



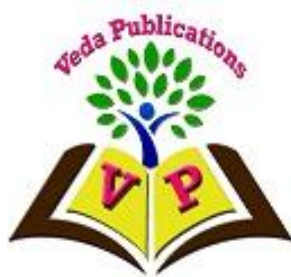
## WORKING WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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### ABSTRACT



This proposed paper is based on the sub-theme-Working with Special Needs Students Education. This plays a significant role in every individual's life. We have tons and tons to say about various teaching – learning processes. Girls' education is taking a fine shape in recent years.

It is the time to focus on yet another major issue that is to concentrate on students with special needs. In fact, over 4.5 million children were repudiated appropriate schooling before the legislation to ensure equal education opportunities for special education children. Since decades special education has become a great challenge in the society. It has become a global issue, too.

Special Education is the systematic instructional approach with specially designed materials and a variety of equipments. Since each individual is different and has unique potential, it is necessary that special planning and designing would be beneficial to meet the unique needs of students.

It is an effort to understand the ever affecting aspects to work and shaping up special students' to have bright future and offer suggestions pertaining to the methods and heterogeneous factors.

**Keywords:** *Special Needs, Potential, Designing, Challenging, Instructional Approach, Development, Government Help And Policy, Pioneer.*

**INTRODUCTION**

“When a group of like-minded individuals band together, a revolution happens that the Education System NEEDS! “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has- Margaret Mead

When we say a revolution happens in Education system, we have to give a serious thought to this new concept. The discussion leads to a weighty and key question: |”why should there be a change?” Some consequential questions arise, too.

“Do your children have any problems in school?”

“Does your child struggle to learn/ read or write?”

“Do feel tired of teaching/ helping your child to carry out her regular school work?

To answer all these queries, there is an urgent need to do some research and analysis. Some educationists and psychologists have proved that all children are born with the congenital talent to reach their own excellence and sometimes a growing group of children do not prosper in a large class. Hence, it is right time to throw some light on new topic: “Special Education”.

**DEFINITIONS**

- a) “Special education (also known as special needs education, aid education education, exceptional education or Special Ed) is the practice of educating students with special educational needs in a way that addresses their individual differences and needs. Ideally, this process involves the individually planned and systematically monitored arrangement of teaching procedures, adapted equipment and materials, and accessible settings.”- Wikipedia
- b) “Special education is specially designed instruction that addresses the unique needs of a student eligible to receive special education services.”
- c) Encyclopedia of Health defines: “Special education refers to a range of educational and social services provided by the public school system and other educational institutions to individuals with disabilities

who are between three and 21 years of age”.

**HISTORY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

In the US, special education came into the way of living within fifty years, but the history goes way long back. Jean Marc Gaspard Itard, a French Physician and Otologist was the pioneer in the field of special education. He started his work with hearing impaired individual Victor. In 1801-1805, he had various methods to train and educate a young boy who was just 1 years old. That boy was found in the forest without any socialization. Itard did educate this with his medical degree not with any kind of special training to teach this special child. He had a determination to work with wards that needed special educational needs. Today, Itard is recognized as one of the founding fathers of special education. Other pioneers to be remembered are Roch-Ambroise Cucurron, Abbé Sicard, a French principal in the school of deaf. He taught them sing language. Thomas H. Gallaudet was influenced by Abbé Sicard who taught in the school of the deaf in the United States.

In 1776, United States was established and for more than two hundred years there was not any progress in the field of SE. Millions of students were deprived of facility of special Education. This was a dark period in the history of Special Education. But once legislation began, a balanced and secured stream of mandates, laws and decisions presented special needs students with given opportunities who were earlier deprived of. Suddenly, the foundation of a quality, individualized education in an accepting, unrestricted environment made independent living an option. These hard-won victories were a culmination of decades of advocacy and dedication that helped to build the rich selection of special education resources in the United States today. The history of SE doesn’t come to an end. In 1933, the first group was made up by parents whose children were marginalized for quality special education. Most of these family associations began making waves in the 1950s when they were encouraged. The law was to provide training for teachers who worked with deaf, hard-of-hearing or intellectually disabled students (historically called “mentally retarded”). In the 1960s, multiple laws were passed, granting funds



for special education students. In the early 1970s, multiple landmark court decisions giving states the responsibility to provide special education resources and schooling to students in need of it. These decisions altered the entire landscape of special education history in our country.

At present, state and local institutions provide 91 percent of special education funding, while federal funds take care of the remaining 9 percent when states meet federal criteria.

### DESCRIPTION

Special Education is the systematic instructional approach with specially designed materials, equipment. Since each individual is different and has unique caliber, it is necessary that special planning and designing would be beneficial to meet the unique needs of students. Special education is provided at no cost to parents and includes the related services a student needs to access her/his educational program. Before going the strategies followed, it is better to find out the various categories

Common special needs include learning disabilities (such as dyslexia), communication disorders, emotional and behavioral disorders (such as ADHD and ADD), physical disabilities (such as Brittle Bone Disease, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, Spinal Bifida, and Frederich's Ataxia), and developmental disabilities (such as autism spectrum disorders and intellectual disability).

Students with these kinds of special needs are likely to benefit from additional educational services such as different approaches to teaching, the use of technology, a specifically adapted teaching area, or a resource room. When the law was amended, it was known as IDEA (Individual with Disabilities Education Act). Even today the purpose remains the same though the law's name has changed, Under IDEA, there are 14 categories under which a student is eligible to receive the protections and services promised in the law. They are:

1. Autism
2. Deaf-Blindness
3. Deafness
4. Emotional Disturbance
5. Hearing Impairment
6. Intellectual Disability\*

7. Orthopedic Impairment
8. Specific Learning Disability
9. Speech or Language Impairment
10. Traumatic Brain Injury
11. Visual Impairment
12. Multiple Disabilities
13. Other Health Impairments

Special education needs (SEN) are different from those of general education students. They need extra support and additional assistance to satisfy different learning challenges.

