

it or the person, or by escaping to a far corner of the room. She said, "No, thank you" or "Excuse me, please" to block attempts to engage her in an activity. When these attempts failed, Sue used physical aggression to avoid unwanted interactions.

When changing from one activity to another, Sue almost always ran away from her teachers, and bringing her back meant a physical struggle. Sue would often climb on furniture to the highest point she could reach so that interaction was almost impossible or became a confrontation. She also talked to interrupt and avoid the activity. Sue's attention span was perceived to be short, so that planned activities were usually simple, fast, and changed often.

Our first task, then, was to decide how we as a group were going to change the way we worked with Sue so as to bring about the change we wanted — her willingness to participate in a task. We made several decisions:

1. Tasks would be simple one- or two-step procedures that were not necessarily academic in nature;
2. Each task would encourage Sue to orient herself with the person helping her in the activity;
3. Verbal praise and encouraging touches would begin as soon as the activity began and end only when the task was completed;
4. If Sue hesitated to engage in the activity, the adult would begin the activity and help Sue participate by placing the materials in her hand;
5. The materials used would be solid objects which could be passed easily from one person to another and which were available in large quantities;
6. The activity would take place wherever Sue happened to be. Having interaction with Sue was most important; where it took place in the classroom was secondary. Should she go to the other side of the room, the materials would be easily transported to her and that is where the teaching would take place;