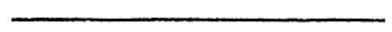


INCORPORATING USAGE OF NONDISABLED PEER MODELING IN TEACHERS' INTERACTIONS WITH DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

by

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A recent trend in education, commonly called mainstreaming, has focused on integrating developmentally disabled children with nondisabled children in the same classroom. A variation sometimes called reverse mainstreaming integrates nondisabled children into classrooms for disabled children. Theoretically, the results of these movements should be improvement in the social and cognitive development of the disabled children and increased normalization of their educational environment.

The basic assumption of these mainstreaming movements is that the disabled children will learn beneficial behaviors, primarily through imitation of the nondisabled children. There is considerable evidence that most retarded children readily imitate (Forehand, Robbins & Brady, 1973; Garcia, Guess & Byrnes, 1973; Lutzker & Sherman, 1974; Martin, 1975).

Imitation in retardates has been explained by Zigler & Yando (1972) as a result of their characteristic "outerdirectedness". Outerdirectedness is defined as a "...style of problem solving characterized by reliance on concrete situational cues rather than by active attempts to deduce abstract relationships" (Zigler & Yando, 1972, p.414). Zigler's theory suggests that retardates are likely to imitate due to a history of failure to adequately perform. They tend to watch others around them for cues on appropriate or accepted problem solving behaviors.