Desensitization 101: Quick Tips for Encouraging Use of Glasses, CPAP, Hearing Aides, and More!

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Impact of Hearing Loss on Development

- Language Delays
- Social Isolation
- Learning Problems
- Vocational Choices

Impact of Vision Difficulties on Development

- Mobility
- Independence and Cognition
- Sleep Problems
- Safety

Impact of Obstructive Sleep Apnea on Development

- Behavior
- Growth Rate
- Cognition
- Health
Reasons Wearing Equipment is Difficult

Cognitive
- It’s a change
- Lack of understanding of purpose of it
- Difficult to notice the difference or benefit

Behavioral
- Developmental stage
- Anxiety
- Wanting to be “normal”
- “Kid Smarts”

Medical
- Overall health: illness, teething, hunger, ear infection

Sensory
- It feels different (hypersensitivity)
- Fit

Parental Factors
- Life
Proactive Strategies for Success
How do we proactively address change?

TEACCH
- What do I have to do?
- How much/how long?
- When am I finished?
- What next?

https://teacch.com/
How do we proactively address change?
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Visual Supports

- Token System
- Road Map
How do we proactively address understanding?

• Social Stories
• Examples of how equipment has helped others
• Video modeling
How do we proactively address difficulty noticing a difference or benefit?

• Pair practice with activities that demonstrate benefit
  o Tablet time, television time, reading books, or playing outside while wearing glasses
  o Listening to music while wearing hearing device
  o Taking in deep breaths during a relaxation activity wearing CPAP.

• Verbally point out differences
• Make the difference more obvious
How do we proactively address the developmental stage?

- Recognize the child’s developmental stage
- Make a list of their strengths while in this stage and use to your advantage
How do we proactively address anxiety?

- Start small
- No other demands
- Start in a controlled environment (home)
- Adult-directed choices
- Create predictability (when)
- Visual schedule
How do we proactively address wanting to “be normal”?

• Find role models
• Use social stories  
  o http://theadventuresofnolan.blogspot.com/favicon.ico
• Teach them to be more independent
How do we proactively address kid “smarts”...

• Ignore when equipment is pulled out
• Praise/attention when wearing the equipment
• Practice only when you can give undivided attention
• Remove equipment when transitioning from one location to another
• Be clear about expectations: tell what to do instead of what not to do
How do we proactively address overall health?

Limit rehearsal to times when the child is healthy
How do we proactively address how it feels/ sensory issues?

• Appreciate the difference yourself
• Providing a quiet area (i.e., cozy corner) with soothing items
• Introduce gradually
• Check for fit
• Practice exploring equipment with adult supervision
How do we proactively address how it feels/ sensory issues?

• Calming strategies used before or while wearing equipment
  o Movement activities (i.e., running, play outdoors or indoors)
• Decreasing anxiety related to new sensory experiences
  o Plan what sensory activities you can use if they start feeling worried
  o Use these strategies before introducing the equipment to “prep” their body
• Normalizing the response to sensory experience
• Create smaller achievable goals
How do we proactively address parental factors...

• Identify your village
• Think about your readiness to start practicing
• Read about what your child is missing when they cannot fully access their environment
• Identify another caregiver that can help if your anxiety is too high
Create A Plan
Implementation

• Try it out!
• Track how it’s going so you can adjust your plan
THANK YOU!

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