



KIT

"Keeping In Touch"

March 2010



A Publication of the Army Educational & Developmental Intervention Services CSPD

Resource Article

The KIT article this month, "Adaptation Interventions to Promote Participation in Natural Settings" by P. H. Campbell, S. Milbourne, and M.J. Wilcox, highlights participation as a key intervention focus for infant and toddlers with disabilities. Applying environmental accommodations and assistive technology (AT) to support children's success in everyday routines and activities are important intervention practices. Yet, as the authors identify there is an underutilization of AT. Data from the Department of Education (2006) and the National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS) (2003), reported in this article, identify that only 4% of Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) included AT services/devices. While this is a low rate the authors acknowledged that contributing factors may be IFSP forms and documentation, understanding of what AT is, and access to AT. Considering the definition of AT in the context of universal design may be a helpful perspective, as it encompasses modifications that are usable to all (e.g., cardboard books, cups with handles, stroller head protectors). The authors define "adaptation" to encompass accommodations or AT within the framework of universal design.



Included in this article is description of a four-step process for deciding upon adaptations to promote children's participation in natural environments. The focus on participation reinforces children's natural interactions and activities rather than specific isolated skills (e.g.,

will participate in meal times by picking up small food pieces with fingers rather than will use a pincer grasp). The four steps to the adaptation decision process are as follows.

First is to gather information about family routines including activities in and outside of the family's home. Also identify and what is going well and what is not going well. Next, gather information about adults' satisfaction with the child's functional performance including social interaction, use of hands and arms and mobility. This information will serve to guide decisions about what to address within the context of the child's day-to-day routines and activities. Up to this point, information gathered through the Routines-Based Interview (RBI) effectively accomplishes the information needed in steps one and two.

Step three begins the process of deciding upon adaptations. This should start with consideration of adaptation strategies using the hierarchy starting with least restrictive then working down towards more restrictive as needed until the most successful strategy is found. The intervention should always flow from least to more restrictive.

Step four of the process is putting the plan into action. This includes making decisions about *how* adaptation interventions will be implemented within the context of everyday activities and ensuring that the necessary training and support are provided. The authors include tools such as a planning matrix and a web to facilitate intervention that is truly focused on promoting participation in the child's everyday activities using real life contexts unique to the child and family.

Interestingly, Wilcox, et al. (2006) found that a majority of families involved in a telephone survey

“reported that they learned about adaptations and devices from friends and other families not from professionals.” Clearly, to ensure optimal use of adaptations, including AT, that promote children’s participation in natural learning opportunities it is essential that providers are well versed in adaptation possibilities and AT options.

Campbell, P. H., Milbourne, S., & Wilcos, M. J. (2008). Adaptation interventions to promote participation in natural settings. *Infants and Young Children, 21*(2), 94-106.

The full article is available online at: http://depts.washington.edu/isei/iyc/21.2_Campbell.pdf

On the WWW



The web resource this month is the “Ideas to Share” link on the Tots ‘n Tech website. See the Consultation Corner of this KIT for more information on Tots ‘n Tech.

<http://tnt.asu.edu/ideas>

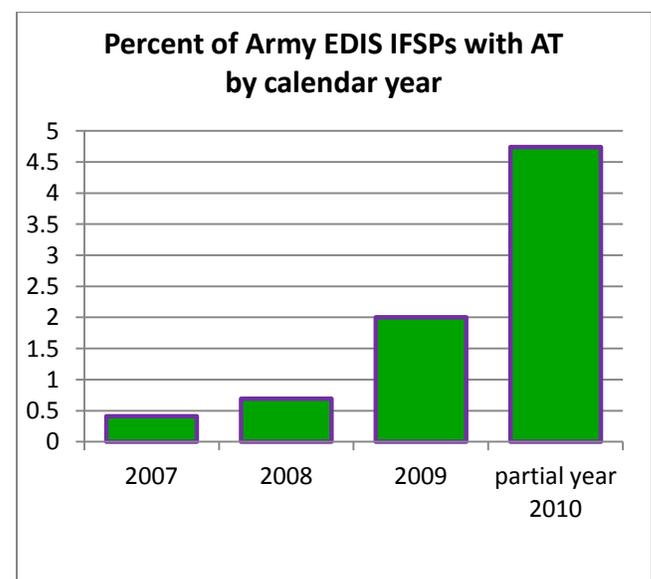
This resource includes a variety of ideas from people working with young children. It is organized around functional skills and activities/routines. The functional skill categories include using arms and hands socializing with peers and adults, getting around, and communicating. The activities/routines include morning, meals, chores, play, bath, bed, errands, story, leaving home, outdoor play, story time, travel time, and community outings. This idea database provides numerous helpful ideas for making adaptations to promote children’s functional skill development and participation in naturally occurring everyday activities.

