

KISS- Keep It Super Simple: Techniques for Making Learning Meaningful

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When children have difficulty accessing and processing basic communication and information, it is our job to KISS – Keep It Super Simple! Emily Taylor-Snell's presentation at the 2016 National Family Conference had participants look at learning from the child's perspective so they can see how to set up activities. This interactive, demonstrated and practiced techniques help children maximize their vision, develop tangible communication systems, and practice hand-under-hand techniques in learning motor tasks.

Basis of Content

The tenets of the presentation were drawn from evidence based practice in working with children with dual sensory loss and other complex needs taken from the work of Jan van Dijk, Barbara Miles, Kat Stremel, Charity Rowland and Phil Schweigert.

A few communication techniques presented at the session were:

- Use objects or pictures for communication for choice & requests
- Don't anticipate every need, create need to communicate
- Develop name signs for people and pets
- Make sure activities have a clear beginning, middle and end
- Declutter pictures and areas and use color contrast
- Pause for "more" and turn-taking and transitions between activities hand-under-hand
- Technique vs. hand-over-hand technique
- Routines based learning: Shows HOW activities are done
- Calendar Schedule: Helps anticipate what activity is NEXT
- Include child in daily chores and community activities
- Use fewer commands and have more fun conversations
- Do things together—have two similar items

Ways to engage Early Emergent Literacy, Emily Taylor-Snell suggested:

- Label Objects
- Recipes

Choice Making

Logos and Packaging Labels

Experience Books

Games that include matching and sorting

PowerPoint Books

The biggest piece of advice she gave to attendees was, “Be consistent and patient.”

