Working With Parents With An Intellectual Disability

Pointers For Mental Health Parenting Professionals

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Children of Parents With Intellectual Disability

• At Risk for Neglectful Care

  – Increases Child’s Chance for Problems With:
    • Health
    • Development
    • Behavior
These Parenting Problems

• Generally Based In Knowledge and/or Skill Deficiencies

• Not Purposeful Abuse or Neglect

Many Factors Determine Parental Effectiveness

• An IQ of 60 or below appears to be a general cut off for the need for external supports
  – Family
  – Life partner
  – Professional
Complicating Factors

• The presence of the following increase risk
  – Mental Illness
  – Personality Disorder
  – Substance Abuse
  – Domestic Violence
  – Chaotic Lifestyle
• The increase in risk is multiplicative, not just additive

Interventions Must Be Provided In The Right Order

• In order to benefit from knowledge and skills development, complicating factors must first be addressed

  – For example, a ID parent with Unmanaged Mental Illness or Substance Abuse will not be able to benefit from knowledge or skills development
Parents With ID Who Are Not Overwhelmed by Complications

- Benefit more from Educational Strategies appropriate to persons with Developmental Disabilities than from standard Mental Health Intervention
  - Talk therapy doesn’t help

Required Competencies

- The Effective Family Support Person Must Have Knowledge Of:
  - Child Development
  - Health
  - Safety
  - Nutrition
  - Effective teaching methods for adults with cognitive and literacy limitations
One Effective Intervention Strategy Involves The Use of Task Analysis, Checklists and a Pictorial Manual

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<tr>
<th>Preparing A Tub Bath</th>
<th>Example of a Child Care Checklist</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Close the window to warm up the room</td>
<td>5. Test the temperature of the water by pouring some on the wrist and make adjustments as necessary</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Put bath supplies next to the tub (see “Supplies for the Bath” in the manual)</td>
<td>6. Undress the baby and clean bottom if dirty</td>
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<td>3. Put the bathmat in the tub and push it down so it sticks</td>
<td>7. Proceed to “Giving a Bath in the Tub” in the Manual</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Run warm water into the tub up to the parent’s wrist (when thumb is touching the tub bottom)</td>
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Example of Skills for Which a Pictorial Manual is Available

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<th>Home Safety and Accident Prevention</th>
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Examples of Pictures in Manual

More Examples
Sources of Information


The Pictorial Manual is Available

• Dr Feldman who has developed the pictorial manual teaches at Brock University in Canada.
• His website indicates that he is willing to offer the Step-by-Step Parenting Pictorial Manual free for one or two manuals or at cost for more.
• His email address is: mfeldman@brocku.ca