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# Module 12, Identification and Intervention

## Module 12: Identification and Intervention

*For students with SEN, early diagnosis can be crucial. It can be the difference between tailored learning and achievement, and a life spent wondering why they are different. Parents can be too close to the child or occasionally will be in denial when it comes to the signs and symptoms of SEN. That is why it is important that teachers are trained to recognize these signs, and help children get the support they need whenever possible.*

What you will learn in this module:

- 12.1. Observation
- 12.2. Testing for SEN
- 12.3. Analyzing Results
- 12.4. Creating an Intervention Plan
- 12.5. Monitoring Students' Response to Intervention

### 12.1. Observation

**Approximately one in five children are diagnosed with Special Educational Needs.**

A child with SEN may:

- Be withdrawn in class.
- Have trouble making friends.
- Have difficulty concentrating on tasks.
- Have a small range of interests.
- "Act out" or throw tantrums in class.
- Have problems with authority.
- Constantly daydreaming.
- Have problems with coordination.



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- Fidget in their seat or continually get up to wander around.
- Consistently act naughty
- Fight or cause problems with other children
- Be impatient and have trouble waiting their turn
- Make offensive or inappropriate comments
- Disrupt others
- Have difficulty focusing on one thing
- Easily become bored or distracted
- Fail to complete homework assignments
- Continually argue with adults
- Become frustrated easily
- Show signs of low-self esteem
- Become aggressive

### **12.2 Testing for SEN**

**Assessments in schools are used for many different purposes.** They can include both formal and informal tests. A school may decide to screen children. School districts can decide to give written tests to the whole school, watch children interact in the classroom, or have a meeting between the classroom teacher and a special education teacher to talk about the kids.

**Both parents and teachers can request that the child be evaluated.** If the school decides that an evaluation is needed, they need to receive written consent from the parents. However, if the parents will not give their consent, for an initial evaluation, the school must document their attempts to obtain this consent. They can continue to try to conduct the evaluation by looking at other options available to them under the law (this will vary by both state and country).

**Assessment for SEN in the US has four main functions:**

- Determining if a child is eligible for special education services.
- Developing the most appropriate instruction program for the child.
- Monitoring progress in the special education program.
- Re-assessing every three years to determine whether the child is still eligible for the special needs services.



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### 12.3 Analysing Results

Once a child has undergone testing and an assessment for SEN, it is time to analyze the results. The results will include a wide range of different materials:

Results	Importance
Observation of child during lessons	Can indicate whether the child is paying attention or struggling to concentrate.
Discussion with parents and child	Parents input will give more information, and an overall look at how the child behaves at school and at home. Discussion with the child can give insight into how they are feeling, and the problems they face with learning.
Examples of the child's work across the curriculum	Can allow teachers to see if the difficulty is just in a few subjects, extends to the whole curriculum, or if the problem extends to learning as a whole-e.g. a problem with listening or reading.
Progress data (teacher assessments)	Indicates whether the child is meeting key milestones, and allows comparison to other children at the same age. Can also allow teachers to see whether the child is progressing or if they have stalled.
Attendance and behavior records	Can indicate whether the child has a behavioral problem, has trouble getting to school (either due to outside factors, or just refusal to attend), and how they behave with their teachers and peers.
Results from diagnostic assessments or screening	Usually the last step, these provide a more concise look at whether the child has SEN. They can include external observations such as from a psychologist or pediatrician.



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It is important that assessment strategies are not limited to standardized checklists and tests. They should include a variety of different methods that provide a more comprehensive picture of a child's skills and knowledge.

### **12.4 Creating an Intervention Plan**

Once a child has been diagnosed with SEN, it is time for the teachers, parents, professionals, and the child themselves to create an intervention plan. The plan should include a variety of strategies and tools, and consider the child's language, mode of communication, and culture.

The level of the intervention plan will depend on the SEN the child has, and how it affects their learning. A child with a mild case of dyslexia, for example, will require a much different intervention plan than a child with a conduct disorder.

#### **An intervention plan for a child with dyslexia could include:**

- Ensuring that directions are clarified or simplified and that the child understands what is expected of them. Also repeating directions if necessary.
- Highlighting essential information in textbooks so the child can block out unessential information and focus on small "chunks" at a time.
- Providing the child with extra practice activities so they can master the skills, and have a greater chance of remembering information.
- Allowing them to use a recording device so they can listen to the lesson at home.
- Maintaining daily routines. Many children who have SEN need a daily structure or routine so they know what is expected at different times of the day.
- Providing outlines or summaries of lessons.
- Placing the child close to the teacher so they can ensure the student understands, and remove distractions.
- Giving the child longer to complete written assignments.
- Adjusting assignments or tests and allowing children to give oral reports instead of written reports or vice versa.
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#### **An intervention plan for a child with conduct disorder may include:**

- Providing opportunities for children to have a positive role in the classroom e.g. handing out worksheets, wiping the board, collecting homework.
- Teaching relaxation techniques.
- Providing cognitive and behavioral therapy.
- Teaching parents training techniques.
- Creating a quiet place for the child to work when they are feeling overstimulated or upset.
- Seating the child near a teacher during lessons and activities.
- Giving the child clear boundaries and choices.
- Explaining limits and consequences.
- Providing problem-solving skills training to teach the child how to solve stressful situations; particularly when relating to other children.
- Functional family therapy.
- Medication to reduce aggressive behavior and impulsivity.

## **12.5 Monitoring Student's Response to Intervention**

In order to monitor if an intervention plan is working, the plan should include goals for the child to meet. These can be based on tests, assessments, or based on behaviors such as keeping their hands to themselves for a whole week, or not distracting other children.

#### **Ways to monitor a student may include:**

##### **Daily Meetings**

These allow the teacher to have a quick check with the child. Depending on the child, a quick talk in the morning can be a good way to get them focused and excited about the day. While one at the end of the school day can allow teachers to discuss how the day went and bring up any concerns.

##### **Weekly Meetings**

Weekly Meetings may be helpful, and can be as simple as adding stickers to a progress chart, or writing down their goals for next week. If possible, having the child's parents attend these meetings can be a great way to keep everyone on the same page, and address any small problems before they turn into larger issues.



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#### **Monthly Meetings**

These should include the child's parents, along with a school principal, psychologist, or other professional. This is a good way to look at the month as a whole to see if the intervention plan is working or if it needs to be adjusted in any way.

#### **Testing**

Testing the student regularly can allow teachers and parents to see real results, and determine if the child is making any progress with their learning. Tests do not need to be long but should cover basic skills, and any areas of concern.

#### **Journaling**

A good way to monitor a student is to have them write in a journal each day. Not only does this give them a good creative outlet, but they will be practicing their writing skills, and putting their feelings into words. Start with a sentence a day, and go through the journal with the child at the end of the week to better understand their thoughts and feelings.

#### **Behavior Charts**

For children who behave badly at school, behavior charts can be a great way to reward positive behavior. These work well for all children, and can be part of the classroom plan as well.

Every time a child behaves well and listens to instructions, they get a sticker or a tick. Every time they "act out" or behave badly, they lose a sticker or tick. At the end of the week, they can use their stickers to purchase a small toy, pencil, or candy. This provides a good goal for children each week and allows teachers to notice if a child is consistently improving their behavior.

**[Link to EXAM](#)**