Students with Special education needs have difficulties in the following areas;

- Expressing themselves or understanding information
- Organizing themselves, focusing or completing tasks
- Reading, writing, or mathematical concepts
- Socializing with others or making friends
- Sensory and physical difficulties which may affect in academic performance and participation skills in regular classroom setting.

### IDENTIFYING LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The best and easy way to identify the learners with special needs is by their medical history. The doctors would have diagnosed with a genetic problem, the learner might be having intelligence disabilities, brain damage, developmental disorder, hearing, visual, or some disabilities. Some students with less obvious disabilities, who have learning disabilities, there are two primary methods to identify: (a) the discrepancy model and (b) response to intervention model. The former depends on the teacher noticing the learners; achievements (whether it is below the expected level). The latter advocate's earlier intervention in the discrepancy mode; the learner receives special education services for a specific learning difficulty (SLD) who has the normal intelligence and the his/hers academic achievement is expected with his or her IQ.

### DYSLEXIA

Dyslexia is not something that will hinder the child from going to college, nor will it cripple the child from being a successful adult. Dyslexia is not a



handicap. A child with dyslexia is no less intelligent than an average child; they just require specialized avenues of intervention. If any child is having trouble in school, these are the five traits to help determine if your child deals with dyslexia.

- a) Basic skill
- b) Spelling
- c) Reading
- d) Math
- e) Behaviour

*Dyslexia does not directly cause behavioural problems, but due to the fact that a child is behind academically, a child may start exhibiting behavioural problems to cope with their frustration.*

- Anxiety may be due to their constant frustration and confusion in school.
- A child may become angry because they may feel defeated with school
- Dyslexic children may have a poor self image
- Depression is another complication with dyslexia

People think be of the opinion that dyslexia is a hurdle, certainly it is not the reason for academic success. If proper guidance and support is given by the parents, the student will be able to cope up with dyslexia.

#### **Basic Strategies for Teachers of Students with ASD**

- Role play/model situations (so students can see instead of just being told)
- May also video tape so students can watch
- Be consistent
- Make sure to keep expectations the same, every time someone is inconsistent it takes 8 times of being consistent to “undo” the inconsistency
- Foreshadow changes in Schedules
- Make it visual by using a symbol or writing it down
- Use “rules” to enforce concepts Many students are rule orientated but don’t overuse rules, for example you may say the rule in \_\_\_\_ grade is that you stand in line with your hands at your side.
- Match Student work time to their performance time
- If they are able to attend a task for approximately 15 minutes have that much work for them to do (not a lot more or less)
- Use alternatives to writing in order to demonstrate competence
- May use magnetic words/letters, word processing device, dictating responses, or use symbols
- Teach Social Skills as part of curriculum
- Remember there is no such thing as “common sense”
- Understand cycle of tantrums/meltdowns and try to prevent
- If you know something is going to set them off, don’t do it, teach student how to handle situation before putting them in it
- Schedule in down time
- May be a 30 second “break” or a 15 minute break depending on student, could be sensory or just a walk
- Have realistic expectations
- Not everyone is social all of the time, not everyone is having a task all the time!
- Success builds Success
- Start a new skill in an area of success first
- Share success between home and school
- Focus activities on turn taking/ self management
- Use visuals to assist (ex. Wait card)
- Pick a goal and focus on one for each activity
- Is the goal the academic content, independence, or socialization
- Maintain Structure
- Try to stay as consistent as possible with a routine
- Offer Choices when possible
- If two assignments need to be complete give student the choice of which one to do first
- Use a variety of stimuli in lessons
- Use visuals and hands on materials when possible
- Understand the function of a behaviour
- Look for the reason behind the behavior, not just the behavior itself
- Use social stories, role playing, or videotaping to make abstract concepts concrete



- Try to think of picturing things in your mind or giving a definition of something, if you can't you need to make it more concrete (ex. Showing what emotions look like, having a wait card, showing what "there" is)
- Teach in a variety of settings for generalization
- Introduce a new skill in a variety of places so that the student can see it applies to more than one setting
- Match visual supports with verbal instruction
- Example: hold up a math book when telling class to get out book, write page numbers on board
- Allow for "wait time" to receive a response
- Average processing time is 30-60 seconds, repeating won't improve comprehension, you need to "wait"
- Use First/Then statements
- Example: First complete your math then it's recess
- Autism is a reason, never an excuse
- Look for the function of a behavior and go from there!
- LESS IS MORE when it comes to verbal
- Even if a student is very verbal, talking too much creates anxiety and makes things more difficult

## REFLECTIONS

Special teaching today has brought in a lot of changes. In 2001 and 2004, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) provided further accountability to schools and added technology assistance and loan programs to help schools acquire needed special education resources.

Now that the basic rights are set in place, advocacy groups similar to those first started in 1933 are forming to put forth legislation. These groups work toward a number of differing goals in regard to teaching methods, the recognition of certain disabilities and greater choice in schools.

Regardless of the direction these educators, lawmakers and advocacy groups continue to streamline disability classifications as the public becomes more aware of politically correct terminology. If special education is one's passion,

one can get his/ her teacher training and certification, and start making a difference today for a better future.

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