

Lesson Plan

Objective: To enhance the motivational readiness and actual **participation in decision making** for students with disabilities.

Setting and materials: Clinic or classroom setting. No materials required.

Content taught

Preconference Intervention

- This phase is intended to enhance motivational readiness and thus increase conference participation.
- The procedures consist of three interwoven objectives:
 1. Give students special permission and encouragement to participate in the conference,
 2. Discuss and briefly rehearse participation strategies,
 3. Induce personal responsibility for participation.

Conference

- A shared or guided problem-solving model is followed.

Teaching procedure

Preconference Intervention

- Each student is told, “since the purpose of the meeting is to make some decisions that can have an important effect on your life, it’s important that you say what you think and what you want. Any decisions that are made should be ones that you think are right.”
- The teacher explains that it is not expected that the student would always have something to say, but that the psychologist conducting the conference would be particularly interested in the student’s views.
- The student is explicitly encouraged to ask questions, express disagreement, and offer opinions at any time during the conference.
- Next, there is an exploration of how the student feels about talking to adults and about how she or he might signal a desire to speak or appropriately break into adult conversation during the conference.
- If no strategy emerges, the teacher makes direct suggestions, including demonstration of the use of hand motioning, clearing one’s throat, sitting forward in one’s chair, saying “excuse me”, or waving a prepared flashcard.
- The process ends with a reiteration of the importance of letting the others at the session know what was on his or her mind.

Conference

- The conference process itself follows a shared or guided problem-solving model.
- The objective is to facilitate family decision making about the psychoeducational service to be pursued in helping the student overcome learning problems.

Method of evaluation

- Behavior tallies of socially appropriate initiations and responses during the conference.
- Overall ratings of frequency and quality of participation using a 6-point Likert scale (1=not at all, 6=very,very much).

Lesson plan based on: Adelman, H. S., MacDonald, V. M., Nelson, P., Smith, D. C., & Taylor, L. (1990). Motivational readiness and the participation of children with learning and behavior problems in psychoeducational decision making. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 23, 171-175.