Bridging the Gap

Strategies and interventions to help students with learning disabilities, AD/HD and emotional disorders meet the Standards in regular ed classrooms

This site has been created by Special Education teacher Anne Sepe with a mini-grant from the Rural Education Advisory Committee

Organization Skills

Many students with LD, ED, AD/HD struggle with organization. Their desks and lockers are a mess, they misplace needed materials, can't find completed homework and are often late. This section focuses on teaching how to organize and maintain needed materials and completed work for accessibility

Direct-teach organization skills:

➢ Teach student strategies to simplify and organize materials *(Nothing on my desk except what I need now. Things I'm not using go in their right place {folder, desk, locker, etc.} as soon as I'm done with them).*

➢ Teach student strategies to manage time *(The bell will ring in 3 minutes. I need to be on time to my next class, so I need to finish this sentence, then start putting my things away where they belong. I need to put this worksheet in my social studies folder, put my pen into the pouch in my binder and put my social studies book into my backpack*

➢ Require student to keep materials organized. Reward success with verbal praise and reiterate the intrinsic benefits *("I notice that since you've been keeping your desk neat/papers organized/backpack uncluttered, you can always find your math homework").* Reinforce with an occasional tangible reward.

➢ Help student plan for and commit to some realistic step(s) towards better organization. Notice and reward successes *("I saw that you did your homework and brought in your notebook, and you got an A on the open notebook vocab quiz. Good job.").*

➢ Set up a consistent routine, in writing, for student to follow. Reiterate verbally often *(put away your math materials, what comes next, what will you need for that, get*

your materials ready for the next task). Give everyone who works with the student a copy of the routine so there is consistency across settings

➢ Let student experience natural consequences of failing to organize *(can't find homework, have to do it again. Late to class, have to go to office and get late pass).* Help student determine what hindered success and how s/he can do better next time

➢ Provide a check list for written work
   1) Heading *(first & last name, date, subject, assignment details)*
   2) Page *(margins 2 finger widths from edge of page, paragraphs indented, skip line between heading and work)*
   3) Edit *(spelling, periods, capitals, words left out, whole sentences)*
   4) Neatness *(mistakes erased or crossed out, no words written over other words)*

<u style="color:red">Organizing daily materials for older students</u>:

➢ Get:
   1) a heavy-duty 3-ring binder with pockets inside both covers, wide enough to hold materials for all classes
   2) 3-hole punched assignment notebook selected by the student
   3) pocketed, 3-hole punched folder and notebook for each subject, color-coded to the textbook cover;
   4) 3-hole supply pouch to hold writing utensils, erasers, lunch money, etc.

➢ Set up binder with assignment notebook in front, supply pouch in back. Pocketed folders and notebooks should be labeled and inserted into the binder in the order of the student's schedule.

➢ Students should place teacher-created subject notes and handouts in one pocket of appropriate folder, most recent materials on top. Returned tests, completed classwork, returned homework should go on the other side. Each night, the next day's homework should be placed into the appropriate folders as the top item in the completed work pocket.

➢ Assignment notebooks should be used to record daily assignments and also home-school communication. Teachers can initial that homework assignments are recorded correctly, and whether or not homework was received, parents initial whether homework was completed.

➢ Allow student time to organize materials throughout day. Have student clean locker weekly.

➢ Share strategies with parents. Parents and teacher encourage, monitor and positively reinforce success.

➢ When materials are lost, provide less desirable replacements (copies instead of originals, used instead of new).

➢ Provide an extra set of books, one to be kept in class and one to be kept at student's home.

➢ Have parents provide extra pens, pencils, paper to be kept in a labeled box in the classroom.

➢ Allow student to go to locker two or three minutes early to plan and pack needed materials