Using the SCERTS Model to guide practice with children with ASD

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Objectives

- Participants will be able to:
  - Use the SCERTS assessment-curriculum model for planning and monitoring intervention
  - Use the SCERTS model to guide practice for Philadelphia children with Autism under three years of age and their families
  - Fill out the Worksheet for determining Communication Stage, SAP-O, SAP Summary form, and the SCERTS objectives and SCERTS Family Support Plan and identify how these apply to practice with families.
SCERTS: Intervention Model

- Barry Prizant
- Amy Wetherby
- Emily Rubin
- Pat Rydell
- Amy Laurent

- www.brookespublishing.com

Slides were adopted from a presentation given in Philadelphia by Wetherby & Woods, 2006
SCERTS: Intervention Model

- S – Social
- C – Communication
- E – Emotional
- R – Regulation
- T – Transactional
- S - Support
Social Communication

• Joint Attention:
  – Capacity to coordinate and share attention and interest with another person

• Symbol Use:
  – Capacity to learn conventional or shared meanings of symbols
Core Challenges – Joint Attention

• Difficulty orienting and attending to a social partner and sharing emotion

• Difficulty coordinating attention between people and objects/events (engaging in intentional communication).
Core Challenges – Joint Attention

• Difficulty drawing another’s attention to objects or events for the purpose of sharing experiences.

• Difficulty reading/sharing affect, emotional states or perspectives
Core Challenges – Symbol Use

• Difficulty learning “shared” meanings for gestures and words (limitations in conventional gestures and symbolic language).

• Use of unconventional ways of communicating (echolalia, self injury)

• Difficulty pretending in play
Social Communication

How SCERTS addresses Joint Attention

• Supporting a child’s ability to orient to social stimuli and share emotion

• Supporting the transitions to intentional communication

• Supporting the range of communicative functions

• Supporting the development of inferential reasoning of emotional states and perspectives.
Social Communication

• How SCERTS addresses Symbol Use

• Supporting the transitions to conventional forms of communication

• Supporting the transition from pre-symbolic to symbolic forms of communication

• Supporting the transition from echolalic language to more creative linguistic communication
Emotional Regulation

- Emotional Regulation is a core developmental process underlying attention, arousal, and the establishment of social relationships.

  (Prizant, Wetherby, & Rydell, 2000).
Self Regulation vs. Mutual Regulation
(Prizant, Wetherby, Rydell, 2000).

• Self Regulation – The ability to attain an optimal level of arousal independently.

• Mutual Regulation – The ability to solicit and secure assistance from others in regulating one’s arousal.
The 4 A’s of Behavior
(Lester, Freier, & LaGrasse, 1995; Anzalone & Williamson, 2000).

• Careful observation of a child’s arousal level, attention, affect and actions can provide insight into the child’s internal experience of the social and physical world.

• Each “A” has a regulatory influence on and effects the other “A’s.”
Optimal State of Arousal
(Prizant, Wehterby, & Rydell, 2000)

• A state of being in which a child is focused, can problem solve, can communicate effectively, and benefit from learning opportunities in his/her environment.

• Coincides with demand of the social and physical environment.
Emotional Regulation

• Regulatory Capacities
  – Sensorimotor Level
    • Sucking, chewing, rocking, deep pressure
  – Cognitive Level
    • Predictable schedule, calming activity, information to reduce anxiety
Optimal State of Arousal

- Children with ASD typically have a narrow window of optimal arousal resulting in fluctuating responses to sensory input and variation in behavior secondary to poor self and mutual regulation of the 4 A’s.
Transactional Support

• Meaningful learning occurs within the social context of everyday activities and within trusting relationships.

• Optimize the back-and forth interaction between the child and parents/caregivers in his/her learning environment.
Transactional Support

• Interpersonal Supports

– Ways for parents/caregivers to adjust language use, emotional expression and interactive style that are effective in helping a child with ASD process language, participate in social interaction, and maintain well-regulated states
Transactional Support

• Learning Supports

– Ways for parents/caregivers to arrange the environment, structure activities, provide visual supports, and adapt or modify the curriculum to foster social communication and emotional regulation and support success in learning
SAP Domains & Components

• Social Communication
  – Joint attention
  – Symbol Use

• Emotional Regulation
  – Self Regulation
  – Mutual Regulation

• Transactional Support
  – Interpersonal Supports
  – Learning Supports
Determining the Communication Stage

- **Social Partner Stage**
  - Transition to communicating with a purpose or intent
  - Transition to conventional gestures and vocalizations

- **Language Partner Stage**
  - Transition to first words
  - Transition to word combinations and the vocabulary burst

- **Conversational Partner Stage**
  - Transition to sentence grammar
  - Transition to conversational discourse
Completing the SAP-O

• The scoring is divided into 4 quarters so that the same form may be used more than once.

• The scoring key is from 2 – 0
  – 2 – child performs skill consistently, 1 – child performs skill but inconsistently, 0 – child does not perform skill
Completing the SAP-O

• Read each statement and determine how the child is capable

  – There are definitions located for each statement starting on page 165 in volume one of the SCERTS manual
Completing the SAP Summary Form

• Integrated Information

• Assists in prioritizing goals and objectives

• Design a SCERTS Educational Program

• Ongoing Tracking/Progress Monitoring
Completing the SCERTS Objectives & Family Support Plan

• How SCERTS goals are selected:
  – Goals must be functional
  – Goals must address family priorities
  – Goals must be developmentally appropriate
Active Engagement

• Is the child well regulated?
• Is the child ready to communicate OR does the child have the opportunity to communicate?
• Is the child actively participating in a productive activity?
• Does the parent/caregiver provide a balance of support and demand within the activity?
By January 30, 2009

• Initial tapes
• Completed SAP-Os
• Progress summary
• Objectives
• Family Support Plans

All need to be mailed to Beth – use TLC mailing address
By February 27, 2009

- Tape #2
- Completed SAP-Os
- Progress summary
- Objectives
- Family Support Plans

All need to be mailed to Beth – use TLC mailing address
By March 27, 2009

- Tape #3
- Completed SAP-Os
- Progress summary
- Objectives
- Family Support Plans

All need to be mailed to Beth – use TLC mailing address
During April, 2009 – team prepares case study (one of 3 families you worked with) for presentation at ASD Group Meeting on May 5, 2009.

- Include snapshot of family context
- Video clips of family/child interaction
- Discuss intervention strategies and outcomes
- Comment on how SCERTS Model worked in this situation