



FORGING A PATH TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

LINA PATEL, PSYD

DOWN SYNDROME BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
COLLABORATIVE

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL COLORADO

TERESA UNNERSTALL

BS-EDUCATION

DS-ASD CONSULTANT



Objectives



Learn about the neurodevelopmental profile for DS and DS-ASD and the concept of prompt hierarchy.



Understand how to fade prompts with the help of using task analysis, visual schedules, token boards and identifying effective motivators.

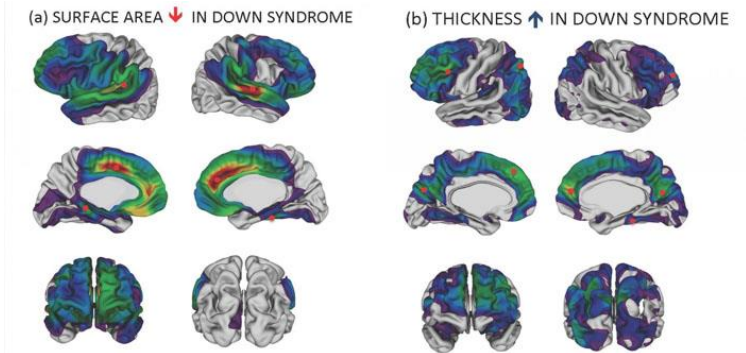


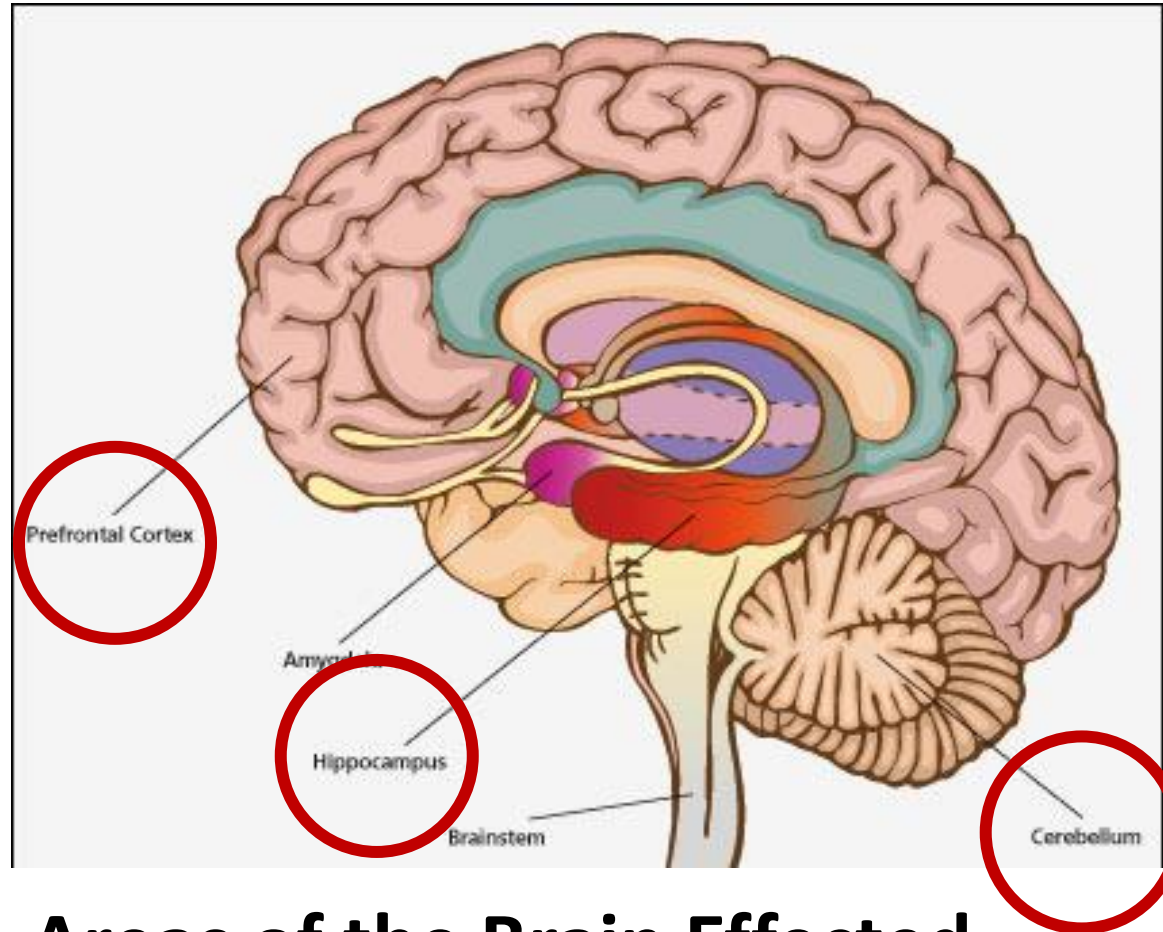
Identify and determine specific life skills that can be worked on at any age level. These skills will help navigate the individual to be as independent as possible when they reach adult age.

