

*Supporting EC Inclusion through Play

Cindy Ryan, WOU
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*Welcome!



*Who is here today?

- *What is inclusion?
- *Why is it important?
- *What should it look like in early childhood?



*Let's talk about inclusion...


- * All children have strengths and challenges
- * All children and families deserve to be part of the same community
- * We are all part of an interdependent community and learn from each other

* "I am who I am because of who we all are."
Ubuntu defined by Leymah Gbowee

*** Inclusion Ideals...**


* The skills and viewpoints necessary to successfully include all children come from early childhood best practices.

Equality




The assumption is that everyone benefits from the same supports. This is equal treatment.

Equity



Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.

Justice



All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

- * Play is a key to learning
- * Value of play is that it is *child-initiated* and *self-chosen*



*** Play is key...**

- * Special education service providers focus on measurable objectives...can those objectives be met through play?
- * Take 5 minutes...
- * What are the challenges?
 - * Talk with a neighbor about the challenges these providers (or you) would have working on objectives through play?
- * What are the celebrations?
 - * Talk with your neighbor about the strengths of using play to meet measurable objectives
- * Be ready to share!

*** Play...**

- * Is there enough space to limit behavioral issues & allow for easy movement?
- * Do children have access to materials, etc.?
- * Are there enough materials for the amount of children in each area?
- * What are the rules?
- * Are there quiet areas for children to retreat to?
- * Space that encourages "buddy" play
- * Comfy spaces
- * Lighting and sound
- * What else?

* Check the environment...



* *"Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning"*
(Fred Rogers)

- * Follow the child's lead
 - * You guarantee that whatever you & the child do together has meaning to the child
 - * Supports the child's capacity to take initiative
 - * Helps them develop original thoughts & ideas
 - * Shows the child you value their choices

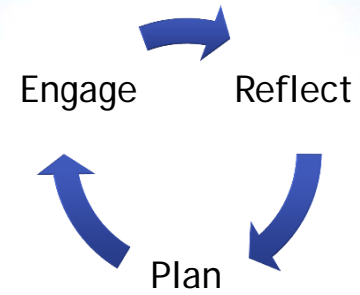
* What we can do...

- * Two-way communication
 - * Want to get communication going any way we can
 - * Not all communication is verbal
 - * Ex. If you hold out a toy and child accepts, that a form of communication
 - * Ex. Child rolling car on floor, you start to roll a car near him...then you crash into his car. He pulls his car back and then crashes into your car...that's communication
 - * All critical to play

* Keys to play...

- * We often attempt to get the child with a disability to join in the play of typically developing peers...so we can work on the child's skills
- * This often fails
- * Why don't we try to bring other children into the play of the child with special needs?
- * We can be the bridge that connects the children

*** Play...**



*** Engage~Reflect~Plan Cycle
of Relationship-Based
Practices**

- * "You are so sad about saying good-bye to your mom. I can see you are not ready to play with your friends yet. Why don't we make a curtain so you can be alone until you are ready? Shall we ask a friend to help? (child nods head) Hey Maria, Katya needs your help!"
- * What does this tell us about the teacher, about the child, and about how they set up their play?

*** Example...**



*** Example...**

- * Jessie is a 4-year-old girl who is new to our inclusive preschool classroom.
- * Preschool is new to her and she is a bit suspicious of all of us
- * Jessie is a young girl, who smiles & laughs when she is happy, and let's you know when she is not. She has Chromosome 18q Deletion, which presents some challenges around communication, early learning, both large and fine motor, and social interactions.

***Example**

- * Jessie avoids away from direct interaction with the teachers & children, getting upset when they get too close.
- * She loves music and has discovered the musical toys in the class, & has fallen in love with a toy school bus that sings & lights up.
- * As Jessie finishes eating her snack, the teacher moves (alone) to the floor and begins to play with the bus...moving it across the floor, activating the music.
- * Jessie turns her head to listen, & the instructional assistant asks, "All done Jessie? Do you want to play?"

***Example**

- * Jessie moves her head and the assistant says, "Ok, let's get you down on the floor, so you can play."
- * While this interaction is going on & as children as finishing snack & moving to play, the teacher is on the floor playing with the bus.
- * The assistant moves Jessie to the floor a few feet from the teacher, saying, "Let's see who is playing in the block area." By that time a few other children are in that area.
- * Jessie watches the teacher closely as she plays with the bus. After a minute or so, the teacher moves closer to Jessie, pushing the bus between them, avoiding direct eye contact with Jessie.
- * Soon she is about a foot from Jessie, & pushes the bus so it bumps into Jessie's foot...

- * What we wanted to encourage Jessie to do is:
 - * Begin to trust the adults & the children
 - * Interact with those around her
 - * Communicate (both verbal & non-verbal)
- * What is significant about what is happening between the teacher & Jessie right now?
- * How did the teacher honor & meet Jessie at the levels she is at right now?

***What is happening here?**



*** Preston...**

- * We all need a little help from our friends
 - * *I am responsible for me and I am responsible for you -Ubuntu*

- * Buddy Play~create activities & opportunities for buddy play
- * I Spy
- * Treasure Hunts & Maps
- * Working on cooperative art
- * Read with a Buddy
- * Buddy jobs
- * Other ideas...



*** Buddy & Group Activities**

- * What ideas can you share that have worked well?
- * What hasn't worked well, but you have learned from?
- * What are your questions about play in the inclusive early childhood classroom?



*** Ideas & thoughts bubbling to the surface...**

Contact Info:

Dr. Cindy Ryan
 Assistant Professor of Early Childhood
 Western Oregon University
 Email: ryanc@wou.edu
 Phone: (503) 838-8605

"Play is the height of research."
 ~Albert Einstein