



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Engaging with People Impacted by
Intellectual and Developmental
Disabilities

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**Child Abuse & Neglect Conference:
Prevention, Assessment, and Treatment
October 21-22, 2019**

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About me/About you

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Today's Purpose

What we will discuss

What we won't discuss

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What is I/DD?

Impairments of mental ability or adaptive functioning in three areas:

- Conceptual Domain
- Social Domain
- Practical Domain

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The Conceptual Domain

- Language
- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- Reasoning
- Knowledge
- Memory



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The Social Domain

- Empathy
- Social judgment
- Interpersonal communication skills
- The ability to make and retain friendships



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The Practical Domain

- Personal care
- Job responsibilities
- Money management
- Recreation
- Organizing school and work tasks



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Severity

Mild

Moderate

Severe

Profound

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What do we know about child protection and I/DD?

How are children impacted?

What do we know about parents?

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What are our responsibilities?

- Americans with Disabilities ACT(ADA) and reasonable accomodations
- Michigan Comp. Laws § 712A.18f: reasonable efforts to preserve and reunify the family
- Ethical Obligations
 - Social Workers
 - 1.02 Self-Determination
 - 1.03 Informed Consent
 - Lawyers
 - Michigan rules of professional conduct rule 1.14: Client Under a Disability

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What are barriers/challenges of engaging with people impacted I/DD?

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A word on language

How do we talk about I/DD?

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What accommodations do you currently make for I/DD?

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Concrete tools to implement into practice

- Structure space
- Consistency of time
- Consistency of staff
- Chunk information
- Pre-post meetings
- Observations of parent/child in a natural setting, over a long period of time

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Written materials

- 11-14 font Size
- Plain font
- Dark Ink, avoid red or orange
- Light colored paper
- Increase use of blank space

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Communication routines

- Talk slowly, and repeat yourself
- Be very clear and specific in your language
- Sarcasm and subtle humor is often missed
- Wait for the answer....
- Ask the person to repeat their understanding
- Try visual aids
- Schedule additional meetings
- Set clear boundaries for people repeatedly interacting with you. For example, "Thanks for stopping by. If you want to chat, please make an appointment first."

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What are the qualities of the practitioner?

- Available and accessible, convey understanding, and not patronize
- Friendly and helpful
- Person first
- Honest and straightforward: reduces confusion

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In Practice: Active Listening

Nonverbal Listening Skills

Reflective Listening Skills

Empathic Listening Skills

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Nonverbal Listening Skills

- Eye contact
- Head nodding
- Body Posture

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Reflective Listening Skills

- Repeating the person's statements
- Paraphrasing
- Summarizing
- Open ended questions
- Ask them to repeat back their understanding

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Empathic Listening Skills

- Acknowledge the person's feelings
- Show support and care
- Attitude of non-judgement

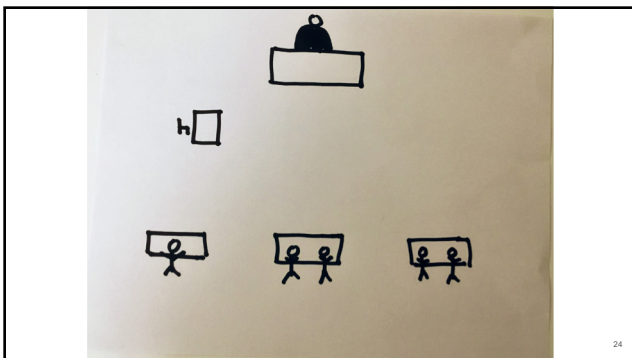
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Here's a quick story

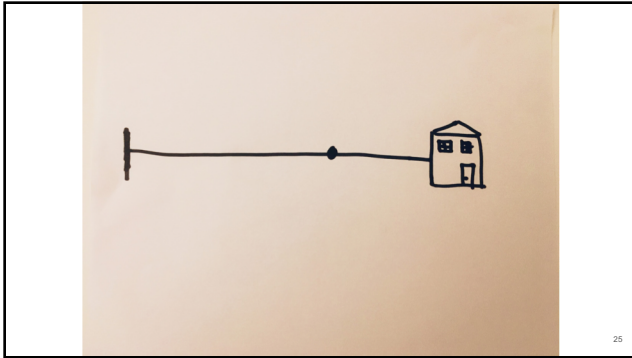
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Role Play

For the practitioner:

- Engage: make a plan
- Create a visual aid to use as a counseling technique
- Agree to next steps
- Give the client a document summarizing next steps

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The Tasks

- Actively listen
- Ask what the parent wants, figure out the barriers
- Clear and specific
- Break down complex parts into manageable chunks
- Be ready to redirect

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What is one step you can incorporate into your practice?

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