**Autism**

In this course, I learned about the Commissioner’s Rules regarding the Texas Autism Supplement to the IEP that must be considered for all children eligible for special education services with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

In the 1980s, the Texas Legislature directed the Texas Education Agency to form a focus group to address the concerns of parents who believed the schools were not providing adequate programs and services for their children with autism. From this focus group came the first Texas Autism Supplement to the IEP.

Having an Autism Spectrum Disorder does not automatically qualify a student for In-Home and Community-Based Training. Determination for this service is done through assessment and an ARD committee decision just like all of the strategies addressed on the supplement.

This assessment should be conducted prior to the ARD meeting so members of the team have the data necessary to make an informed decision during the meeting. To assist with the decision making process, the ARD Committee should address two questions:

1. Why is the student not generalizing his learned skills?

2. Is this lack of generalization due to a skill deficit or a performance issue?

For students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), however, regression and recoupment are only **two ways to qualify** for **extended school year**. For students with ASD, the ARD Committee must also examine whether the student would have:

1. A severe loss of an acquired skill, or
2. A loss of skill would result in harm to the
student or others

Critical skill areas are:

•         Muscular Control, Mobility, Self-care, Communication, Social Interaction, and Impulse Control

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) utilizes research-based strategies designed to increase quality of life and decrease challenging behavior. It assists with understanding why a child engages in challenging behavior and offers strategies to prevent the behavior while changes to the stimulus and reinforcement in the environment are made. The child is then taught socially appropriate replacement behaviors to meet the function of the original behavior.

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**Environmental Impact**

Antecedent manipulation is the utilization of interventions that increase the likelihood of success or reduce the targeted challenging behavior. They involve the modification of the environmental or situational events that typically precede the targeted behavior.

 Examples include, but are not limited to:

 • Visual schedules

• Physical and visual structure to assist in organization and predictability

• Communication systems

• Sensory replacements

• Choice making throughout the day

• Task manipulation and variation

• Emotion scale or thermometer

**Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)**

 A Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) should be conducted to collect data for a student with behaviors that are impeding learning. The data should indicate the function of the student’s behavior and the antecedents (A) and consequences (C) of that behavior (B).

**Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)**

 The data are analyzed and utilized to develop a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) which addresses the targeted behavior. The BIP is the component of the IEP that identifies positive intervention strategies the staff will utilize to decrease the inappropriate behavior and increase the use of a socially and contextually appropriate replacement behavior.

**Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)** is a broad term referencing the science in which tactics derived from the principles of behavior are applied systematically to improve socially significant behavior and experimentation is used to identify the variables responsible for change.