Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Outreach Programs

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**Coffee Hour - March 18, 2021**

**Western Region Early Intervention Conference**

**Using an Active Learning Approach with Infants and Toddlers**

Presented by

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# [The Active Learning Space](http://www.activelearningspace.org/)

* Collaborative site
* Explain basic principles of Active Learning
* Resources to help others learn how to use this approach

# A photograph of Dr. Lilli NielsenWhat Is Active Learning?

* Had 4 blind siblings – she was the 2nd of 7 children in her family and she cared for blind younger brother from the time she was age 7
* Trained as a teacher, later got her doctorate in developmental psychology
* Spent years developing and doing research on Active Learning and the equipment she developed

# Why this approach?

This approach specifically targets learners who are developmentally birth-48 months no matter their chronological age

Relies on research that shows how all humans develop in the earliest stages of learning – that is they learn through doing

[Michigan State University, Movement Can Increase Learning in Children](https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/movement_can_increase_learning_in_children#:~:text=Research%20suggests%20that%20promoting%20movement,and%20promote%20alertness%20in%20infants)

Major Characteristics  
**Simply Psychology website about these two stages of learning: (Piaget's 4 Stages of Cognitive Development**: Background and Key Concepts of Piaget's Theory, [Saul McLeod](https://www.simplypsychology.org/saul-mcleod.html), updated December 07, 2020)

## Sensorimotor (0-2)

* + learns about the world through senses and through their actions
  + cognitive abilities develop: object permanence; self-recognition; deferred imitation; representational play
  + emergence of capacity to represent the world mentally
  + (8 months) understand the permanence of objects

## Preoperational Stage (2-7)

* + ability to internally represent world through language, mental imagery
  + think about things symbolically
  + perception dominated by how world looks, not how it is - not yet capable of logical (problem solving) thought
  + demonstrate animism – think non-living objects have life and feelings like a person’s

# [ZeroToThree.org](https://www.zerotothree.org/)

* **Physical Development:** I learn about my body and grow strong by moving.
* **Intellectual Development:** I move, I learn.
* **Communication:** Watch me, and you will know how I feel and what I think.
* **Building Strong Relationships**: I move with you, I know you, I feel close to you.
* **Self-confidence:** I can do it!

[Center on the Developing Child Harvard University](https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/three-core-concepts-in-early-development/)

# Children with Significant Disabilities

* Often have extended stays in hospital, negative experiences
* Have physical challenges making movement difficult
* Visual and hearing impairments reduce access to the world (distance senses)
* Experience high stress
* Need more time to process and move
* Lack opportunities to repeat movements
* May be delayed in bonding

# Principles

* Overview of Active Learning
* Philosophy of Approach
* What is Play?
* Pathways to Learning
* How Special Needs Children Spend Their Day
* Dynamic Learning Circle
* Social and Emotional Development
* Key Points of Active Learning
* Five Phases of Educational Treatment

# Jack and Cindy – Phase 1 Offering

* What is Cindy doing?
* What specific skills does Jack demonstrate?
* Does his behavior and emotional state seem to change from the begin to the end of the video?

# [Phase 1 Offering](https://activelearningspace.org/principles/five-phases-of-educational-treatment/phase-1-offering)

* Make no demands
* If the child leaves or moves away from you let them go and wait for them to return
* Accept any movement or way of interacting with object

## Purpose:

* to promote trust between the learner and the adult
* to observe the learner's reactions
* to identify what the learner likes/dislikes
* to establish an understanding of the learner's emotional level
* to introduce self-activity

# Developmentally Appropriate Activity

## What Goes Wrong?

* Do you see children who are significantly developmentally delayed display similar behaviors?
* How do you think these behaviors might change over time if the adult persists?

# [Phase 2 Imitation](https://activelearningspace.org/principles/five-phases-of-educational-treatment/phase-2-imitation)

What does the teacher do in this video that indicates she is following his lead?

* Imitate the child’s activity
* Offer new action of your own, see if child will imitate you
* If not, return to imitating child
* Evaluate if the what you offered was at too high developmentally for the child to imitate and make adjustments

## Purpose:

* to increase the learner's interest in activities nearby
* to increase the learner's ability to initiate
* to increase the learner's belief in him/herself
* to introduce activities and movements not yet performed by the learner

# Phase 3 Interaction

What interests the child in this activity?

Is he comfortable interacting with the adult?

Did the adult demonstrate good interaction skills?

# [Phase 3 Interaction](https://activelearningspace.org/principles/five-phases-of-educational-treatment/phase-3-interaction)

* Provide every opportunity for child to familiarize himself with activity and participate & complete movement – but make no demands or praise.
* Model activity as close to the learner’s hands as child will allow, use a hand under -hand
* If the child withdraws or turns away, you may have proceeded too quickly to the stage of interaction, and should return to the stage of imitation or even offering.

