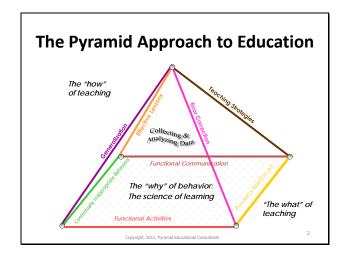
# The Pyramid Approach for Parents and Professionals

Lori Frost, MS, CCC-SLP Andy Bondy, PhD



# The Pyramid Approach for Parents and Professionals

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Pyramid Educational Consultants



## **Summary of Presentation**

# Purpose: Design effective educational environments

- The Base
  - Why learn?
  - What to teach
- The Body
  - How to teach
- Central is Collecting and Analyzing Data

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## **Functional Activities**

#### **Functional Orientation**

- · Why do we have schools?
- To teach skills to get a job and move away from home
- · Where do we teach?
- School Based
- Home Related
- Community (including services and vocational)
- If the child doesn't finish the task independently, who will?

**Functional materials** 

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# **Reinforcement Systems**

#### **Powerful Reinforcers**

- Student defined
- 1/2 second rule
- Grandma's secret (non-contingent R+)
- Differential Reinforcement
- "Let's make a deal" using visual support!
- Setting the minimum rate of R+ via ARRT (Audio Reinforcer Reminder Tone)

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#### **Functional Communication**

- Not all behaviors are communicative
- Must occur between two people
- Communicator directs behavior to communicative partner
- Communicative partner mediates access to reinforcer



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## **Functional Communication**

#### Where do we start?

What communication skill?

- Request direct/tangible consequences
- Comment social consequences

Spontaneity?

- Initiate
- Respond
- Imitate

Is modality important to defining communication?— **NO**!

•Speech, PECS, sign, SDGs, etc.

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# Picture Exchange Communication System™ (PECS)

- · No prerequisite training
- First step: teach spontaneous request

Impact: Learner <u>approaches</u> communicative partner to initiate social interaction

- Gradual change to sentence structure
- Functions added (comments, attributes, etc.)
- No evidence of speech inhibition
- · Greatly reduces "prompt dependency"
- Evidence-based practice

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#### **Nine Critical Communication Skills**

#### **Expressive**

- 1. Request reinforcers
- 2. Request assistance
- 3. Request a break
- 4. Accept
- 5. Reject

#### **Receptive**

- Respond to "wait" or "no"
- 2. Respond to directions
- 3. Follow a schedule
- 4. Transition

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# Contextually Inappropriate Behaviors and Alternatives

#### Behavioral Function vs. Form

- Major Functions
  - Gain some type of R+
    - Concrete, activity, social, internal
  - Avoidance/Escape
    - Demand, activities, settings, pain
  - Elicited (minimally controlled by consequences)
    - Loss/delay of R+, schedule induced, pain
- FEAB (Functionally Equivalent Alternative Behavior)
- Direct Reactions to CIB

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## **Generalization Strategies**

#### Plan from the start, not from 'mastery'

- Stimulus Factors
  - People, places, time, materials
  - Contextual issues: supervisory distance, # of learners in group
- Response Factors
  - Rate, total #, duration, intensity
  - Complexity, accuracy, fluency

**GRADUALISM!** 

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#### **Effective Lessons**

#### **Lesson Format**

- Discrete Trial format (DT)
  - Short, simple, distinct
  - Repeatable but how many in a row?
- Sequential tasks
  - Chains: Forward vs. Backward
- Who Initiates
  - Teacher initiation
  - Learner-initiated interest
    - Often with teacher expansions

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# Prompting as a Teaching Tool

- Prompts are a teacher's way to help a learner behave in a new way
  - Many types

#### **#1** Rule of Prompting

- ♦ If you put it in, you take it out!
- · Teaching without prompting?
  - Shaping

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# **Minimizing and Correcting Errors**

#### **Error Correction Strategies**

- Correct it, don't just FIX it!!
- 4 Step Error Corrections
  - Within discrete lesson re-establish stimulus control
- Backstep
  - Find error in sequence re-establish routine with prompt to prevent error
- Anticipatory Prompt
  - Known error pattern change prompt on next trial

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## **Collecting and Analyzing Data**

- · We take data to answer:
  - "Is this a good lesson plan?"
    - Take as little as needed to reliably answer question
- · Take lots of data early and thin slowly
- Types of data
  - Behavior: Frequency, intensity, duration
  - Product: Outcome of actions
  - Support level: Prompt type, supervision
- · Summarize data for trends
- When problems appear, go through the Pyramid!

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# Why use the Pyramid Approach to Education™?

- Fits broad educational goals
- It works for
  - Learners all ages, all disabilities
  - Staff less turn-over
  - Parents
  - Administrators cost effective!

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# How can the Pyramid Approach be implemented?

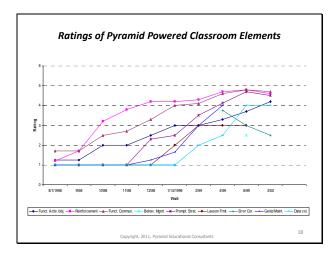
- Training and workshops
- Consultation
- Feedback from administrators, colleagues and parents

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## Frost & Bondy The Pyramid Approach for Parents and Professionals



# **Pyramid Workshops**

- · Pyramid Approach Training
- Pyramid Topics including
  - Critical communication skills, behavior intervention, Asperger syndrome, language of emotions, parent training, analyzing language (using Skinner's Verbal Behavior), organizing and managing classrooms, and more
- PECS Level 1 Training (2-day)
- PECS Level 2 Training (2-day)
- PECS Implementer Certification™



Please visit <a href="http://www.pecsusa.com/Research.htm">http://www.pecsusa.com/Research.htm</a> for PECS related research publications

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