Case Study Analysis of a Behavior Intervention Service Delivery Model With Autism Spectrum Disorder Students

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter focuses on autism spectrum disorder (ASD), a designated disability that is becoming more common in schools in the United States. Autism spectrum disorder, as the name suggests, covers a range of symptoms. Some students with this disorder are high functioning and, although lacking in social skills, can be educated in the general education classroom. Students at the other end of the spectrum need someone to assist them with daily living skills and are often nonverbal. The chapter includes a discussion about effective service delivery models for students who have ASD and provides two case studies that use a behavior intervention service delivery model. The chapter also presents intervention strategies that can assist the general education teacher in providing proper help to students with autism spectrum disorder. Finally, the chapter discusses future trends surrounding this disability.

INTRODUCTION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) defines autism spectrum disorder (ASD) as:

a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. Autism does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance [or if the] child manifests the characteristics of autism after age three. (§ 300.8[c][1][i-iii])

According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2012), there were 378,000 students with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in U.S. schools during the 2009-2010 school years. This type of disability has increased significantly during the past 15 years. During the 1999-2000 school year, students with special needs who had an autism spectrum disorder diagnosis were at 0.1% of the total school population, which increased drastically to 0.8% during the 2009-2010 school year.

This type of disability tends to target more males than females and "exists at approximately the same level in all racial and ethnic groups" (Friend, 2011, p. 303). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2014), "1 in 68 children (1 in 42 males; 1 in 189 females)" (para. 2) are diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. This disability is very broad and diverse in that the intelligence quotient of these students can range from below 70 in about one-third of the cases to at or above average in approximately 50% of the cases.

Within the ASD category, there are three subcategories. The first subcategory includes autistic disorder, which is "reserved for individuals who display social interaction and communication impairments as well as repetitive, stereotypic, and restricted interests and activities prior to thirty-six months of age. This disorder is accompanied by a moderate to severe intellectual

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