

Challenges which Impact Active Engagement For Individuals with Social Emotional Learning Differences

Neurodevelopmental differences can impact one's ability to predict the actions and intentions of teachers and peers. These neurodevelopmental differences have a significant impact on active engagement. In particular, the following abilities tend to be the most compromised:

- Predicting that others are a source of assistance,
- Predicting that others are source of engagement or pleasure,
- Predicting the sequence of activities,
- Predicting the steps within each activity,
- Predicting what to say,
- Predicting how to engage in activities,
- Predicting how to regulate emotions in a manner sensitive to others, and
- Predicting the purpose of academic and social activities.

As a result, children with social emotional learning differences:

- May not realize that caregivers, teachers, and peers can be a source of help, as evidenced by limited initiations and a reduced rate of spontaneous communication, both nonverbal and verbal,
- May not realize that caregivers, teachers and peers can be a source of emotional support and engagement, as evidenced by difficulties responding to bids for interaction and a limited range of communication for social purposes (e.g., asking for help, initiating play or conversation, and collaboration and negotiation),
- May not realize that others are a source of information, as evidenced by the use of unconventional gestures, language, and coping strategies as opposed to those learned through social imitation,
- May not know what to expect, as evidenced by difficulties with transitions initiated by others,
- May not be motivated in to engage in tasks initiated by others, as they may not be able to determine the steps within the task as well as why they are being asked to engage in the task,
- May have limited trust in others, as evidenced by heightened anxiety, frequent activity avoidance and/or aggression toward caregivers, teachers and peers; miscommunication and lack of predictability often leads to a history of repeated failure in social situations and negative emotional memory.

Research has shown that a number of learning accommodations can be effective at fostering more active engagement in children with these learning differences. By understanding the prediction error we can provide the necessary supports for the child to be a competent social communication partner that has emotional regulation strategies to support one's optimal level of arousal.

Can the student...	Y	N
Predict that others are a source of assistance		
Predict that others are a source of engagement or pleasure		
Predict the sequence of activities/tasks		
Predict the steps within each activity/task		
Predict what to say		
Predict how to engage in the activity/task		
Predict how to regulate emotions in a manner sensitive to others		
Predict the purpose of academic and social activities/tasks		
Date: _____ Time/Class: _____ Initials: _____		