

Children with disabilities using sign language



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Children with disabilities using sign language Children with disabilities using sign language A common aspect of children with disabilities is that they suffer from a complexity of spoken language, which leaves such children frustrated. However, through the application of sign language, such children can be assisted to develop language and communication, as well as social, emotional, and academic skills (Brereton, 2010). Through the application of sign language, the areas of brain that are associated with speech are stimulated, and the ability to acquire and apply expressive language and verbal ability is developed (Toth, 2009). Children with disabilities, such as those suffering from disorders like autism, experience impairments in memory, socialization, and communication. This way, such children will exhibit a delay in speech or receptive ability. Considering that, sign language uses manual communication and body language to convey a message, such visual and gestural characteristics serves to support the receptive and expressive language for children with disabilities (Simpson & Lynch, 2007). Additionally, the incorporation of visual and auditory aspects of sign language serves to make language more tangible for children with disabilities, thus enhancing their language and communication skills. Considering that speech, language, and communication activities are supported by the left hemisphere of the brain, then, the application of sign language serves to spur the growth of the brain in children, while increasing the level of activity in the left hemisphere. This adds the kinetic sense to the visual and the oral aspects of language acquisition, enhancing the communication and language base for children (Kelly, 2008). The application of sign language is also important for teaching children with disabilities, in that, the incorporation of movement and signs enhance the ability of such

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children to remember what they heard and saw, increasing their receptive and expressive abilities (Simpson & Lynch, 2007).

Most paramount of the application of sign language to teach children with disabilities is that, it allows a teacher to demonstrate using signs and symbols, while the learners keep imitating this. Eventually, the teacher allows the learners to imitate the signs and the symbols using their own words, an aspect that serves to enhance their language development (Simpson & Lynch, 2007). This case was observed at Grenloch School, where teachers adopted sign language for teaching children in all subjects. This application was observed to create enthusiasm in children, as they enjoyed learning through tangibles, an aspect that served to enhance greatly, their receptive and memory ability (Kelly, 2008). The application of sign language serves to increase comprehension and confidence in children with disabilities, in that it builds excitement over the use of tangible signs and objects.

Considering the inability of children with disabilities such as autism to acquire speech easily, then, the application of Argumentative and Alternative Communication, which replaces spoken language with the application of pictures, drawings, and symbols, is a major step towards enhancing their language and communication abilities (Toth, 2009). Through the application of sign language, children sees, hear and feel the words, thus associating such words with their physical characteristic, as represented by the signs and symbols, enhancing their ability to communicate using such words (Brereton, 2010).

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