## Purposes to help child:

* learn dependency on another or several other people
* initiate interactions
* the child's development of self-identity
* A basis for social development

# Phase 4 Sharing the Work

**Purposes:**

* to increase the learner’s experience of success
* to involve the learner in new social relationships
* to increase the learner's interest in acquiring new abilities

Note: learner must be 24 months or older developmentally

# Phase 5 Consequences

Purposes are:

* to help learner to endure meeting demands
* to help the learner endure changes in life
* to help the learner feel self-confident
* to establish a sense of responsibility

Note: learner must be 24 months or older developmentally

# [5 Phases of Educational Treatment](https://www.activelearningspace.org/principles/five-phases-of-educational-treatment/interacting-with-the-learner)

1. Offering
2. Imitation
3. Interaction
4. Sharing the Work
5. Consequences

# [Key Points of Active Learning](https://activelearningspace.org/principles/key-points-of-active-learning/key-points-overview)

* Active Participation – Independent and interactive play
* Opportunities to Repeat – activities and skills
* Developmentally Appropriate
* Reinforcing to the Individual
* Limited Distractions

# Implementing Active Learning Principles

Active Learning is MORE than a piece of equipment! It’s an approach.

[Video](https://library.tsbvi.edu/Player/18398).

# Guides

* [Getting Started Guide](https://activelearningspace.org/images/downloads/Getting_Started_with_Active_Learning_2021ver.docx): 5-page document to walk you through the steps to implement an Active Learning approach
* [Active Learning Materials and Planning Sheet](https://activelearningspace.org/program-planning/active-learning-materials-and-activities-planning-sheet)
* [Equipment Overview Quick Guide](https://activelearningspace.org/images/downloads/QuickGuideActiveLearningEquipment_2021.pdf)

# Things You Should [Buy](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment)



* Little Room
* Support Bench
* Hopsa Dress
* Essef Board

# Collage on this slide, with a wrist scarf, a door stop board, an activity wall, and a mobile.Things You Can [Make](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/overview-make-your-own-equipment)

* Resonance Board
* Position Boards
* Activity Walls
* Mobiles
* Elastic Board
* Vests, belts, gloves
* Pegboard books

## Girl lying on her side on a Resonance board surrounded by many materials[Resonance Board](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/resonance-board)

* Birch plywood with raised wood trim, typically 4'x4', 4'x6' or 4'x8'
* Amplify feedback of any movement during independent, interactive play through vibration
* Learn about orienting and placing things within a defined space
* Use as stand-alone or with Little Room, Essef Board, Support Bench
* Can make or buy

## Position board with items hanging from it[Position Boards](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/position-board)

* Promote increased fine motor development from a level of scratching, to a level of grasping and increase skills for manipulation of objects
* Learn the position of objects and materials
* May be positioned on a wall or modified to place on a tray or as freestanding device.

## [Echo Bucket](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/echo-bucket)



* Metal bucket suspended upside down above child.
* Holes have been made around the rim and objects are tied with elastic.
* Designed to encourage vocalization.

## [Activity Wall](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/activity-wall)



## [Mobiles](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/mobiles)



## [Tabletop Mobiles](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/tabletop-mobile)



## [Elastic Board](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/elastic-board)



## [Vests and Gloves](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/vests-aprons-gloves-scarves-belts)



## [Belts](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/vests-aprons-gloves-scarves-belts)



## [Pegboard Books](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/pegboard-books)



## [Pegboard Books (CVI)](https://activelearningspace.org/equipment/make-your-own-equipment/creating-pegboard-books-cvi)



# Comparables

[Video](https://library.tsbvi.edu/Player/14776)

# Home Hacks

[What does this look like if you don’t have the money to purchase these?](https://activelearningspace.org/families/home-hacks/home-hacks-overview)



# [Other Ideas](https://activelearningspace.org/families/ideas-for-young-learners) to Try at Home



# Activity wall by child's bedAdaptations for the Home Environment

* Activity wall by this child’s bed encourages him to stay in bed longer and play independently
* A position board or activity wall could also be placed in the living room or other communal area.
* Designate a cupboard or drawer in the kitchen for the child to explore independently while the family is preparing meals.

# Materials



* Use a wide variety of materials in multiple quantities
* Attractive objects
* Learner’s preferences
* Learner’s skill level
* The number of objects
* What an object is made of
* What the object can do

# Resources for more information

* [**Active Learning Space**](https://activelearningspace.org/)
* [**Forms**](https://activelearningspace.org/resources/forms)
* [**Newsletter**](https://activelearningspace.org/resources/active-learning-space-newsletters)
* [**Modules**](https://activelearningspace.org/courses)
* [**Webinars**](https://activelearningspace.org/resources/webinars)
* [**Lilli Nielsen’s Books**](https://activelearningspace.org/resources/dr-nielsen-s-books)

# Questions?

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