

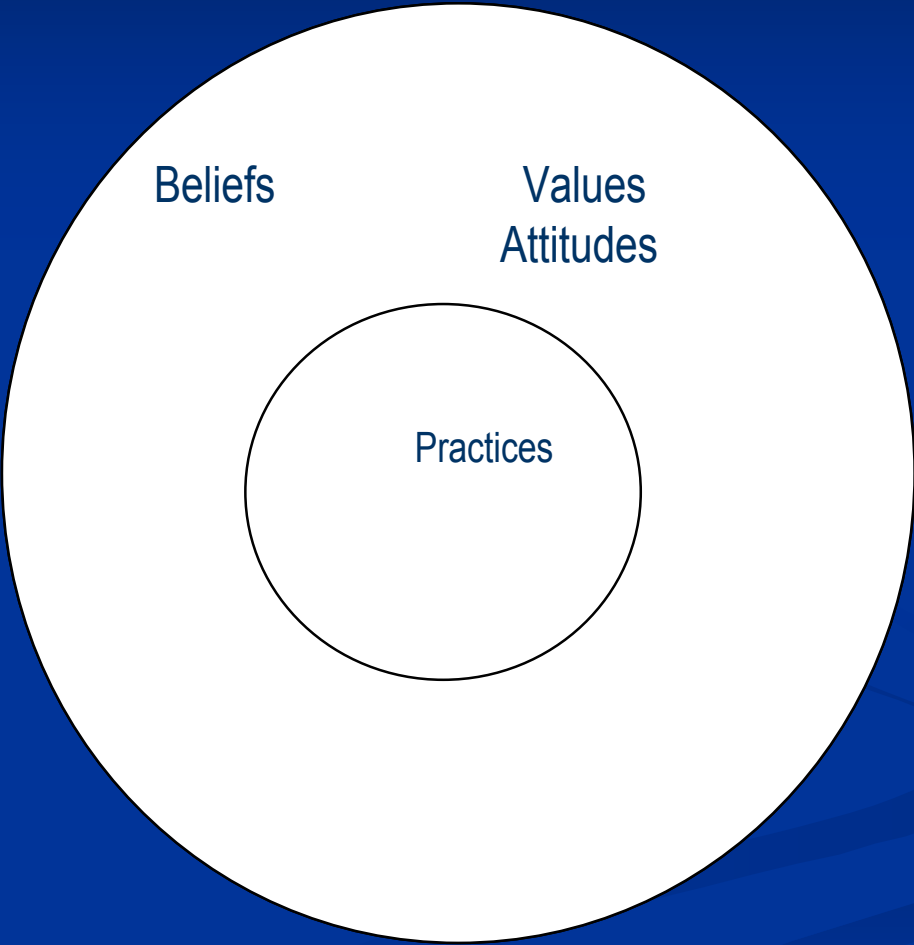
# Evaluating Programming for Students with Autism

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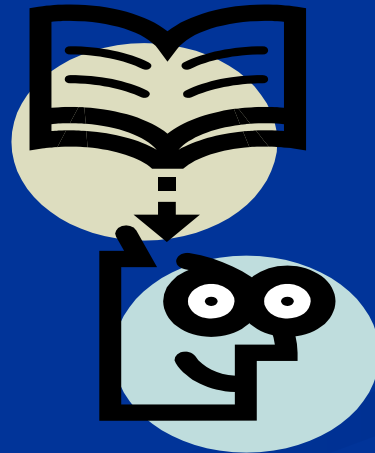
Beliefs

Values  
Attitudes

Practices

# The Big Picture of Educating Any Student with a Disability

Assessment → Program Development and Implementation → Progress Monitoring



# The Principle of Normalization

## ■ Normalization

- Nirje: making available to individuals “patterns and conditions of everyday life which are as close to possible to the norms and patterns of the mainstream society”
- Wolfensberger: Normalization focuses on enabling individuals to lead lives that are valued by other members of the community (called *social role valorization*)

# Conceptual Basis of Normalization

- People with disabilities ought to have lives that are similar to the lives of people without disabilities. Thus, the principle is rooted in the concept of *equality*.
- People with disabilities ought to have the opportunity to create and pursue good lives that are related to their own personal situations. Thus, the principle is rooted in the concept of *quality of life*.
- People with disabilities ought to be valued and have the same rights as people without disabilities. Thus, the principle is grounded in the concept of *human rights*.

