

Ways a therapist might work with your child

Individually,

away from the classroom or home

- ✓ Complete assessments with minimal distractions.
- ✓ Demonstrate strategies for a teacher or parent to try in the classroom or home.
- ✓ Therapist able to try out different strategies.
- ✗ Can't observe environment experienced by child.
- ✗ No carry over of strategies learnt if individual therapy sessions are carried out without a teacher or parent present.
- ✗ No opportunity to set up goals in everyday activities for increased practice.

One-on-one,

classroom or home

- ✓ Therapist able to observe the environment experienced by the child.
- ✓ Teacher or parent may be able to see some of what therapist is doing.
- ✗ Little time to work with teacher or parent to discuss strategies.
- ✗ No opportunity to setup goals in everyday activities for increased practice.

Working together

in or out of the classroom or home

- ✓ Therapist able to observe the environment, distractions and social interactions experienced by child.
- ✓ Therapist able to observe the child's strengths and difficulties with tasks in the classroom or home.
- ✓ Therapist able to provide strategies to teacher and parent which relate to actual activities in the classroom or home.
- ✓ Opportunity to setup goals in everyday activities through discussion with teacher and parent to ensure increased practice opportunities.
- ✓ Learning of skills where they need to occur.

Group activity

in the classroom

- ✓ Therapist able to observe the environment, distractions and social interactions experienced by child.
- ✓ Teacher able to observe therapist.
- ✗ Little time to work with teacher on skill development.
- ✗ No opportunity to setup goals in everyday activities.

Small group,

away from the classroom

- ✓ Teachers and parents can observe strategies used by therapist in the group and practice them in the group before implementing them in school or home.
- ✓ Parents and teachers can practice strategies in the group and tell therapists if they will work in school or home.
- ✗ No carry over of strategies learnt if group therapy sessions are carried out without a teacher or parent present.
- ✗ No opportunity to setup goals in everyday activities for increased practice.

With child

during everyday activity in classroom or home

- ✓ Therapist able to observe the environment and social interactions experienced.
- ✓ Therapist able to observe the child's strengths and difficulties with tasks in the classroom or home.
- ✓ Therapists able to provide strategies to teacher and parent that relate to activities in the classroom or home.
- ✗ No opportunity to set goals in everyday activities if no time is allocated to talking with parent or teacher.

Features of Parents, Teachers and Therapists working together.

- Each works as part of a team to identify problems, brainstorm for solutions and monitor progress.
- Each has a role to play in bringing about successful outcomes for the child.
- Each is an expert in his or her own way.
- Each brings knowledge and information to share.



Learning Everywhere

Working together to use every opportunity



**Therapy
FOCUS**
Helping Children Grow

Therapy: What you can do?

When it comes to therapy, children with special needs may not be able to use the skills they learn during therapy time in other times and places. Therefore therapists and families need to plan for children to have opportunities to practice skills throughout the day and in different places, in order for them to make progress.

Here are 3 things you can do with your therapist to ensure that your child has many opportunities to practice:

- Think about what your child needs to learn to be successful in their daily activities and discuss with your therapist.
- Identify various times in your child's day when strategies can be used to achieve therapy goals.
- Ongoing communication between therapists, parents and teachers is essential, as everyone needs to know what the goals are for your child and how each person can contribute towards those goals.



"Learning Everywhere"

Use every opportunity in your child's day to develop their skills



10 Really good reasons why children should learn everywhere

Findings from Research

- Therapy delivered in the child's everyday environments has been linked to increased generalisation and maintenance of skills.
(Case-Smith, 1995; Kellegrew & Allen, 1996)
- When therapy is provided in the classroom, teachers and therapists talk with each other four times as much as they do when therapy is provided out of class.
(McWilliam & Bailey, 1994)
- Best outcomes are achieved when skills are practiced routinely within daily activities rather than in special therapy time.
(Kemmis & Dunn, 1996; McEwen & Shelden, 1995)

- 1 So that children learn the skills they need in the places they will use them, rather than just with their therapist in a therapy room.
- 2 So that opportunities to practice skills happen throughout family, school and community routines.
- 3 So that children practice as much as possible.
- 4 So that parents, teachers and therapists focus on the skills that will be immediately useful for the child.
- 5 So that therapists can see whether or not the strategies they develop are practical.
- 6 So that parents and teachers can see what the therapist does to develop the child's skills.
- 7 So that therapists can work with parents and teachers to sort out problems as they happen.
- 8 So that a child does not miss out on any classroom activities.
- 9 So that there is no special "therapy time" but practice that occurs throughout the child's daily routines.
- 10 Because it's the right thing to do!

“ ... therapist's aren't always there and these are things you need to do all the time. If parents learn the strategies we can use them all the time, anytime... whether you are at home, the community, anywhere... ”

Mother of a child with a disability

“ Working with the child in everyday activities helps me understand the environment the child is in, including parents and teachers. Since the activities are part of the child's day, they are more likely to be done. ”

Speech Pathologist (Therapy Focus)