Lesson 3: Implementing Service Plans – Writing Goals and Objectives

This activity will focus on the development of long-term goals and short-term objectives for young children with special needs. Although your role in writing the IEP/IFSP may be limited, it is still important that you have a strong understanding of the goals and objectives included within the service plan. Paraprofessionals often play an important role in the implementation of these goals and objectives for children and families.

Read each of the following 2 scenarios, and then answer the questions that follow. You will be asked to create goals and objectives for each child based on the information presented in the example. Keep in mind that the IEP/IFSP team usually has much more information about a child when developing goals and objectives. The purpose of this exercise is only to help you become more familiar with the goals and objectives that you will encounter in your work as an early childhood paraprofessional.
Scenario A

Sophie is a 3-year-old at Happy Days Preschool, and she has recently been evaluated for a possible language delay. She currently says single words but is not able to say two- or three-word phrases. Her teachers would like Sophie to be able to use language functionally in the classroom, such as to ask for a snack or to interact with other children. Sophie often plays alone and does not actively participate in large group activities. Sophie’s teachers and parents are worried that her language difficulties will hinder her social development.

Imagine you are on the educational team developing Sophie’s IEP. Based on the information you have been given, develop a reasonable long-term goal for Sophie. Then develop at least one short-term objective that would help Sophie reach her long-term goal.

1. Write the long-term goal below. Remember to include the behavior to be changed, the direction of change, the present level of performance, and the expected annual ending level of performance. You may use the following example (presented in the lesson) as a model.

   Example: Jose will decrease (direction) shouting during small group activities (behavior) from an average of four times each day (present level) to no shouting (ending level).

2. Create a short-term objective that will help Sophie reach the long-term goal you wrote for question No. 1. Remember to include the conditions in which the behavior is performed, the performance of a specific and observable behavior, the criteria for attainment or level of performance, and the evaluation procedure. You may use the following example (presented in the lesson) as a model.

   Example: During small group time (condition) Jose will use an appropriate volume (specific behavior) daily (criteria) as recorded by the teacher (evaluation procedure).

3. If you were on the evaluation team developing Sophie’s IEP, what additional information would you like to know before creating the long-term goals and short-term objectives? What information would help you create better goals and objectives?
Scenario B

Charlie is a 2-year-old at Happy Days Preschool, and he has recently been evaluated for a possible developmental delay. Charlie’s teachers have several concerns about his behavior during free play, including his difficulties with sharing. When another child approaches Charlie to share toys or materials, Charlie yells, “Mine!” and gathers all toys in front of him. If the other child makes another attempt to share, Charlie often pushes the child away or brings the toys to another area of the room. Charlie usually has trouble with sharing about four times each day.

Imagine you are on the educational team developing Charlie’s IFSP. Based on the information you have been given, develop a reasonable long-term goal for Charlie. Then develop at least one short-term objective that would help Charlie reach that long-term goal.

1. Write the long-term goal below. Remember to include the behavior to be changed, the direction of change, the present level of performance, and the expected annual ending level of performance.

2. Create a short-term objective that will help Charlie reach the long-term goal you wrote for question No. 1. Remember to include the conditions in which the behavior is performed, the performance of a specific and observable behavior, the criteria for attainment or level of performance, and the evaluation procedure.

3. If you were on the evaluation team developing Charlie’s IFSP, what additional information would you like to know before creating the long-term goals and short-term objectives? What information would help you create better goals and objectives?