

**SUBJECT: Specific Teaching Skills(SEM 2)CC8**

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**Topic:Teaching students with Special Educational needs**

### **Education for Children with Special Needs**

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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.

## **Formal Schools**

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.

- Children with locomotor handicaps (O.H.)
- Mildly and moderately hearing impaired
- Partially sighted children
- Mentally handicapped educable group (IQ 50-70)
- 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.

## 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.

## National Open School (NOS)

The 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 is specially suited to the needs of certain categories such as school dropouts, girls, mentally or physically disabled, etc. It has also developed educational materials for teaching children

with special needs in their own homes. At present there are 1459 NOS study centres in the country.

It offers courses like the foundation course, notionally equivalent to class VIII level, secondary education and higher secondary courses and vocational courses. The NOS 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:

## Open Basic Education (OBE)

This project is for out of school children in the age group 6-14 and also for adult learners. It has 3 levels : Preparatory, i.e.

- Primary
- Elementary
- Which are equivalent to a formal school standard of class III,V and VIII respectively.

## Special Accredited Institutions for Education of the Disadvantaged (SAIED)

To cater to the needs of the people with physical or mental disabilities the NOS has accredited institutions for education of the disadvantaged. Academic courses like open basic education (OBE), secondary and senior secondary courses and vocational courses are offered either independently or in combination with an academic subject(s) through SAIED.

## Special Features of NOS

1. It allows total freedom to learn at one's own speed. One gets a period of 5 years and 9 chances to complete the course
2. Flexibility in choice of subjects.
3. There is no age limitation for admission in NOS programmes.
4. For admission, a person is required to submit the following supporting documents:
5. Attested copy of birth certificate, obtained in one of the following ways:
  - From the Admission Register of the last school attended or
  - Birth certificate from Registrar of Births and Death or
  - From a recognized Hospital or
  - Affidavit from parents countersigned by first class/sub division magistrate.
  - Minimum Education Qualifications:
  - Self Certificate or Certificate of class V / Matriculation/Higher Secondary pass.
  - Five recent passport size (3cmx2cm) photographs are also required
  - Handicapped are exempted from payment of registration and cost of

course material.

- Candidates with disabilities are required to produce a certificate from a Government hospital and not from a private nursing home.

## 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**

- Prepare the student by presenting new concepts and vocabulary
- Guide the student in to reading a story by asking questions which bring up the purpose or goal of the reading
- Develop or strengthen skills relating to the material through drills or worksheet activities
- Assign work in order to apply the skills acquired during a lesson
- Read aloud to students regularly
- Devote a few minutes every day to sustained silent reading
- Use writing activities that provide opportunities for the teacher to model writing strategies and skills.
- Include journal writing as part of the student's individualised educational programme
- Provide meaningful printed materials in the instructional setting (e.g. dictionaries, categorised lists of words)
- Establish a network of communication with other teachers, and thus using holistic techniques in working with such students
- Let the child read aloud (oral reading). If the child makes mistakes they can be easily identified by the teacher and corrected
- Reading can be done with peers or with parents (paired reading). This will enhance the confidence of the child
- Reading in a group (choral reading). Here they get both auditory and visual stimulus to correct themselves
- Use color-coded textbooks (e.g., green equals start, red equals stop)
- Have a small group of class read aloud simultaneously

### **Strategies for writing skills**

- 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.
- 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.

- Create a social climate conducive to writing development. Teachers need to be encouraging in a non-threatening environment and should try to develop a sense of community by promoting student sharing and collaboration.
- Integrate writing with subjects such as language and arts so as to stimulate the writing skills.
- 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).
- 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.
- Help students develop the skills and abilities to carry out more sophisticated composing processes.
- Assist students in the development of goals for improving their written products.
- Goal setting and having students evaluate their own writing according to specific criteria can help students accurately monitor and evaluate progress.
- Tape alphabets forms to the floor, Have students walk or hop around the form. Have them reproduce the form with coloured yarn.
- Have students use a stick (broom handle) and their bodies to form the letters.
- Spray shaving cream can be used to form large letters. Paper provides a suitable surface.
- Have students use a torch light beam to trace letters on a chalkboard.
- Have student's form letters in wet fingerprint/paint/sand.
- Use colored directional cues such as green arrows and red dots.
- Help students to form an association for a letter they have difficulty remembering
- Have students orally describe their movements as the letter is being written. This provides auditory reinforcement.

