

SELECTING EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Selecting educational goals is a team process. All team members need to observe the individual carefully in multiple environments and identify areas of need for specialized instruction. Academic and functional curricula can be used to give ideas as to appropriate goals. Academic, social and functional goals can often be combined in well thought out teaching plans. Remember: goals should address areas of immediate need for the individual (child or adult) rather than a projected need that may or may not be present in the future. (If the individual is functioning acceptably in all current environments with a variety of people and tasks, then goals to address possible future needs can be considered.)

Teams need to prioritize what to teach and when to teach it. Use the attached *Behavior Taxonomy* to help prioritize the most important goals to be addressed first.

Parents are often asked to provide input regarding goal selection but sometimes express concern that they are not making the best suggestions. Here are some questions that parents and professionals can discuss in order to identify goals and objectives for an individual.

1. What behavior does this child/adult now have that is dangerous or might become dangerous?

2. In what situations might this child/adult be in danger due to lack of skills?

3. When and where do I feel self conscious about this child/adult's behavior? What skill(s) could help her/him fit in better in this situation?

4. What does this individual do with others (friends, classmates, housemates, coworkers and siblings) that presents a problem? What do other people complain about? What could this child/adult be taught that would help him/her get along better with others?

5. Are there any situations that I (we) dread, knowing in advance that these situations will be difficult for the individual and/or for all of us? What skills need to be taught?

6. In what is this child/adult greatly interested or fascinated?

7. What are environments that we encounter that are difficult for this child/adult to handle?

8. When and where is this child/adult the most embarrassed? What skills would help to lessen this problem?

9. What would this child/adult like to be able to do? What would make him/her feel proud and satisfied?

10. What skills do I wish the child/adult had? What do I wish s/he could do? What skill(s) would make him/her more competent and appear more competent to others?