

Introduction

There are a number of strategies which support children with autism within the early years. However there are barriers children with Autism will come across and this poster will show how these are overcome through inclusion and equal opportunities in an early year's setting. Children are provided with a number of rights by UNICEF (1990) where they are given equal opportunities and a voice to say their own opinions.

Communication

A barrier which children with Autism may face for the duration of their time at early years settings is the difficulty in accessing education independently due to their communication skills. If they begin school and have no support, it can be hard on the child due to them being unable to sit or manage daily tasks. Ambitious about Autism (2018) states that communication can be developed by the child learning to lead, point, use pictures and signing to access the learning materials within the early years setting. Sign language is often used to communicate between children and adults to encourage children to be able to say what they need or want.

Swain, et al. (2014) supports this and discusses disabling negative attitudes by showing the world positive attitudes of how they manage having a child with a disability and that although it can be challenging, it shows the world that these children are just as important and that even with a disability, the family can have a positive attitude and work together to support the child and reach a number of outcomes to develop.

UNICEF (1990) state that children have the right to live a full life with dignity, they should be given independence and have a part to play within their community. Governments must support children with disabilities and their families. This is Article 23 – Children with a Disability.

Conclusion

To conclude, there are a number of strategies which are used to break down barriers which children with Autism face during school. Through well trained staff and effective resources, children with Autism can be given opportunities to achieve to the best of their abilities. It is clear that these can also be critiqued because children should be given the opportunity to develop their independence and not be wrapped in cotton wool. Children have rights to protect them from being discriminated against and this is relevant as children with Autism have the right to be included and supported whilst they grow and develop.

Inclusion through One-to-One Support

Another barrier which children with autism face is being included in clubs due to their needs being difficult to manage for one adult to handle them as well as the rest of the children in the club. This may mean it can be hard to facilitate for them to attend the club.

However within early years settings they provide support by providing an extra adult to support the child in the club. Azad., et al. (2015) states that one-to-one assistants are important within the structure of staff when supporting children with Autism in the classroom. Due to the No Child Left behind Act which was brought out in 2002 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, there was an increase in training and supervision and one-to-one assistants also increased.

By providing children with one-to-one support, this reduces their chances of being independent. The adult who works with them needs to ensure they can take a step back to observe the child and see the child's potential and abilities without the extra support. McCarty (2017) states that although it is challenging, it is important to find the balance between supporting and promoting independence.

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