- Difficulty recalling what was seen or heard
- Find reasons to tinker or move when bored
- Enjoy manipulating materials
- Sit where they can move around

How can I work with students who are kinesthetic learners?
What is the Learning Style of your Students?

- Write the name of a student in your classroom.
- Guess their learning style and write it.
- Tell your neighbor how you know this.
- Share one way you can teach to their learning style.
Managing Academic/Behavioral Needs
Scaffolding Instruction
Scaffolding Instruction

Defined

“Scaffolded instruction is the “systematic sequencing of prompted content, materials, tasks, and teacher and peer support to optimize learning.””

(Dickson, Chard, & Simmons, 1993, p. 12)
Scaffolding Instruction

Essential Features

▪ Interaction takes place in a collaborative environment and honors the child’s intentions
▪ Expectations are developmentally appropriate
▪ Support is gradually withdrawn as skills are gained
▪ The child internalizes the knowledge and becomes independent
Scaffolding Instruction

Guidelines for Implementation

▪ Identify what the student already knows
▪ Begin with what the student CAN do
▪ Help students achieve success quickly
▪ Help students to “be” like everyone else
▪ Know when it’s time to stop
▪ Help students be independent when they have command of the activity
Our Goal...

- Our goal as paraeducators is to help students with disabilities become as independent as possible throughout the school, home, and community.
Strategies to Build Independence

- Cues/Prompts
- Modeling
- Shaping
- Wait Time
- Fading
- Reinforcers
Strategies to Build Independence

Cues/Prompts

▪ Verbal or nonverbal signals that indicate what action is necessary

Example:

“Do you remember the 9/10 strategy we learned yesterday?”
Strategies to Build Independence

Modeling

- To demonstrate a behavior or completion of a task for the learner

Example:

25  50  75  $1.00
Strategies to Build Independence

Shaping

- To teach a behavior or task by providing cues, models, and consequences for steps demonstrated gradually until the final behavior or task is learned.

Example:

Wider-lined paper → Narrower-lined paper
Strategies to Build Independence

Wait Time

- The amount of time given to the student to respond to a question or complete a task

Example:

Question (wait 20 seconds)
No response? Rephrase the question.
Strategies to Build Independence

Fading

- A gradual reduction of cues/prompts and extrinsic (outside) reinforcers as the student demonstrates desired behavior or task
Strategies to Build Independence

Reinforcers

- Any action or event that increases the likelihood that a behavior will occur

  - **Positive Reinforcer**
    Adding something desirable
    Example: “You have earned extra free time!”

  - **Negative Reinforcer**
    Taking away an aversive
    Example: “You only have to finish the first half of the worksheet”
Strategies to Build Independence

Reinforcers

- Reinforcers that occur naturally

Example: David follows directions to silently read a story. He participates in class discussion. When the next story is assigned, David eagerly opens his book and reads.
Strategies to Build Independence

Reinforcers

- Reinforcers that are contrived (not naturally occurring) and are intentionally provided to increase the behavior or to ensure task completion

Example: Accelerated Reader
Videogames (Score!)
Popcorn Party for good behavior
Balancing Work and Reinforcement
Instrinsic & Extrinsic Reinforcers

- Draw attention to the natural consequences of performing the behavior
- Ask a question about what natural consequences resulted from performing the behavior
- Connect the behavior to a reinforcer
Behavior Strategies 101
Executive Functioning
Executive Dysfunction

▪ planning for the future
▪ the ability to inhibit or delay responding
▪ initiating behavior, and
▪ shifting between activities flexibly

How's this next decision going to effect me?
Strategies to Improve Executive Functioning

- Checklist
- Set time limits
- Use a visual schedule or planner
- Spell out rationale
- Explore different ways of learning
- Establish a routine
- Use rewards
SOCIAL SKILLS
16 Classroom Survival Skills

- Accepting Criticism or a Consequence
- Accepting “No” for an Answer
- Asking for Help
- Asking Permission
- Disagreeing Appropriately
- Following Instructions
- Getting the Teacher’s Attention
- Giving Criticism
- Listening
- Making an Apology
- Minding Your Own
- Business (MYOB)
- Resisting Peer Pressure
- Staying on Task
- Using Appropriate Voice Tone
- Waiting Your Turn
- Working with Others
“SUCCESS IS THE ABILITY TO GO FROM ONE FAILURE TO ANOTHER WITH NO LOSS OF ENTHUSIASM.”

WINSTON CHURCHILL