

Deep Dive Session 4

Practical Tips & Strategies to Enhance Inclusion in the General Education Classroom



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Today, efforts to include students with disabilities in the general education classroom is at the forefront of many educational efforts. Sadly, students with Down syndrome are excluded from these efforts at a much higher percentage than students with other disabilities.

Yet, across the country, we see examples of students with Down syndrome flourishing in the general education classroom. This session will focus on instructional strategies that parents and family members can use to support inclusion of students with Down syndrome in the general education setting. Participants will learn how to plan, design, develop, accommodate, and apply these strategies. Focused on the parent or family member, participants will also learn about proven practices all educators implement when supporting students with Down syndrome. Together, we will explore effective practices for reading, writing, mathematics, content-area classes, executive functioning, and other areas of need that are often raised as barriers to inclusion.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to identify and understand how effective practices can be used to further promote inclusion in the general education classroom.
2. Participants will learn how to collaborate with their educational team to facilitate the implementation of these strategies into a student with Down syndrome's learning experience.
3. Participants will understand the essential elements of inclusionary practices and how to promote those at home and in school settings to further inclusion for students with Down syndrome.

Sean J. Smith, Ph.D., is a Professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas and also an Associate Researcher in the Center for Research on Learning. He is also the Past-President of the technology division for the Council for Exceptional Children, Innovations in Special Education Technology (ISET), and member of the Board for the National Down syndrome Congress. Dr. Smith's research interest focus on innovations and technology solutions to support struggling learners and those with disabilities, particularly interventions aligned with the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework. At present, Dr. Smith is the Principal Investigator on a federally funded project exploring the impact of virtual reality on struggling learners in the area of social emotional development. Dr. Smith, with a variety of collaborators, has received and managed over \$25 million of external research and development funds.

Mitchel C. Rothholz, R. Ph., MBA, is the father of Evan, a nine-year old boy with Down syndrome, who has brought a new perspective to him and his family, and is thriving thanks to the support of family, friends and community. Mitch is a pharmacist currently serving as Chief Strategy Officer for the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) dedicated to improving access to and coverage of pharmacists' patient care services, improving vaccination rates, and advocating for individuals with disabilities so that they can access quality and inclusive education, healthcare, employment and community living.