

Adapted Education Program for Students With a Profound Intellectual Impairment



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**Trial Version
October 2005**

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Part One The Student

Part One

The Student

DEFINITION OF STUDENTS WITH A PROFOUND INTELLECTUAL IMPAIRMENT

When this document refers to students with a profound intellectual impairment, it is using this term as it is defined by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport in the document entitled *Students with Handicaps, Social Maladjustments or Learning Difficulties: Definitions*:

"Students are deemed to have a moderate to profound intellectual impairment when the evaluation of their cognitive functioning by a multidisciplinary team using standardized tests shows a level of general functioning that is clearly below average, as well as impaired adaptive behaviour appearing from the beginning of the development period."¹

"An intellectual impairment is qualified as 'profound' when a functional evaluation shows that a student displays:

- ▶ major limitations in the area of cognitive development making attainment of the objectives of the ordinary program of studies impossible and requiring the use of an adapted education program

- ▶ manifestly limited perceptual, motor and communication skills, requiring individualized methods of evaluation and stimulation
- ▶ very low functional abilities in the area of personal and social autonomy, with a constant need for support and supervision to accomplish daily school tasks

A functional evaluation may show that the student has related impairments, such as physical disabilities and sensory impairments, neurological or psychological disorders and a strong susceptibility to various diseases."²

When the result obtained on a development scale or on a standardized test of cognitive functioning reveals a development quotient below 20 to 25, it is generally considered to be a sign of a profound intellectual impairment. (The development quotient is the statistical difference between the observed developmental age and the chronological age.)

The severity of the developmental delay is often related to the presence of various anomalies or related impairments. The possibility that many different types of impairments of varying degrees of severity can be present along with the intellectual impairment makes this category of students very heterogeneous.

DISABILITY CREATION PROCESS

When describing educational activities offered to students with a profound intellectual impairment, it is essential to understand how disabilities are created. The model used here is the one developed by the Comité québécois sur la classification internationale des déficiences, incapacités et handicaps.³

To clarify the concepts used in this model, each concept will be defined and illustrated with an example.

Cause

"A cause is a risk factor that has effectively led to a disease, trauma or any other disruption to a person's integrity or development."⁴

A congenital or acquired anomaly occurring in an individual constitutes a risk factor. One example would be a baby born lacking oxygen. This lack becomes the cause of an impairment if it harms the nervous system. Parents generally notice the situation quickly and consult specialists, who confirm the impairment.

1. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Students with Handicaps, Social Maladjustments or Learning Difficulties: Definitions* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2000), 13.

2. Ibid., p. 14.

3. P. Faugeyrollas et al., *The Quebec Classification, Disability Creation Process* (Lac St-Charles, Québec: RIPPH/SCCIDIH, 1998).

4. Ibid., p. 34.

Impairment

“An impairment refers to the degree of anatomical, histological or physiological anomaly or alteration of an organic system.”⁵

For example, if the nervous system has been affected on the level of the cerebral cortex, this can result in an impairment to the bone or joint system, motor coordination problems, posture or balance problems, or significant delays in cognitive functioning.

Disability

“A disability results from a partial or total reduction in a person’s capability to accomplish basic or elementary activities according to age, gender and functional norm in the human reference group.”⁶

For example, impairments detected in certain individuals can result in severe disabilities (in terms of locomotion, verbal language, distinct pronunciation of sounds, or sphincter control), as well as difficulty feeding themselves and performing activities involving basic mental processes.

Environmental factors

There are two types of environmental factors: social and physical.

Social factors include attitudes and perceptions of others. Physical factors relate to the manner in which educational and rehabilitation services are organized, and include access to various facilities and technical aids, as well as adaptation of tasks.

Obstacle

“An obstacle refers to an environmental factor that hinders the accomplishment of life habits when interacting with personal factors (impairments, disabilities and other characteristics of a person).”⁷

For example, standard furniture or materials can become obstacles that prevent the person from carrying out basic daily activities. It is thus crucial to identify obstacles so that facilitators can be put in place to assist the person in various life situations.

Facilitator

“A facilitator refers to an environmental factor that contributes to the accomplishment of life habits when interacting with personal factors.”⁸

Examples of facilitators would be using a communication board or a resource person to facilitate communication.

Handicap situation

“A handicap situation refers to the reduced accomplishment of life habits, resulting from the interaction between personal factors (impairments, disabilities and other personal characteristics) and environmental factors (facilitators and obstacles).”⁹

For example, individuals with an impairment end up in a handicap situation if nothing is done to help them overcome the obstacles. A handicap situation is the result of a dynamic process that brings into play various factors relating to the person and the environment. It is opposed to a “social participation situation,” in which the person is able to perform the actions required to carry out daily life habits. Life habits include not only personal activities essential to maintaining life, but also activities of daily living, such as household tasks.

Education geared to attenuating handicaps

The big pedagogical challenge is to determine how to act on the elements of the dynamic in order to attenuate, slow down or even reverse the process that produces a disability, and thereby reduce the disability. A student with one or more disabilities and limited aptitudes frequently encounters obstacles in the physical and social environment.

