



SUPPORTING A VARIETY OF PHYSICAL ABILITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES

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Everyone of us has a unique personality and capability. No one was born alike even twins. Wherever we go, we can meet someone with inimitable character whom we admire because of his skills. But have we consider Children with Physical Abilities? What about them? What can they do to make us proud of them?

In my place of work, especially our children at the primary level naturally enjoy music and movement. They begin reacting to music at an early age even our children with exceptionalities. In our country, we are not much aware of those disabilities unless it is declared by medical specialists but once we have found out some children with behavioral problems, we have to make sure that proper guidance, proper assessment, and proper activities are given to them to address the situation they are experiencing. Parents and teachers should be aware of what is happening to their children every day by taking down notes of the different routines that the child is doing in the classroom. It will help the adults to monitor the situation. Those are also the reasons why inclusion nowadays can be a great help for these children and the teachers as well to support their specific needs. They also need help from their peers.

How does movement make their life more meaningful inside the classroom? When they take part in music and movement activities, they are allowed to have fun, be creative, dance around, and burn off some energy. Children with exceptionalities are not left behind in preparing for their presentations in every program. During their rehearsals, every group is sitting in their room. Once they hear their music, the first group will perform while others are watching at a distance. They are so amazing because they know their music already. When

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they hear the music, everybody loves to move and dance. As they synchronize their movements with the music, the more they develop creativity and cooperation with each other.

I believe movement matters in the classroom, especially for children with exceptionalism. It develops brain rewiring for them through experiences. Therefore, the more sensory experiences they have, the faster the transmission will occur. The movement also helps them to process and react to incoming information they receive and make their memory work well. I witnessed a kid in one of the classes with level 2 autism and I saw that music and movement help him to develop comradeship with his peers. He has shown his talent in dancing and the most important learning I witnessed was language development. To a five-year-old autistic child who did not talk even before and is now learning to say some words from the lyrics of the song he always hears in the classroom is one of the best accomplishments for both teacher and parents. He is now responding to every instruction the teacher gives to him especially if movement is involved in the activity. The teacher always encourages him to join in songs during circle times, especially with action songs. When he wants the teacher to do something, the teacher plays dumb or pretends she doesn't understand what he wants. Sometimes, the teacher creates silly and unusual situations like putting his socks on the same foot or putting shoes on the wrong foot (left on right, right on left). That way, the teacher makes him work to communicate with her and show her what he wants through gestures or his movements. For other kids in the classroom, while it may not be noticeable to us adults as observers, these children may be working hard just to keep their bodies in their seats while the teachers are instructing the class. We can help these kids out by allowing movement before learning experiences like jumping on their spots, fidgeting, and everything that can release their energy so they are the readiest they can be to receive and process information. Handling children with exceptionalities is very crucial but with music and proper movement, everything will be just fine. It needs more patience and more knowledge to teach them how to release their energy especially if they have different exceptionalities.

Every child has a different learning style and pace. Each child is unique, not only capable of learning but also capable of succeeding - **Robert John Meehan**

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