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Autism

**Causes, incidence, and risk factors**

* Diet
* Digestive tract changes
* Mercury poisoning
* The body's inability to properly use vitamins and minerals
* Vaccine sensitivity

**Symptoms**

* Pretend play
* Social interactions
* Verbal and nonverbal communication
* Be overly sensitive in sight, hearing, touch, smell, or taste
* Have unusual distress when routines are changed
* Perform repeated body movements
* Show unusual attachments to objects
* Cannot start or maintain a social conversation
* Communicates with gestures instead of words
* Develops language slowly or not at all
* Does not refer to self correctly
* Repeats words or memorized passages
* Uses nonsense rhyming

**Treatment**

An early, intensive, appropriate treatment program will greatly improve the outlook for most young children with autism. Most programs will build on the interests of the child in a highly structured schedule of constructive activities. Visual aids are often helpful.

* Applied behavior analysis (ABA)
* Medications
* Occupational therapy
* Physical therapy
* Speech-language therapy

MEDICINE

* Aggression
* Anxiety
* Attention problems
* Extreme compulsions that the child cannot stop
* Hyperactivity
* Impulsiveness
* Irritability
* Mood swings
* Outbursts
* Sleep difficulty
* Tantrums

DIET

Some children with autism appear to respond to a gluten-free or casein-free diet. Gluten is found in foods containing wheat, rye, and barley. Casein is found in milk, cheese, and other dairy products. Not all experts agree that dietary changes will make a difference, and not all studies of this method have shown positive results.

Bibliography

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Smart Goal

Specific: We want to educate a seven-year-old girl so she can understand English.

Measurable: We will know that Habiba knows English because she will be able to write at least a paragraph with correct spelling and grammar, she will be able to read and understand a given book.

Achievable: We thought it would be better if two people taught one person so the student can learn more. It is a difficult goal because the girl is still at a young age and can get distracted easily.

Realistic: This goal is realistic because we could give supplies to Habiba so she can learn well plus from time to time, we checked books from the library for her to read. We taught her at home but it was fine for her since she was used to this familiar environment.

Timely: We do not have any deadlines for Habiba but we just want her to reach the goals of reading, understanding and writing.



Updated Action Plan

Target problem: Habiba doesn’t know how to speak English

Target group: Habiba, six-year-old Arab girl

Project title: English Learning

Goals

* Smart Goal 1: Teach Habiba how to read a basic KG book
* Smart Goal 2: Teach Habiba how to write a paragraph
* Smart Goal 3: Let Habiba understand the basics of the English language

Obstacles

* She only speaks Arabic
* She is only six-years-old
* She has her own homework from her school
* She can get distracted easily

Tasks

* Bring a kindergarten or elementary (depending if her understanding of English grows) book
* Write down vocabulary words from the books we give her
* Get English learning activities from online or make one for extra practice

Journal Entries

November 23rd, 2011-  
  
Today was the first day I met Habiba. She seems like a really sweet, hyper and loving child. Today, Nilufer and I brought a book from the Elementary library and read it to her. She seemed to liking this book then when it was her turn to read she just acted shyly and got distracted a lot. She read about halfway the book until she just gave up reading and preferred to look at the pictures instead. I guess it was a normal thing to do since she doesn’t have proper English class at school and doesn’t believe that learning another language is necessary.  
  
May 5th, 2012-  
  
It’s been a long time since we started our project and Habiba understand basic English words such as ‘‘hello’’ ‘’House’’ etc. It is a bit harder for Habiba to write in English since Arabic has its own letters. It’s also hard for her to write the name of an object since she doesn’t know how to spell it correctly and from the top her head; she has to see the list of vocabulary words we made for her. Despite this, she has made a great improvement over the long period of time.

May 13th, 2012-  
  
Habiba is been having the same trouble of not remembering the vocabulary words and how to spell the words. She can get a few words but her spelling is not the best. We brought another book from the Elementary library and she tried to read and understood the book perfectly. This shows improvement and that she’s been reading the books that we handed to her a few days ago. We had to cut our teaching lesson short since Habiba was feeling sick and had to go home.  
  
May 18th, 2012-  
  
Today Habiba has shown improvement since she can write down and say the name of an object if it is pointed at. She told us she was practicing how to write and showed us that she could write little phrases such as ‘’how are you?’’ and ‘’my name is Habiba’’. I believe it was a great improvement for her because of her age and her busy life. Our goal was to let Habiba write a paragraph but unfortunately we were not able to achieve this.



**Service Learning Reflection Essay**

Through out the school year of 2011-2012, the service learning class has taught me several things about life. My first service learning activity was helping out with the iftar to give to a cancer hospital. Here, I was very nervous about what was going to happen plus I just had came back from Venezuela and haven’t seen my friends for six months. When packing all the food before leaving, I had a great time socializing and catching up with everyone which made packing a lot easier and more enjoyable. When we were all giving the food to the children, there were several emotions racing through me, I felt a bit angry because no children should be diagnosed with such a horrible disease, happy because I was helping out and being part of this action made me realized that people in general should do this more often. It’s not that simple to describe the feeling when you are helping someone out, it’s between a combination of sympathy, joy and many other emotions. I was sure glad to have come to the event and joined to the service learning class.

Teaching at the Sudanese school was a totally different from anything I’ve ever done. During the first semester, I was a tutor for Spanish but it was not the same thing to teach a group of 7th graders Math and English. The first time I went to the Sudanese school there was a protest and the students could not go so we stayed there to help clean. The second time the students were there but I was so nervous to teach but everything went all right. I taught basic math to three teenage girls with a friend of mine that had experience from coming here before. There was some trouble from time to time when the girls started talking Arabic to each other and weren’t paying attention. I left the school feeling refreshed and inspired to do my own project.

My friend, Nilufer, and me started a project, which consisted of helping a five-year-old girl named Habiba to learn how learn English. At the beginning of the project, Habiba wasn’t too excited to get an extra English class since her school taught English too but over the long period of time, she found English exciting and fun. I believe that learning English is quite important to learn since it’s an international language that the majority of the people speak, and learning it at such age can end up in great ways. It was a bit hard to teach such a language to a young girl who only speaks Arabic since Arabic has a totally different letters and sounds/pronunciations.

Our project was a bit hard to do since there were some obstacles along the way. First, Habiba is a very distracted person, which is quite common for a girl her age. This causes focusing problems and she doesn’t put all effort in trying to learn English. Also, Habiba receives her own education and she is already busy with the work that the school gives, which makes a difficulty when making a schedule with her so we can teach her English. We had to call her mother in advance to let me and Nilufer know when we could be with Habiba. There could also be sudden events such as one day that we were in the middle of teaching her and she suddenly felt sick and had to go home.

In conclusion, service learning has taught me that I should be aware of the people around me and that not everyone receives the same amount of education, money, health care, etc. Everyone has their story and not always is a happy one. I met a few kids in while I was teaching in the Sudanese school that had to leave this family behind or didn’t have both parents. I am thankful to have what I have right now and to have people who love me and will take care of me.

