

CASE STUDY- OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER

M, Age 3, Oppositional Defiant Disorder

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Name: M
Gender: Male
Chronological Age: 3 years, 7 months
Clinical Diagnosis: Oppositional Defiant Disorder

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

M was a full term baby born by cesarean delivery due to abnormal position, which caused the membrane to break. In addition, the umbilical cord was tangled. M slept very little during his early years. He always wanted to be rocked and held. His developmental milestones were accomplished in a normal time frame. His difficult behavior patterns started to concern his mom when he was asked to leave his second preschool because of his behavior.

M was a strong willed child who easily refused to do anything that was asked of him. His self-care skills were still developing. He was not potty trained and would not sleep by himself at night. He has average intelligence and his behavior was quite purposeful. His hyperactive aspects surface during oppositional phases. He has refused to pick up toys that he'd pull off shelves. He did not listen and would do what he wanted and when he wanted to.

M was diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD). Although oppositional behavior is often a normal part of development for two to three year olds, M was frequently openly uncooperative and hostile. His ongoing pattern of defiant and hostile behavior toward authority seriously interfered with his day-to-day functioning. M had frequent temper tantrums and refused to comply with adult requests and rules. M was easily annoyed by others and often blamed others for his mistakes or misbehavior. He made deliberate attempts to annoy or upset others. M was clearly spiteful and vindictive and often angry and resentful.

M had much difficulty staying focused on activities within the classroom. His short attention span made him easily distractible, especially by noise. Throughout the day, M would need repetition and clarification more than other children his age. He most definitely has difficulty establishing his personal space and physical boundaries. He often runs into others and bumps them roughly.

M was referred to Morris County EduCare & Enrichment Center because of the teachers' abilities to incorporate special needs students into their programs. He was assigned a private aid and joined the three-year-old class. He is going to begin receiving occupational therapy in July of 2005 to further assist with his sensory integration.

TREATMENT

Treatment methods began with M's private aid transitioning him into the preschool program by strictly following his IEP and providing 'break-away' time for M when he needed it. The Listening Program® (TLP) was chosen in order to provide M with some sense of grounding to his environment. The second goal was to improve attention and aggressive behavior. The purpose of The Listening Program was to help M maintain auditory attention, communication and social skills.

The Listening Program was the first treatment started with M since his diagnosis of ODD. The classroom teacher also made sure to build on the positives, to give him praise and positive reinforcement when he would show cooperation. The teacher made sure to prioritize the things she wanted M to do. She set up reasonable, age appropriate limits with consequences that could be enforced consistently. M began to respond to these positive techniques after participating in The Listening Program.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The Listening Program was easily integrated into M's day. While the children were in centers, M and others were given the choice of a listening center. Other children listened to stories on tape while M used this time to follow his TLP Base Schedule using the Classic Kit. Integrating The Listening Program this way created a positive experience for M. It enabled him to remain part of his class group yet work on skills he needed to attend to.

PRE/POST TLP

Before implementation of The Listening Program, the preschool child study team evaluated M. He was classified as having Oppositional Defiant Disorder. It was recommended for his mother to attend parenting classes and begin enrollment at EduCare with a private aid.

After CD #2, M began to have less difficulty staying focused. He became less distractible by noise and much less sensitive to certain sounds of his classroom environment.

By CD #4, M was showing more interest in class work dealing with letters and sounds. He was becoming better at discriminating sounds. He was improving tremendously with attending to the work that was expected of his preschool class. He no longer showed sleepiness or tiredness when listening to the teachers.

By the time M reached CD #7, he showed an improved sense of balance and coordination. He demonstrated an improved sense of personal space and physical boundaries. This was of great help for M in making new friends and playing with his peers. M also showed improvements in rhythm and movement activities. Instead of just jumping around, his movements seemed to be having purpose.

M still has tendencies to exhibit some hyperactivity but at a minimum. He now is more able to settle himself down. He has responded extremely well to TLP. M received an evaluation for occupational therapy and qualified for services before beginning TLP. He was not involved in any specific activities to improve his motor skills while participating in TLP; however, he has made great gains in his sense of personal boundaries and fidgeting as well as becoming less clumsy. He has benefited immensely from The Listening Program.

Listening Checklist

Referring to the Pre and Post Listening Checklist, the following skills went from always to rarely: Difficulty staying focused, short attention span, easily distractible, over sensitivity to certain sounds, misinterprets questions or requests.

The following skills went from often to rarely: Difficulty in sound discrimination, confuses similar sounding words, needs repetition and clarification more than usual, poor short- term memory, tires easily, and becomes sleepy when listening to speakers.

The following went from sometimes to rarely: Difficulty recalling exact word usage, sings out of tune, difficulty summarizing a story, difficulty relating isolated facts.

The following difficulties were not noted at all after participating in The Listening Program: Inadequate sense of personal space and or physical boundaries, fidgeting, clumsiness, poor sense of rhythm, and timing of movement.

M's greatest improvements are his self-regulation skills and his ability to settle down considerably.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

Perhaps the most evident of all changes that have been observed in M since beginning TLP came from one parent's observations upon leaving one evening. The parent came into the office and complimented our staff on notable improvements in M's behavior. She said, "Boy, you guys have certainly done wonders with that boy." That was only after week three. Also, after just beginning TLP, M started to walk out of the building each night by his mother's side. When he started in our preschool program, he was known for darting down the hallway and getting running hard ahead so she could not catch him.

Improvements in M's ability to attend to Circle Time have also been demonstrated since participating in TLP. M now can sit with his peers and participate in Circle Time. He also brings projects home and completes work on letters and numbers.

FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that M continue with TLP on a Base Schedule because he has made so many nice changes already. Since M is so receptive to TLP and often asks to "do listening ears". Additional listening will take place using the Sensory Integration Kids CD. We will experiment with open air delivery in the classroom to further promote and support the self-regulation and grounding M has demonstrated and then move on to headphones.

DISCUSSION

M's participation in TLP was definitely a rewarding experience for him and his mom. Staff and other clients recognized notable improvements in his behavior in a relative short amount of time. He has made gains in listening, attention, and focusing as well. During this time when he was involved in TLP, M improved in all areas of development including self-help skills. M became potty-trained. Because of M's positive involvement in TLP, he will benefit from continued work with the program to help maintain his gains and assist with continued positive change.

SUMMARY OF PRE AND POST TEST RESULTS

M has only been evaluated by the preschool child study team. Pre and post comparisons are based on observed behaviors. Hopefully, because M is young and so receptive to The Listening Program, by the time he enters Kindergarten, he will have become more attentive and less aggressive.