

# Adaptations:

## Supporting Positive Outcomes for Children with Disabilities



Region IX Quality Improvement Center for Disabilities Services  
California Institute on Human Services, Sonoma State University

This resource was originally developed for

### **Measuring Outcomes for Children with Disabilities** ACF Region IX Cluster Institutes

Written by

Senta Amos-Greene, M.A.  
QIC-DS Project Specialist

Maggie Bame, M.A.  
QIC-DS Consultant

Deborah Conn  
QIC-DS Project Specialist

Edited by

Judy Higuchi Lindbeck, M.A.  
Senior Project Specialist

Kai Kaiser, M.A.  
Project Specialist

Illustrated by  
Deborah Conn  
QIC-DS Project Specialist

## Adaptation Cards Content

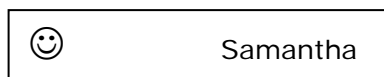
The following adaptation cards have been developed to spark your thinking about adaptations and support your work in facilitating positive learning outcomes for all children within your Child Care program. You will find creative, low cost curriculum strategies to enhance meaningful daily experiences for children through instruction, physical arrangements, routines, and materials. These practical strategies support diverse learners with varied strengths, interests, preferences, and needs and are based on the *Head Start Child Outcomes Framework*.



### Domain: Literacy

**Sample Indicator:** Children will develop a growing understanding of the different functions of forms of print such as signs, letters, newspapers, lists, messages

- Use metal nuts, sponge rollers, or modeling clay to build up the handles and/or weight of markers, pencils, and paintbrushes for easier grasping
- Add writing materials to the dramatic play area to take food orders or create recipes
- Clip plastic bag clips (variety of sizes) onto pages
- Hot glue Popsicle sticks, tongue depressors, or plastic tabs to books to help children with low muscle tone turn the pages of a book
- Include hardcover as well as softbound books for children who need support in fine motor control
- Add Velcro to the back of hard cover books to place on the rug or a carpet square to prevent sliding
- Ask restaurants to donate menus from the community
- Use a consistent symbol before a child's name to help with name recognition. This symbol and child's name should be printed on all of the child's work and cubby. Symbol and name should be printed left to right. For instance,



- Add picture icons with words to each area in the classroom for labeling and choice selection
- Use glue gun to add textures to written words, symbols, or pictures
- Add sand, sandpaper, sponges, and other sensory materials to books for texture and sensory input
- Use shaving cream, glue, or hair gel on sensory table for writing
- Write stories using picture icons or rebuses
- Have tape players, blank tapes, and microphones available for children to tell and record their own stories
- Use a switch that records sequential messages to play a recorded story. When the child pushes the switch, it “reads” the next page.
- Record repeated phrases from books on a switch so the child can participate in reading. Put a picture icon that represents the words on the switch.
- Provide a variety of reading and writing materials with different shapes (e.g., circles, rectangles, and ovals) and themes across learning centers, especially books with linguistic and cultural relevance for the children in your classroom. For instance, place in the dramatic play area menus from local restaurants, child created menus, books about relatives, cooking books, a chalk/message board with dry erase markers, etc.
- Add felt pieces to a book for tactile sensation (e.g., green felt in the right hand corner of the “Very Hungry Caterpillar” book)
- Add puppets and other props to the book area. Children could act out stories and build vocabulary, and you can check for level of understanding
- Use picture and icon cards to facilitate use of language
- Arrange materials together to suggest play themes from books (e.g., for “Elmo’s Birthday Party” use an apron, bowl, spoon, measuring cups and spoons, empty cake box, kitchen equipment, plastic eggs, etc).
- Use books on tape
- Use moist sand in the sensory tables so children can practice writing their names in the sand for sensory feedback