## Strategies for mathematics

- Use manipulatives such as buttons and beads. Let the students drop beads into a clear plastic cup and count while seeing how many beads represent the number. The child also gets auditory input to support this concept.
- Use visuals. Materials for younger students usually have a generous display of visual illustrations. Materials for older pupils tend to rely more on abstract

presentations. A teacher may need to supplement teaching by drawing and constructing visual representations.

- Try providing verbal reinforcement with visual material. Describing the computation process while working problems along with clapping activities are other examples of verbal reinforcement
- Try using tactile presentations. These can be materials such as sandpaper number or paper strips of various lengths used to demonstrate concepts such as more or less. Another type of tactile presentation is to trace a number or problem on the back of the student's hand.
- Use color cues. Colored chalk and marking pens can be used to indicate these steps and direction of the process. Highlighters can be used to call attention to process signs (+, X) and clue words ("more than", "times").
- Provide a sample problem for each assignment. The referent problem can be particularly helpful for students with memory difficulties.
- Relate class activities to increase temporal awareness to time. Using phrases such as 'in five minutes' "earlier today" and "yesterday" will provide some basis for understanding time. Calendar work is useful, particularly in regard to special events and holidays.
- Reduce the number of examples in the assignment. Some work pages are overwhelming to the pupil because of the sheer numbers of examples. They may also lose their place because of figure-ground deficits. These pupils are also slower in their rate of production.
- Use display charts.
- Play tallying games. Develop word problems based on game scores.
- Have students use playing cards to develop games that require arithmetic computation.
- Apply measurement in the classroom. Chart the growth of class members (a long-term project for certain ages), the growth of plants, and other measurements. Have students estimate distances, weights and possible answers.
- Have students use an abacus to facilitate their calculations.
- Reinforce high rates of correct responses.
- Set a rate goal.
- Chart performances and terminate daily practice once the goal is achieved.
- Tell students to work faster.
- Challenge students to beat their last rate score.
- Teach students to use rules. (e.g., any number times 2 is double that number).
- Drill difficult problems with flash cards.
- Play instructional math games.
- Teach students the relationship between addition and subtraction or multiplication and division when they are learning the respective facts.
- Use color-coded textbooks (e.g. green equals start, red equals stop)
- Use concrete manipulations.

- Use meaningful examples and materials
- Have students use graph paper to help organize numbers and columns on mathematical assignments.
- Teach key vocabulary in mathematics.

## Strategies for Attention deficit and hyperactive disorder

- Reward the student for being prepared by allowing him/her to participate in favourite activities, conferring classroom privileges (like making the child monitor of the class)
- Establish routines for placing objects –especially routinely used objects such as books or assignments.
- Point out to the salient features of the assignments (topic sentences, headings or table of contents)
- Provide the student with a list of materials needed for each task. Limit the list to only those materials necessary to complete the task.
- Enhance the clarity of instructions. Repeat as often in a clear, calm tone.
- Shorten the task by breaking one task into smaller parts to be completed.
- Make tasks more interesting.
- Increase the novelty of the task by using a game format
- Use high interest curriculum materials.

## General interventions

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

# 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:**

- Awareness of the problem
- Recognition of the problem
- Search for a cause
- Search for a cure, and
- Acceptance of the child

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

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

**Source:** *A Handbook for Parents of Children with Disabilities*

(Please refer to the websites for topics on Special Educational Needs and Learning disabilities  
Find more and make notes on different types of Learning disabilities)

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