

DESIGNING ACCOMMODATIONS: some things to consider

Copyright A.M. Donnellan and M.R. Leary 1997, with contributions by Jayne D. Miller, Mary Lapos, Carole Doran, Judy Marquette and the writings of Donna Williams.

Note: Accommodations must be tailored to the individual person. These helped someone at some time. They are not meant to represent the needs of any particular group of people. Personalize!

➤ If what you are trying to do to support a person involves: *Attending to Means-Ends/Cause and Effect*

1. Choose tasks with clear beginnings and endings
 - Stacking chairs
 - Making popcorn
 - Emptying waste baskets
 - Washing very dirty dishes
2. Make object transformation more salient
 - Use “Endust” or opaque foams and colored cleansers
 - Use color cues
 - Collate only two items at a time
3. Teach a motor pattern “RULE” --visual motor prompt
 - Clean from this corner to this corner
 - Wash each plate in this motion
 - Take everything from here to here-- put it there

➤ If what you are trying to do to support a person involves: *Ease with Temporal Sequencing*

1. Use concrete visual display
 - Pictures of task sequence
2. Use self monitoring devices
 - Check off lists timers etc

➤ If what you are trying to do to support a person involves: *Fluid use of objects which are not always or typically visible*

1. Teach a rote sequence
 - Lay out a visual display of the task left to right
 - Have a container with all materials available in order

- Teach a pattern rule
2. Have the adaptation visible
 - Card with pictures
 - Clock and picture at work space
 - Open pantry

➤ **If what you are trying to do to support a person involves:
Ease with utilizing discriminating symbols**

1. Stress perceptual saliency
 - Exact object match labels box fronts
 - Coupons exact pictures
 - Non representative drawings
2. Insert adaptations into motor pattern
 - Picture of desired food
 - Tape
3. Stress Zero Inference teaching
 - Natural materials
 - Natural environments
 - Natural scope and sequence

Some additional accommodations to consider

➤ ***Material Accommodations (“Things” that may reduce stress and increase comfort levels for some individuals)***

Tumbleform chairs	“Feel Good Box”	Tinted Glasses
Bean Bag Chairs	Black light	Earplugs or earphones
Chewy and crunchy things	Weighted Vest	Heavy padded clothing
Tube necklaces	Foot/ hand vibrators	
	Light box	

➤ ***Environmental Accommodations***

1. Screening for background noise
2. Reduce reverberation by using:
 - Carpet
 - Cork flooring

- Ceiling tiles
 - Large padded furniture
3. Reduce refraction by:
 - Turning off unnecessary lighting especially fluorescent
 - Using matte finishes on surfaces and walls
 - Using lamps Vs overhead lights
 - Using low wattage light bulbs
 - Soft colored light (cut down contrast and color contrast in a room)
 4. Maintain tidy, orderly rooms but observable and accessible materials
 5. Neutral monochromatic color for wall or floor coverings
 6. Position the furniture around the periphery of the room:
 - easier to navigate
 - not necessary to keep visual account of where large obstacles are located
 7. Furniture in plain color distinctly different from the wall color
 - easier to make sense of as a whole object
 - easier to know in relation to everything else
 8. Quiet spaces
One plain wall in a room or classroom

➤ ***Interpersonal Accommodations (Or, what we can do to accommodate this person and change ourselves to support this relationship)***

- Reduce non-essential verbal information
- Clear turn taking
- Reduce non-essential visual and touch information while sound is being processed
- Reduce non-relevant sound particularly during touch
- Keep non-relevant movement to a minimum including non-essential body language
- Predictable, rhythmical touching is OK
- Rhythm helps
- Signal the intention to touch
- Slow down
- Give “real” breaks:

- A chance to process information;
- Not a new conversation
- Don't go overboard with praise
- No sensory bombarding rewards
- Give personal space
- Reduce the need to interpret:
 - Use concrete language and be concise
 - Make what's being seen and heard clearly observable and tangible, or able to be replayed
- Present new information in a predictable format or style if that works
- Indicate topic switches with a clear, concise sign
- Be clear in your intentions and message
- Don't give unnecessary context
- Limit and monitor emotional overload as many people report:
 - "Unfiltered emotions" are more bombarding than sensory overload
 - Loss of sense of control
 - Avoidance of exposure of self-expression and interaction
 - Manic behaviour: destroying one's work; attacking own body
- Teach people to leave or avoid sources of provocation
- Emotion can build:
 - A little bit scared can turn into terror
 - A little bit upset can turn into furious
 - A little bit amused can turn into manic, hysterical laughing
- Direct confrontations may be:
 - Raw and exposing
 - Emotionally provoking
- Indirect confrontations may work better:
 - Speak to "another" or to the material
 - Use objects to explain interactions
- Encourage similar "indirect confrontational interactions" from person
 - Push object in their direction
 - Use typing
- Gradually bridge to more direct interaction and communication

DESIGNING ACCOMMODATIONS: some things to consider [Copyright A.M. Donnellan and M.R. Leary 1997]