## Domain: Music

**Sample Indicator:** Children will participate in music activities

- Attach small bells using a hot glue gun to an elastic band or sock for musical instruments
- Use an old oatmeal or frosting container for a drum to be worn around the neck by punching holes through the lid and adding a piece of yarn
- Fill different size containers that fit a child's grasp (e.g., toilet tissue tubes, oatmeal containers, frozen orange juice containers, or water bottles) with beans or rice for percussion instruments
- Provide opportunities for visual and physical sensation of music (e.g., children can feel vibrations from the bass speaker and can draw or paint to the sound of the music. Or a flashlight dancing to the beat of music can be pointed at a felt board to show the visual beat of the music).
- Use song cards with pictures that correspond to songs for choice making
- Hang instrument from PVC pipe in front of child so she can participate in playing the instrument independently
- When singing songs, use picture icons to cue for words to the song
- Add props for each child when singing songs to encourage active participation
- Have large stretchy band for children to hold and move during movement time
- Use dramatic vocal effects such as chanting, whispering, speaking in high and low voices, and making sounds with your tongue and lips
- Pre-record assistive technology devices with songs ahead of time
- Have children hold onto a Hoola-Hoop during group time activities that require movement in a circle
- Use a prop that represents a song (e.g., yarn spiders for "Itsy Bitsy Spider", frogs for "Five and Green Speckled Frogs," stars for "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star," or a train whistle for "Down by the Station")
- Provide simple tasks that children can do like turning on the tape player to play music or using green and red electrical tape to indicate when to play the music-"go" and when to "stop"



## Domain: Science

**Sample Indicator:** Children will develop increased ability to observe and discuss common properties, differences, and comparisons among objects and materials

- Consider science from an earth, physical, and life perspective to expand environmental materials (e.g., pictures of a child from babyhood to preschool to demonstrate the changes in human growth)
- Encourage children to taste, touch, think, and tell as much about their learning experiences as they can (e.g., when talking about weather use fabric pieces such as a rain coat, the lining of a winter jacket, spandex for a bathing suit, etc)
- Hang pictures of children going on nature walks or experiencing science in action
- Keep clocks, scales, thermometers, measuring tape, cups, and rulers throughout learning centers
- Encourage children to describe, question, and discuss what they are doing (e.g., use a tape recorder to record children's voices and play back for children to identify who is speaking)
- Drop different objects down plastic rain gutters
- Connect different pieces of PVC piping to create a maze and pour water through it; food coloring can be added for visual feedback
- Use picture icons or textures on index cards for "Seek and Find" walks (e.g., find one bone, something smooth, something rough, something that floats, two rocks, a flower, etc.)
- Add "scents" to water for sensory feedback
- Create tubes with colored water and oil, glitter, and small materials (useful for calming/self soothing)
- Have Isotoner or other gloves available so tactilely defensive children can participate in "bone" digs in the sand box, exploring natural materials such as pine cones and pods

- Place a cardboard screen made from a refrigerator box around the discovery table, clip on a light-weight high intensity lamp to shine on objects on the table to focus attention and screen out extraneous stimuli
- Remove chairs from discovery and manipulative tables
- Fill sensory table with sand, bird seed, or cocoa bean hulls (fragrance is wonderful) and “hide” plastic insects or other critters in it
- Grow your garden in a narrow raised bed so children using walkers and wheel chairs can reach. Do the same with a worm farm and have children put in left over vegetable scraps to feed the worms
- Put colored Saran Wrap over flash lights
- Use a light table to provide more contrast when examining objects
- Have a large variety of lenses, magnifying glasses, colored goggles or paddles, and even simple toilet tissue tubes to focus attention



## Domain: Mathematics

**Sample Indicator:** Children will show growth in matching, sorting, putting in a series and regrouping objects according to one or two attributes such as color, shape, or size.

- Think about math on a variety of levels and not just number concepts (e.g., seriation such as loudest to softest, smallest to largest, roughest to smoothest; time concepts such as the daily routine [first and last] and changes that occur in seasons; and comparisons such as graphing favorite foods
- Talk with children about things that come in pairs such as eyes, ears, feet, hands, shoes, etc.
- Use a pipe cleaner or clear plumbing tubing instead of string or yarn to string beads; tape one end of the pipe cleaner or tubing to the table to secure it
- String metal, rubber, or plastic washers instead of beads
- Use double prints of photos of children for matching; cut out photos along the silhouette and add felt on the back
- Use orange, red, and yellow whenever possible as they are the most visible colors

