



EARLY START DENVER'S MODEL PHILOSOPHY.

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WHAT IS THE EARLY START DENVER MODEL

- ◉ The Early Start Denver Model is an evidence-based, comprehensive, play-based approach to teaching that focuses on helping children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) develop social communication.
- ◉ The model emphasizes use of everyday activities to help children connect, Interact, Communicate and learn.

WHO IS THE EARLY START DENVER MODEL FOR?

- This therapy is designed for toddlers and preschoolers with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or with early signs of ASD.
- Young children diagnosed with other kinds of developmental and behavioral disorders can also use this intervention.

WHAT IS THE IDEA BEHIND ESDM?

Children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) have difficulty learning how to communicate and develop relationships. This model aims to help children learn these skills by:

- ◉ focusing on the communication and relationship skills children already have.
- ◉ using play to gradually build on these skills in an intensive, structured and enjoyable way.
- ◉ This play is based on having (or developing) strong positive relationships between children and their carer.
- ◉ The approach encourages these relationships by focusing on activities children enjoy and using these activities as the basis for teaching.

BASIC PRINCIPLE AND AIM

- Children learn best when they interact and communicate with other people. **NOT ELECTRONICS.**
- Children with an ASD have fewer opportunities to learn from others because of their social communication difficulties (eye contact , sharing & turn taking)
- ESDM teaches children how communicating with others can help them, so they're motivated to keep trying.



Play,
Learn

and

Grow...

T
ogether!



HOW DO WE DO IT?

- ⦿ Child must be motivated and interested
- ⦿ Draw child attention (use your face, sound)
- ⦿ Eliminate competition
- ⦿ Watch and comment
- ⦿ Use sensory social routines because this may enliven a passive or calm overactive child.

PHILOSOPHIES USED IN ESDM

1. Developmental orientation to activities:

- The ESDM follows a comprehensive curriculum that is based on the development of typical children and children with an ASD.
- It includes abilities that are often affected by an ASD, such as:
 - Communication (requesting, sharing, giving, pointing and facial expressions).
 - Social skills and engagement
 - Social and pretend play.
 - Personal independence
 - Fine and gross motor skills

2. STRATEGIES BASED ON APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS (ABA):

- The ESDM employs some of the strategies that are derived from ABA. (Antecedent, Behavior, Consequence)
- The therapist uses a variety of behavior analytic procedures, some of which are directed by the instructor and others initiated by the learner.
- Parents or family members receive training so they can support learning and skills throughout the day.
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CONT: ABA

- The learner's day is structured to provide many opportunities - both planned and naturally occurring
- The learner receives an abundance of positive reinforcement for demonstrating useful skills and socially appropriate behaviors.
- The learner receives no reinforcement for behaviors that pose harm or prevent learning.

3. INDIVIDUALISED LEARNING PLAN

- ⦿ Every child is unique and so is a child with ASD
- ⦿ Start with assessment using ESDM Curriculum. This tells us what skills a child has already learned and which ones we need to teach.
- ⦿ together with parents we develop an individual learning plan, to tell us which skills the child has to learn next.
- ⦿ Each objective is broken down into smaller steps, as we cannot assume to teach a whole objective in one or two sessions).
- ⦿ Detailed records of the child's successes are kept, so we can closely monitor the child's progress.
- ⦿ The objectives must be S.M.A.R.T.

4. PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES

- Parents/caregivers are the primary teachers of all young children and this is not different for children with an ASD.
- Parents/caregivers will also be coached in the implementation of the learning plan at home using the ESDM strategies.
- Thus parents/caregivers become “co-therapists” in a transdisciplinary team.

5. TRANSDISCIPLINARY TEAM

- ◉ ASD is a complex disorder affecting several areas of development.
- ◉ Therefore a team consisting of different professionals, such as teachers, speech pathologists, occupational therapists and psychologists, work together on the child's assessment and learning plan to ensure that all areas of need are addressed.
- ◉ Parents are part of this transdisciplinary team.

6. TEACHING IN GROUPS

- ◉ While each child has an individualized learning plan and receives 1-1 teaching , we believe that children with an ASD, just like other children, also learn from their peers.
- ◉ Group activities are carefully planned so that individual children's objectives can be addressed during these activities.
- ◉ Play activities and materials are carefully selected, and the play room is organized in such a way that the activities attract the children's attention and facilitate transition from one activity to the next.



SUMMARY

- ◉ In summary, the ESDM is a teaching approach that “seeks to empower children with ASD to become active participants in the world, initiating interactions with other people.” (ESDM Manual, p. xi).

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