

Five Effective Instructional Strategies:

Students with ED in the Classroom

What are instructional strategies?

Instructional strategies refer to the learning techniques a teacher uses to help students learn or gain a better understanding of the course material (Persaud, 2020).

1. Allow Movement:

When working with students with ED, it is important to remember that they need a lot of sensory and vestibular input to pay attention. In order to help them attend in class, allow them to move using active seating, and allow for multiple movement breaks. By keeping their body moving, even if it is simply chewing gum, or pressing their legs against an exercise band, students with ED can increase their attention span in the educational environment.

2. Use Organizational Tools:

Students with ED have considerable difficulty keeping themselves organized. This lack of organization is due to a deficit in executive functioning. Using organizational planners and visual reminders can help students with ED stay organized.

3. Use Positive Feedback and Logical Consequences for Behavior:

Students with ED have behavioral issues related to poor self-regulation. Teachers can help reinforce self-regulatory behaviors by using positive feedback when they “catch” the student exercising control. If the student acts impulsively, it is important not to react to the behavior if it is minor. If the behavior is very disruptive, there should be logical consequences (“if you pester your neighbor, your seat gets moved”, versus “if you pester your neighbor, you lose recess time”).

4. Conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment:

Students with a suspected ED should have a full functional behavior assessment (FBA). An FBA will evaluate a student’s emotional and social impairments across environments and will help the teacher and school support team develop an effective support plan.

5. Plan for Tier 2 and Tier 3 Support:

Students with ED need extra support in social and emotional learning. Tier 2 supports can include social skills instruction, small group social stories, self-management plan, and mentoring. An individualized behavior support plan and the addition of family and community supports are examples of Tier 3 interventions.

References

- CEC. (2021). *RTI for emotional/behavior disorders shows promise* . cec.sped.org.
https://www.lcps.org/cms/lib/VA01000195/Centricity/Domain/63/PBS/RTIforEmotional_BehaviorDisordersShowsPromise.pdf.
- CPIR. (2017, December 6). *Emotional Disturbance*. Center for Parent Information and Resources. <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/emotionaldisturbance/>.
- Gargiulo, R. M., & Bouck, E. C. (2018). Chapter 5: Assistive Technology. In *Special education in contemporary society: an introduction to exceptionality* (pp. 135– 158). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Persaud, C. (2020, September 14). *Instructional strategies: The ultimate guide*. Top Hat. <https://tophat.com/blog/instructional-strategies/>.
- Sanders , C. A. (2010, May). *Strengths Based Interventions for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: Implications for School Counselors* . alfredadler.edu. <https://alfredadler.edu/sites/default/files/Sanders%20MP%202010.pdf>.