Brains of Individuals with Down Syndrome



- At or just before birth, **no differences**
- Brain differences **begin to show** after 3 - 6 months of age
- Adult brains of people with Down syndrome are about **20% smaller** than average





Areas of the Brain Effected

Areas of the brain that seem to have differences in size or connections include: **Hippocampus, Prefrontal Cortex, Cerebellum**

What These Structures Do

Hippocampus

- Responsible for memory and learning

Prefrontal Cortex

- Responsible for things like planning, problem solving, inhibition, expressions, etc.

Cerebellum

- Responsible for coordination of movement and learning, as well as attention and language

Potential Impact on Daily Life

Hippocampus

- Remembering multiple step directions
- Remembering and recalling facts

Prefrontal Cortex

- Impulse control
- Understanding safety
- Problem solving if a routine is changed
- Knowing what to do when clear instructions are not given
- Reaction to something unexpected

Cerebellum

- Muscle memory for tasks without repetition in the same way.

"Probabilistic Behavioral Phenotype"

- The characteristics or behaviors are **more likely**
- Does **not** mean every child will display these characteristics or behaviors



Why is This Important?

- If we don't teach based on a person's specific learning style, we fail to teach.



How Does This Apply to Independence?

- If we fail to teach using a person's specific learning style, we dramatically limit their ability to become as independent as possible.
- If we don't use specific teaching strategies, we build skills, but we fail to build independence because we create prompt dependency.





Why is Independence Important?

- Builds opportunities to participate in inclusive environments more fully.
- Promotes confidence and self esteem.
- Improve ability to manage stress and anxiety.
- Creates safety.
- Strengthens relationships.
- Happiness and life enjoyment.



How Do You Create Independence?

- Start from a young age.
- When starting to introduce new skills, first evaluate what skill is already there.
- Determine level of prompting needed.
- Gather your toolbox.
- Gather your village.
- Give yourself time.

