

7A INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

When the student with TBI returns to the classroom, he/she may not be able to attend, or to remember information and organize thoughts and materials. Cognitive deficits can affect how the student perceives, interprets, and responds to his/her environment and the tasks at hand. The following are instructional strategies and modifications that will be supportive in developing a successful reintegration program.

STRUCTURE

The following basic guidelines will provide a framework to build a structured environment for the reintegrated student.

The student with TBI will:

- 1) function best when provided with organization
- 2) function best with clearly stated expectations, combined with a systematic and consistent routine
- 3) function best with limited choices to eliminate confusion and provide direction
- 4) function best when directions are specific, task oriented, and clearly stated with expectations outlined

FLEXIBILITY OF DEMANDS

- Student may need time to make up courses or instruction they have missed.
- Student, initially, may be able to attend school for only a few hours daily due to fatigue.
- Student may need extra time to get from one class to another or from one activity to the next.
- Student may need extra time to respond verbally during classroom discussions, when answering questions, or may require structure/cues to aid verbal organization and recall.
- Student may need a "time-out" period to rest due to fatigue, at least initially upon return to school.
- Student may need to use video and audio tapes for studying. Tape recorders can be used in place of notetaking.
- Student may need to have written demands reduced.
- Student may need oral testing in place of written responses.
- Student may need multiple choice format, tests of recognition, as compared to tests of recall. Whenever possible, multiple choice test format should be considered because it is an effective means of assessment for the student with TBI.

7B INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

SUPERVISION

This will be essential in one or more aspects of the student's program. The severity of the student's deficits will be one determinant of the amount of supervision needed.

- A *Buddy System* is one way to provide support to the student in getting from one room to the next, getting to the bus, getting to lunch, and following the day's schedule.
- A teacher assistant can meet the student at the entrance of the school and bring him/her to class. Often the student who has suffered a brain injury is confused upon entering a building and may need direction.
- Supervision is also recommended for review of the student's schedule for the day. The student with TBI needs to become familiar with his/her surroundings and schedule. With frequent reinforcement and the use of a daily log, the student will become more independent.
- Supervision during transition periods may be necessary until the student has become familiar with his/her surroundings and can use compensatory strategies.

- Supervision will be necessary if the student has mobility problems. Secondary students may need to be released from classes several minutes earlier to avoid the confusion of the halls.

COLLABORATION

The most effective model for successful educational reintegration involves collaboration between the school and the hospital/rehabilitation center in the transition process.

- School personnel should be notified prior to the student's reentry so that services can be planned, and staff can be informed.
- It is helpful if the referring agency visits the school to observe the classroom and building layout.
- The therapists and educators who will be servicing the student should visit the referring hospital or rehabilitation facility to learn about the student's present services and needs.
- After the student is fully transitioned to school, collaboration between school staff must continue. The key to a successful program is the continued collaboration and planning by all staff working with the student and his/her family.