

POTENTIAL NEEDS OF SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN WITH FRAGILE X SYNDROME

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Academic

- A reading curriculum that is visually based, rather than phonetically based. For example the Edmark series, Logo Reading System (developed by Marcia L. Braden), SRA word patterns and families, Merrill reading series.
- Math skills with practical applications, e.g. making change, telling time, cooking. Suggested curriculums include: I Can + and - Arithmetic Program (Pro-Ed), and Good Apple Math (Grimm and Mitchell).
- Individual speech and language therapy, with an emphasis on strengthening language skills and pragmatic communication.
- Language-based curriculum.
- Music therapy as a way of teaching academic concepts.
- Use of visual cues to supplement verbal instructions and teaching.
- Use of a computer for instructional purposes.
- Build on the child's good imitation skills.
- Low student/teacher ratio in classroom, one-to-one instruction when indicated.
- Minimal auditory and visual stimulation.

Behavioral

- Develop independent work skills using a visually based system, e.g. start and finish boxes or color matching assignments with a list specifying their order.
- Increase ability to stay on task, e.g. the child uses a timer to specify work periods.
- Increase ability to deal with transitions, e.g. use of daily schedule with pictures.
- Increase ability to tolerate change, e.g. reviewing with pictures the steps involved in a new activity or change in routine.
- Compliance training (i.e. following directions on a more consistent basis).
- Implement a system of positive reinforcement, e.g. daily report sheets sent home to parents or a menu of rewards at school that changes frequently.

Social/Adaptive

- Development of play skills/effective use of leisure time.
- Social skills training, e.g. turn-taking, greeting behaviors, establishment and maintenance of eye contact.
- Maintaining, reverse mainstreaming, and use of peer models or buddies (percentage of time, specific activities, etc.).
- Use of calming techniques and/or relaxation training.
- Toilet training, dressing, and eating skills.
- Survival skills, e.g. ordering in restaurants, making small purchases, and other community-based activities.
- Individual time with a counselor.

Pre-Vocational/Vocational

- Consultation from an occupational therapist in this area.
- Identifying the child's interests and skill areas.
- Classroom simulations, e.g. assembly tasks.
- On-site job training and supervision.

Physical

- Occupational therapy (sensory integration and other techniques).
- Adaptive physical education.
- Medication monitoring when indicated, e.g. collecting behavioral data and completing behavior checklists.

Other Concerns

- Transportation, e.g. acceptable length of time on bus and use of a bus monitor.
- Establish a time frame for re-assessment and review of the IEP.
- Use of a notebook to facilitate communication between the child's parents and the numerous professionals working with him/her.
- Recommended teacher training, e.g. participation in relevant conferences or in-service training regarding fragile X syndrome.