



Connection Training

Professional Respite Care Providers while at PPRS need to enjoy laughing and engaging at each individual's level of communication and ability. It is your goal every day to offer the best social & emotional care to with whom you are interacting. Anyone participating in our programs deserve to be respected, engaged and shown how to have an enjoyable experience while in our care. Sometimes it may seem to be challenging to engage but there are ways to break through to them through using play therapy techniques, games and laughter. Professional Care Providers need to provide opportunities for with one another and create arts & crafts and games that all can participate in together.

Connecting Through Play

The D.I.R. FLOORTIME method by child psychiatrist Stanley Greenspan has different stages to help individuals learn how to engage with individuals with special needs. For further information see: (<http://www.icdl.com/DIRFloortime.shtml>)

- 1) **OBSERVATION:** Listen to the tone of voice and watch his/her facial expressions and posture to figure out how to approach him/her.
- 2) **OPEN CIRCLES OF COMMUNICATION:** Acknowledge emotional tone and then build on what he/she is doing at the moment.
- 3) **FOLLOW THE CHILD'S LEAD:** Be a play partner with your child. Narrate his/her play and let him/her be the leader.
- 4) **EXTEND AND EXPAND PLAY:** Ask a question and make a "twist" in the play so you have created an opportunity for him/her to react.
- 5) **CHILD CLOSES THE CIRCLE OF COMMUNICATION:** When he/she responds he/she has closed the circle. Remember, one circle opens you up to more circle of building communication; keep the circle opening and closing.

Getting those to engage while receiving care:

- 1) Get on eye level ---squatting, sitting or even --look them in the eyes.
- 2) Be respectful. Each person will have their own preference as to how close they will be comfortable with you getting next to them. Slowly ease in to interaction with them. Keep your voice volume under control so as to not overwhelm anyone!!

- 3) Have fun, play, laugh and be animated! Most respond really well to playfulness and the use of humor. Entertain them!
- 4) Use visual cues, auditory cues, music and songs to communicate...whatever works...each client is different!
- 5) Use gestures too! Gesturing reinforces our communications. For example, when a client does something correctly give him a “thumbs up” while nodding and saying “Yes, Good Job.”!

What Makes People Laugh?

Laughter is healthy and healing for the soul! Through observing and interacting you will be able to see what they are interested in and how to engage with them in fun activities.

The Steps to laughter:

- 1) Observe and discover what his/her favorite activity or toy.
- 2) Get down on the floor and use your hands playfully to “interrupt” his/her activity. Make funny sounds like beeps & buzzes and things that make him/her giggle. Interact!!!!
- 3) Use his/her favorite activity or toy in a way that is unexpected. Hide the toy and play peek-a-boo with it. Make-believe that is creating the funny sounds that you are now using to great effect.

Behavior Management

- Model appropriate behavior, language, and manners at all times.
- Remain calm even when upset or frustrated!
- Show respect for all, parents, Senior Staff, and Management.
- Be organized - This can prevent problems from occurring!
- Demonstrate self-respect by modeling good healthy habits, grooming, dress, and posture.
- Praise good behaviors!!

Handling transitions while in the community:

Moving from one activity to another can be really stressful for individuals with special needs. Much of the anxiety that surrounds these moments might have to do with the fear of the unknown. If they can't anticipate what is coming next due to the inability to understand the concept of time...anxiety rises and behaviors may occur. Ways that we can help to decrease the anxiety is to provide visual cues, schedules, verbal cues, relaxation techniques, deep pressure and/or squeezes.

PPRS's Daily Schedule:

Most have a schedule that can be referenced during the day. If you point to it or use the visuals with it to show while transitioning from one activity to the next, it will help to ease any anxiety that they may have. Schedules are posted f to have an idea as to what is coming next during their time while with our Professional Respite Care Providers at PPRS. For more information and examples: <http://www.child-autism-parent-cafe.com/visual-schedules.html>

Offer Choices:

Offering choices empowers them and shows them that they have an element of control in their environment.

Philip Abrams & Leslie Henriques stated: "When your child makes a choice, he interacts with the world. Even a simple choice involves a give-and-take with the child's environment. The act of making his own choice gives your child a feeling of autonomy. If you give your child many opportunities to make choices, you will help him develop independence and self-assurance.

Offer a choice of two things. Give them praises for making good choices! <http://www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/cfc.html>

Examples:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Hand over Hand Assistance with Art Work, Sports & Eating!!

At PPRS, we are here to play and enjoy making crafts and play sports with each other. Each person's abilities are different but ALL can participate, it is just the matter of understanding how to best help them when needed. We use hand over hand assistance to help when needed, in order for them to participate and be included.

What is Hand over Hand Assistance? (adapted from Provincial Integration Support Program)

When someone has limited ability or interest in using his/her hands in a purposeful way, the Respite Care Provider can assist by using, hand over hand strategies. Hand over hand involves participating in the activity with assistance from the Respite Care Provider, with:

- The helper putting their hand comfortably over hand and
- Guiding their hand from 'above' (over) to complete the activity

When offering HOH Assistance -Keep in Mind:

Resistance: Someone who resists movement or pulls away during a movement sequence. Sometimes they will do this as a way to indicate “finished”.

Allowing the Movement: *When* relaxed and going with the flow of the movement you are directing. Most are doing this some of the time. It may be his/her way of asking to continue with an activity.

Assisted Movement: The individual is able to help you to move her/his hand or arm, most likely in a familiar activity. Your participation many very gradually decrease over time.

Some examples of hand over hand activities are:

- Teaching a child to their wash hands before snack time (see visual sequence)
- Stacking or Building blocks on the table or floor
- Coloring, cuttings, or gluing crafts at the dining room table
- Eating with a spoon or fork during meal time
- Rolling the ball, catching the ball, kicking the ball