

INTEGRATED PLAY GROUPS DESIGN TOOL
Integrated Play Groups Action Plan

Formulate an IPG action plan for a child you wish to support in Integrated Play Groups. With members of your team, conduct the corresponding field exercises.

Integrated Play Groups Team	
Form a team; designate roles and primary responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play Guide • Assistant Guide • Key Consultants • IPG Coordinator 	
Set up regular team meetings/task force	
Gathering and Preparing the Players	
Determine how you will recruit the players and secure permission	
Choose novice players 1. 2.	Choose expert players 1. 2. 3. 4. Alternates
Design and implement awareness and orientation activities to prepare the players (Field Exercises 1-2)	
Preparing the Play Setting	
Choose a venue	
Decide where to set up the play area	
Select and gather basic and theme-based play materials (Field Exercises 3-4)	
Design and set up the play area (Field Exercise 5)	
Structuring the Play Session	
Establish meeting times for play groups	
Design a personalized play group schedule (Field Exercise 6)	
Establish play group rules (Field Exercise 7)	
Design opening and closing rituals (Field Exercise 8)	
Design activities to foster a group identity (Field Exercise 9)	
Other Planning Issues	
Securing administrative support	
Soliciting and raising funds	
Conducting awareness programs	
Recruiting staff, interns, volunteers	

Wolfberg, P. J. (2003). *Peer play and the autism spectrum: The art of guiding children's socialization and imagination*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

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IPG Program and Environmental Design Evaluation (Part I)

Play Guide:

Novice Player(s):

Date of Evaluation:

Reflect on how you are addressing the following while customizing Integrated Play Groups for each novice player.

Design Component	Considerations	Comments
Play Group Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group size: 3 to 5 players • Ratio of expert to novice players 	
Compatible Players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Age • Development and ability • Temperament, play, social style • Play interests • Primary language • Siblings 	
Recruitment of Players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact peers within natural social network • Get to know players • Solicit recommendations • Hold try-outs • Extend invitations • Obtain permission – informed consent 	
Preparation of Players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism – diversity awareness • Play group orientation 	
Suitable Venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural integrated setting – school, community, therapy, home • Consistent play space • Other play spaces 	
Play Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size restriction/spatial density • Clearly defined boundaries • Explicit organization • Limited distractions • Activity/theme-based arrangements 	
Selection of Play Materials	<p>Wide range manipulation-sensory, functional-constructive, sociodramatic toys/props:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High motivational value • Developmentally/age-appropriate • High social potential • High imaginative potential • Representing diversity • Nonviolent • Safe and durable 	

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IPG Program and Environmental Design Evaluation (Part II)

Play Guide:

Novice Player(s):

Date of Evaluation:

Reflect on how you are addressing the following while customizing Integrated Play Groups for each novice player.

Design Component	Considerations	Comments
Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting times: 30- to 60-minute sessions/twice weekly • Personalized (visual) schedules 	
Play Group Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worded in positive terms • Understood by players • Clearly displayed 	
Opening Rituals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather in same play space • Present visual sequence of play session • Express greeting • Review rules • Recap • Highlight strategies • Make a plan to get started in play 	
Closing Rituals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to visual sequence of play session • Clean up • Gather in same play space • Review • Plan for next session • Share a snack/special treat • Say good-bye 	
Group Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play group name • Poster-logo • Signals, passwords, chants, cheers • Play group story books • Cooperative activities 	

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