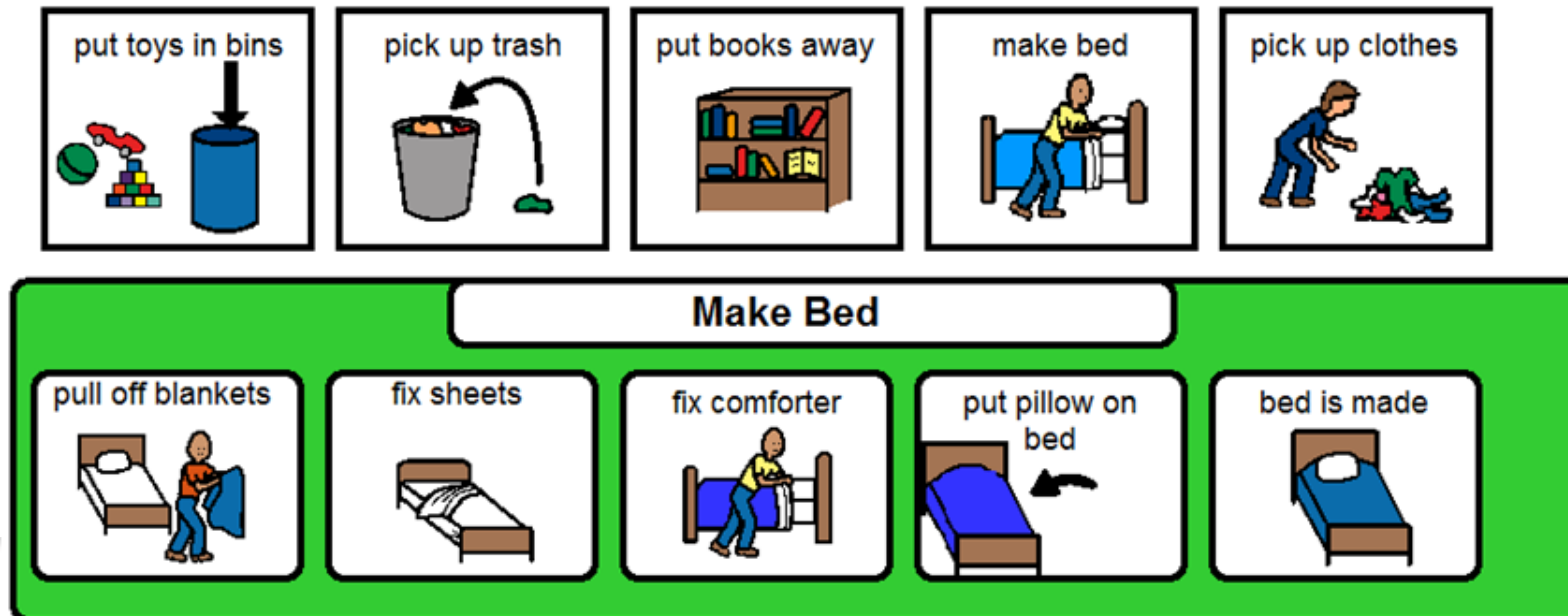
PROCESS

Prompts

- A prompt is a cue that you give before or while teaching a new skill.
- The type of level of prompting is the least amount of prompting you have to do in order for the person to respond correctly.
- In the A-B-C behavior chain, a prompt comes after the antecedent (A), but before the behavior (B). The consequence (C) is then a correct response.

Types of Prompt: Visual

Strengths	Challenges
Still there even when person isn't	Time to make the visuals



Types of Prompt: Verbal

Strengths	Challenges
Motivating	Prompt dependency

Types of Prompt: Gestural

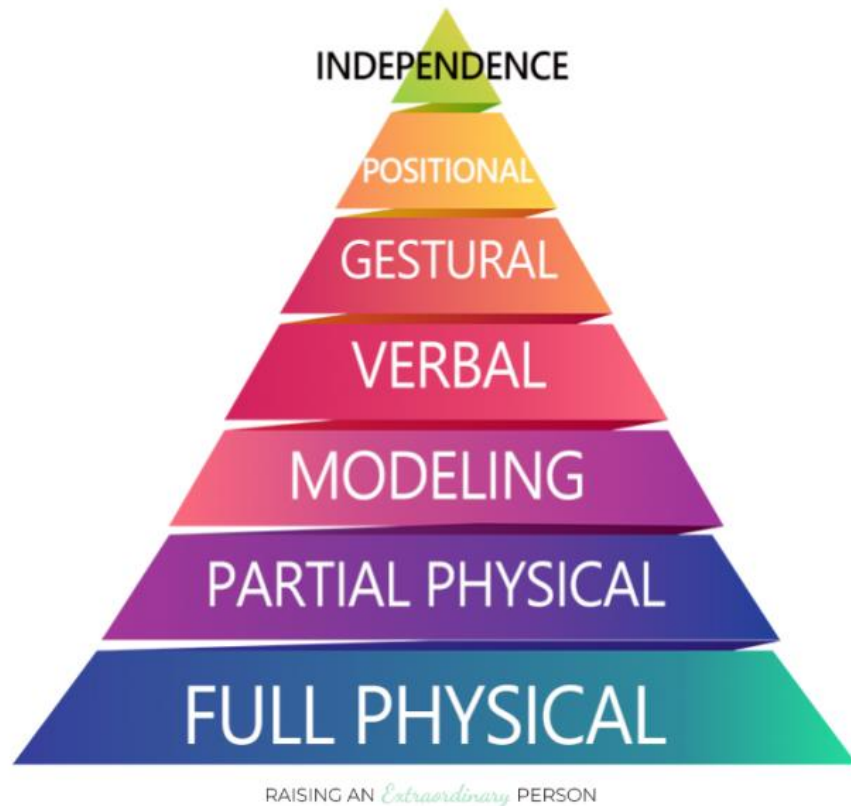
Strengths	Challenges
Less invasive	Comprehension

Types of Prompt: Modeling

Strengths	Challenges
Different people can model	Everyone needs to model in the same way

Types of Prompt: Partial/Full Physical Prompt

Strengths	Challenges
Easier to demonstrate with accuracy	Person may feel frustrated with being physically managed in this way




Prompt Hierarchy

- A prompt hierarchy is a tool to help you determine what level of prompting you need to use to allow the person to complete a task as independently as possible.
- Going from most restrictive/invasive to least restrictive/invasive the prompts are full physical, partial physical, modeling, gesture, direct verbal, indirect verbal, visual, and then natural cue.
- Verbal prompts are the hardest type to fade.