# Inclusion

- Inclusion is a philosophy that urges schools, neighborhoods, and communities to welcome and value everyone, regardless of differences.
  - *Members* of their community
  - *Full citizens* in these environments and not visitors
  - *Valued*

# Promoting a Lifetime of Inclusion: Making Inclusion Work

- Successful inclusion requires a two-pronged approach
  - Public education (knowledge & philosophy)
  - Student education (effective instruction & appropriate skills)
- Philosophical viewpoint is the foundation
  - All instruction is aimed at increasing independence and participation with non-disabled peers

# Beliefs

- Every student, no matter how severe his or her disability, is capable of learning.
- Learning should include direct preparation for the activities of daily life.
- Instructional decisions must be individualized to reflect the unique needs of each student.
- Social integration is an essential element and desirable outcome of education.
- Interdependence and partial participation are valid educational goals. Students should never be excluded from an activity because they will not be able to do it independently.
- Learning needs to occur in a variety of everyday settings.

# Aim of Instruction

- All instruction is aimed at moving to less restrictive environments
  - In school
  - At work
  - In the community

# Inclusion continued

- Inclusion and Positive Behavior Support
  - Problem behavior is biggest barrier to inclusion
  - Positive behavior support reduces problem behavior by DEVELOPING skills
- Inclusion and Quality of Life
  - Inclusion is one important aspect of a good life
  - See hierarchy

# Individualized Supports and Services

- No one approach is superior for all individuals (wide range of abilities in ASD)
- Consider family preferences when determining goals and methods
- Incorporate child's preferences and special interests into the program
- Focus on child's strengths and weaknesses to determine intensity and level of instruction
- Engagement is the best predictor of positive student outcomes
- Procedures should be *custom designed*

# Systematic Instruction

- Involves planning for instruction by identifying valid instructional goals, outlining procedures for instruction, consistently implementing and adjusting instruction based on the data
- Based on principles of ABA and includes reinforcement, prompting, shaping, and fading
- ABA is not a specific program, procedure, or technique; it involves principles and methods

# Comprehensible-structured learning environments

- Help students “make sense” of their environment
- Uses of visual cues or supports
  - Examples:
    - Scheduling
    - Providing choices
    - Facilitating transitions

# Specific Curriculum Content

- Core deficit areas are communication and social interaction
- Systematic instruction of social engagement skills, recreational or leisure skills, and language and communication

# Functional Approach to Problem Behavior

- Skill development not behavior reduction
- Support plans should be comprehensive and focus on antecedent interventions and replacement behaviors

# Family Involvement

- Families are most stable and consistent influence in a child's life
- Teach families to implement strategies
- Use family characteristics and context to develop appropriate levels of support
- “Wrap-around” services and collaborative partnerships needed to implement programming in multiple settings

# Best Practices for Legal Requirements

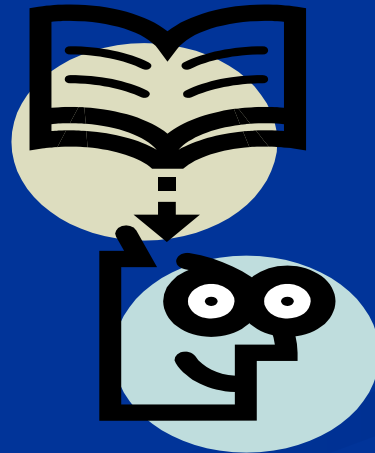
- Times have changed
  - In the beginning, there was an emphasis on access
  - Now there is an emphasis on quality

# Procedural vs. Substantive

- Procedural: Must follow the law
- Substantive: Must provide an education that confers meaningful educational benefit to the student

# The Big Picture of Legal Requirements

Assessment → Program Development and Implementation → Progress Monitoring



# Implications of Due Process and Court Decisions

- Schools must move quickly to evaluate students and develop programs
- Schools must have competent professionals conduct comprehensive and individualized evaluations
- Schools must address all areas of need identified in the evaluation
- The IEP must be reasonably calculated to provide meaningful educational benefit
- Students need to be included to the maximum extent possible (*rebuttable presumption*)
- Schools must adopt empirically validated instructional strategies
- Schools must collect meaningful data to document progress