You are also welcome to share your good ideas for the benefit of others.

What Do the Data Say?

What percentage of children in Army EDIS have an IFSP with AT included on their plan?

To answer this question data from the Special Needs Management Information System (SNPMIS) were analyzed. Rather than looking at just the current year, AT on IFSPs for the past three years were examined. Based upon these data there has been gradual increase in AT on Army EDIS IFSPs. In calendar year 2007 .41% of IFSPs had AT listed on the plan. This grew to .69% in 2008 and increased to 2% in 2009. From January to April 2010 nearly 5% of IFSPs have AT included. AT is a required element of the Army IFSP-Process Document. It is however possible that AT is not consistently entered into SNPMIS, as it is a separate data field. If this is so the percentage of children with AT on their IFSP could be higher than what is reported in SNPMIS. Further examination of the AT related data fields in SNPMIS may also be necessary to accurately capture the array of AT (low to high tech) possibilities. The increasing percentage of children with AT on their IFSP may be associated with advanced guidance and provider diligence with data entry. Further guidance is also encouraged to facilitate uniform understanding and documentation of AT across EDIS programs.



Consultation Corner

From March through July 2010 the consultation corner topic is:



Assistive Technology in Early Intervention

Over the next few months, Pip Campbell and Jill McLeod will be the consultation corner experts sharing their knowledge and expertise on Assistive Technology in Early Intervention.

Pip Campbell is a co-director of the Tots-n-Tech Research Institute as well as a professor of occupational therapy and director of Child and Family Studies Research programs at Thomas Jefferson University. She has conducted research in EI areas such as learning in natural environments, assistive technology, community-based service delivery, family-centered services, and integrated therapy. These projects have produced and disseminated a wide variety of print and audiovisual materials, protocols, and guides for a variety of audiences in addition to resulting in numerous presentations at state and national meetings and publications in scholarly journals. Studies of the use of adaptations, including AT, in promoting participation and learning of infants and toddlers with disabilities/delays are currently being carried out in Philadelphia with families raising infants and toddlers under extremely high poverty conditions and throughout the state of Pennsylvania in partnership with a group of 48 occupational and physical therapists who are participants in a collaborative research-action partnership.

Jill McLeod is a research coordinator at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, PA and has worked with the Tots-n-Tech Research Institute for

one and a half years. Jill was involved with the development and distribution of a nationwide self assessment on assistive technology (AT). She has also contributed to the development and maintenance of a low-tech AT database for families and providers called "Ideas to Share". Jill

also writes an AT newsletter that is distributed to providers across the country.

Tots 'n Tech

The Tots 'n Tech Research Institute (TnT) is an inter-university collaboration between Thomas Jefferson University (TJU), Philadelphia and Arizona State University (ASU), Tempe. TnT's mission is to provide up-to-date information and resources about adaptations, including assistive technology, to use with infants and toddlers for states, Early Intervention providers of all disciplines, and families across the country. In order to achieve this mission, TnT provides technical assistance to states to help them enhance the use of adaptations with infants and toddlers and conducts a national research program about use of adaptations and assistive technology (AT).

Continuing Education for KIT Readers



The Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) is offering a continuing education opportunity for EDIS KIT readers.

In line with the focus on AT in EI, readers are invited to receive continuing education contact hours for reading the monthly KIT publications (March 2010 through July 2010) and completing a multiple choice exam about the content covered in these KITs.

If you are interested, complete the exam online at www.edis.army.mil and upon successful completion, you will receive a certificate of non-discipline specific continuing education contact hours.

Please send your Consultation Corner questions and KIT ideas via email to ediscspd@amedd.army.mil