Prompt Hierarchy Prompts

Least Restrictive / Most Independent

Most Restrictive / Least Independent



Visual (visual supports should be paired with all levels of prompting so that you can eventually fade to using the visual alone as the least restrictive form of prompting)					
Visual	Verbal	Gestural	Modeling	Partial Physical	Full Physical
Visual clue or guide	Telling	Pointing or motioning towards	Demonstrating	Guiding by elbow	Hand-over or hand-under hand
Visual schedule on dressing or laying out his pants	Telling him to pull up his pants.	Pointing to his pants	Mimic pulling up your pants while he is pulling up his pants.	Holding his forearm while he holds his pants and pulls up	Holding his hands to help him pull up his pants.
The word "Name" written on the top of a paper	Telling him to write his name	Pointing to the paper where he is to write his name.	Having a model for him to copy	Holding his elbow while he holds the pencil to guide through the movements	Holding his hand while writing his name.



Example

Determining Which Type of Prompt to Use

Questions to ask yourself to determine type of prompt for teaching a new skill:

1. What skill are you trying to teach? Certain skills are more easily taught with a certain type of prompting.
2. What skill does the person already have? Some people may need a higher level of prompting because they are already struggling with an associated skill.
3. What types of prompts have worked best with the person in the past? Some prompts may work better than others simply because the person has already been exposed to that type of prompt.
4. What prompt is the most helpful, but with the least amount of support?
5. What tools do I need/how will I set this up?

EVALUATE

How is it Going?

- Responding well to level of prompt versus needing more support?
- Getting easier and going more quickly each time versus support needed staying the same?
- Missing specific skill versus having the skills necessary for the sequence of steps?
- Resistance versus cooperation?
- Is the task successful at the level of cuing given in different environments?

Prompt Fading

- Prompt fading is the process you follow for gradually fading away your prompt so the person can become more independent.
- Ways that you fade the prompt can include the type of prompt, the intensity or frequency of prompt, and the timing of the prompt.
- You should be thinking about how you are going to fade the prompt when you create your initial plan.
- Prompt fading is critical to prevent prompt dependency and for creating independence.

Prompt Hierarchy

Least Restrictive / Most Independent

Most Restrictive / Least Independent



Visual Visual clue or guide	Verbal Telling	Gestural Pointing or motioning towards	Modeling Demonstrating	Partial Physical Guiding by elbow	Full Physical Hand-over or hand-under hand
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Task	What would support at each level look like for your child?			What level are they at now?		