- Modify peg boards by decreasing the number of pegs; use empty film canisters for pegs to provide a larger “peg” for children to grasp
- Help children organize their materials for sorting by providing small containers for each object. Place colored swatches or pictures of the objects at the bottom of the container.
- Create recipes with children of their favorite foods/meals and nonsensical items like imaginary recipes or recipes about making friends or friendships (e.g., To make a friend you need...two legs, one smile, three hugs...)
- Create guessing games (e.g., Can you guess how many things are in my pocket? That’s too many or that’s too few.)
- Expand block play options by adding Velcro to unit blocks or use sponges (they are lighter in weight) or magnetic blocks for stacking
- Label the kitchen play area with shapes of graduated sized plates, measuring cups, spoons, etc.
- Use tongs or large tweezers for picking up small items to sort

## Domain: Creative Art



**Sample Indicator:** Children will gain ability in using different art media and materials

- Vary the thickness of paints by adding cornstarch, sawdust, and/or sand
- Change the weight or enlarge the handles of markers, paintbrushes, and pencils by taping metal nuts, sliding on sponge rollers, or making an impression of the child’s hand in Playdoh and letting it dry around the handle.
- Use a glue stick or refill a pump-style hand soap container with glue to minimize excessive use of glue and spills
- Add tempera paint, food coloring, or scents to glue to enhance sensory feedback
- Use duct tape to stabilize tape dispensers on the table
- Reduce the number of steps involved in process-related art activities that lead to an end product such as paper wreaths, puppets, etc.
- Define a child’s art space by using empty shoe or shirt boxes

- Encourage tearing paper to practice the pre-skills necessary for cutting
- Use a variety of weighted and textured materials (e.g., playdough, aluminum foil, rice paper, straws, etc.) to provide sensory information when cutting
- Adapt crayons for children who lack fine motor control by melting broken crayons in cupcake holders and letting them harden
- Make playdough with Kool-Aid, Jell-O, and/or scents to reinforce sensory input
- Place slimy, gooey, and/or moist materials in a ziploc bag or use Popsicle sticks for promoting exploration
- Use angled boxes, table easels, or 2" to 3" notebook binders for drawing or painting at a table

The following source of information was adapted from Claire Cavallaro & Michele Haney, *Preschool Inclusion*

### **Continuum of Adaptations**

The following source of information was adapted from Cavallaro, C. & Haney, M. (1999). Preschool inclusion. Baltimore, Maryland: Paul MN: Brookes Publishing Company.

1. No adaptation: Child is able to independently carry out learning task/play activity.
2. Peer or adult assistance: Provide different kinds of input to the child during activities such as hand-over-hand guidance, demonstrating an activity while talking about it
3. Different expectations: Recognizing that each child's activity level and ability are different, consider how long a child is able to do the activity or specifically how he/she will do it.
4. Modified materials: physically alter an item to promote greater independence and/or success for a child (e.g., Gluing a film canister to a painting sponge to provide an adaptive grasp).
5. Parallel Activity – encourage a "typically-developing" peer to play alongside the child with disabilities to model activity

### **Various Forms of Adaptations**

- Environment - rearrange furniture, locate materials to ensure easy access by all children
- Input – provide different kinds of input to the child during activities (e.g., demonstrate or show pictures of an activity while talking about it)

- Level of difficulty – increase or decrease the level of difficulty of the activity so that the child is challenged but successful
- Level of support - provide enough support so the child can participate and still be as independent as possible (e.g., adult or another child may place her hands over the child's hands to guide him through an activity or lightly touch the child's hand to remind him of the action to be carried out, such as washing hands for snack time)
- Participation – provide different ways for children to be involved in all activities at their skill levels
- Time – recognize that children stay engaged in a particular activity for different lengths of time and/or may need more time to do the activity; plan the schedule to accommodate these differences
- Alternative teaching opportunities – plan different activities to work on a particular skill; become familiar with each child's particular rhythm (i.e., what times of the day he does well at certain kinds of activities) and plan accordingly.
- Output – provide children with opportunities to express themselves, communicate, and interact in a variety of ways (e.g., a child with speech delays can use a picture of an event such as playing in the housekeeping area to indicate choice during play time)
- Alternative goals – review child's progress with family and revise goals as appropriate; may involve breaking each IEP/IFSP goal/outcome into smaller steps

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## My Ideas



## Resources