NICK



Creating a Vision for the Future

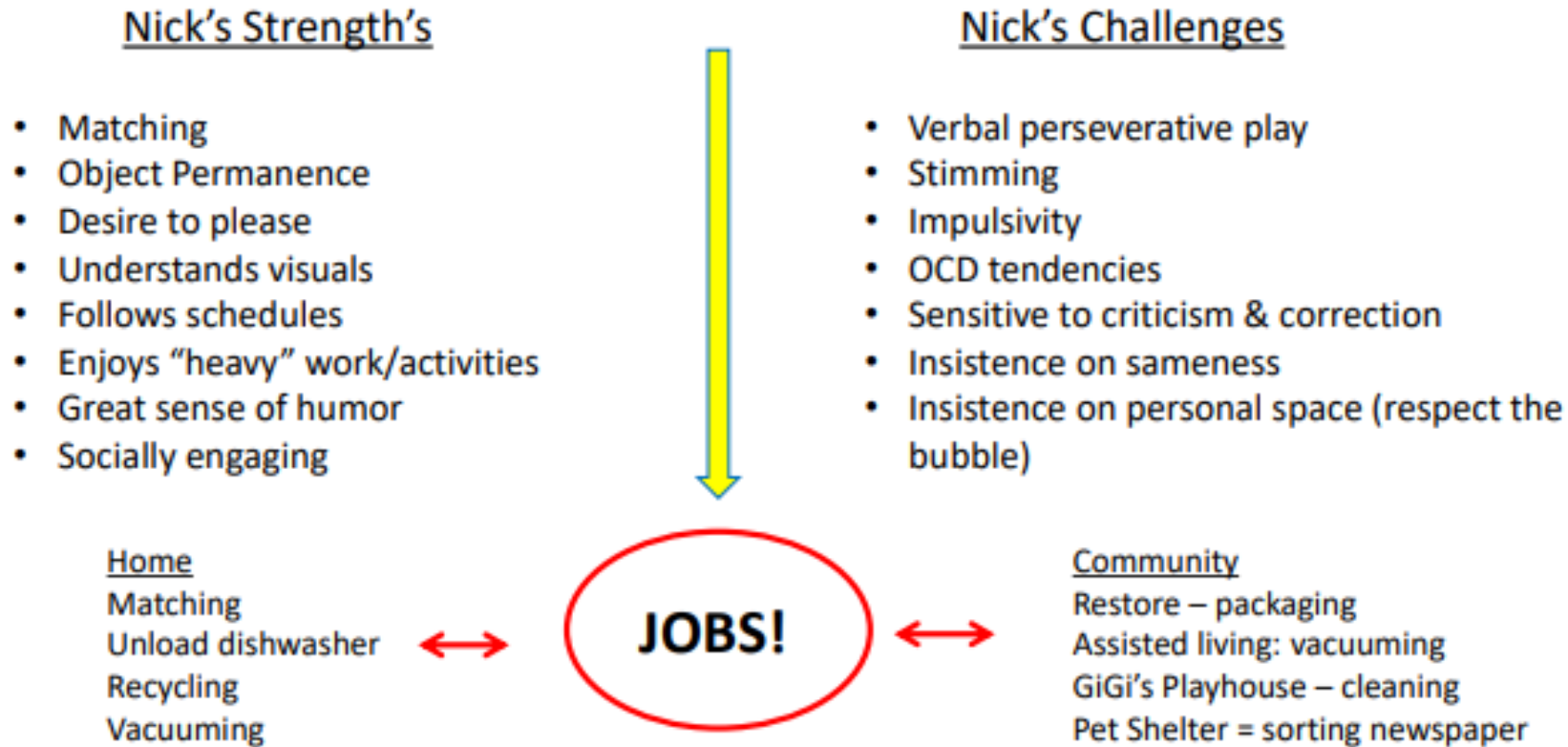
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- Where do you see your child when they age out at age 22?
- What goals are needed to achieve this vision?
- What levels of support and accommodations are needed?

Nick's High School, Post-Secondary and Adult Jobs:

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Minimize Barriers → Maximize Strengths



Personal Hygiene Skills

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- Using the toilet
- Putting clothes in the hamper/ hanging up towel
- Picking out clothes to wear/ dressing skills
- Brushing Teeth/ flossing
- Washing hands & face
- Putting on deodorant
- Shaving
- Beauty Regimens
- Menstrual cycle cleanliness
- Bathing/ showering & drying off
- Brushing hair
- Blowing nose
- Clipping nails/ tolerating and desensitizing nail clipping

Teaching Concepts to Foster Independence

- Hot vs Cold
- Wet vs Dry
- Clean vs Dirty
- Time on Task
- Model across all environments



Kitchen Task Skills

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- Help load & unload the dishwasher/ wash and dry dishes
- Wipe down countertops and windows
- Sweep and mop floor
- Feeding pets
- Help with garbage and recycling/ can crushing
- Set the table
- Assist in meal preparation and making choices of food and snacks
- Sweep and mop floor
- Put away groceries

Home Management Skills:

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- Cleaning up toys, putting away in bin/basket
- Sweeping/ mopping the floor
- Vacuuming the floor
- Dust furniture
- Throwing away items in the trash
- Taking out the trash
- Empty out recyclables and can crushing
- Taking garbage and recycle bins to the curb
- Picking up the mail
- Wiping off countertops and windows

Home Management Skills:

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- Set the table
- Assist with meal planning, food preparation and making choices of food and snacks
- Washing dishes
- Loading and unloading the dishwasher
- Feed pets
- Put dirty clothes in the hamper
- Carry and load laundry into washer and dryer
- Folding clothes
- Put away clothes
- Hang up coats
- Making the bed
- Bring in and put away groceries
- Water plants

Tips for Teaching Independent Living Skills:

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- Meet the child where they are at and build activities around their strengths
- Use visual schedules, task strips, token boards, modeling/video modeling, point prompts and hand over hand techniques
- Start with a preferred activity
- Focus on one area or task at a time and build from there
- Use a highly preferred reinforcer that is motivating to your child

“Independent work teaches responsibility, following directions and gives a sense of achievement.” -The Autism Helper
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Questions?

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