5. Ibid., p. 34.

6. Ibid., p. 35.

7. Ibid., p. 35.

8. Ibid., p. 35.

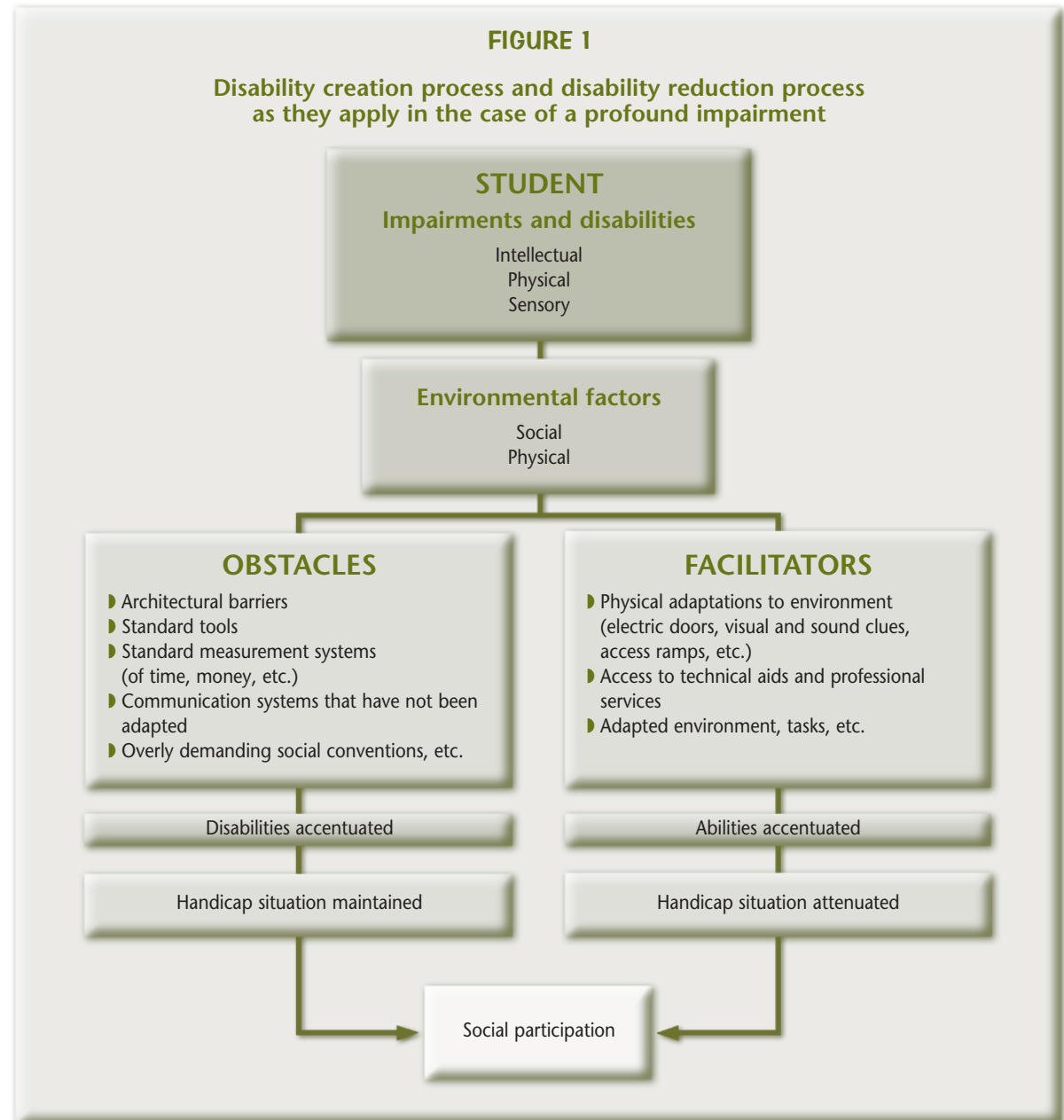
9. Ibid., p. 36.

By adapting interventions, materials, and task organization, disabilities can be attenuated, thus enabling the student to acquire the necessary skills to be autonomous and enjoy greater social participation.

If no adaptations are made, the student must try to comply with conventional behaviour models, and will find it difficult if not impossible to carry out the desired physical or mental activity. The inability to act in a way that meets the needs of the situation will give rise to a handicap and place the student in a position that hampers social participation.

If, on the other hand, situations are adapted to the student by eliminating or attenuating a certain number of obstacles, there is a greater chance that despite his or her limitations, the student will develop the skills needed to carry out that same activity adequately. The disability will be proportionately diminished, and the handicap situation will be attenuated, enabling the student to enjoy increased social participation.

Figure 1 presents the disability creation process and the disability reduction process, as they apply in a case of a profound impairment.



CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF STUDENTS

COGNITIVE ASPECT

Inhelder¹⁰ observed that children with an intellectual impairment go through the same stages of cognitive development as other children, and often in the same order, but they progress at a different rate. Students with a profound intellectual impairment generally function at the level of sensorimotor intelligence, although they may have some openness to symbolic thought, especially if they have no related deficits.

Laval defines sensorimotor intelligence as a practical type of intelligence related to action and maintains that these actions enable children to construct and structure reality progressively.¹¹ Thus the children acquire object permanence, and develop concepts of space and time as well as cause and effect.

When children subsequently become open to symbolic thought, they must relearn at the level of thought what they learned at the level of action. This long and gradual progression from actions to operations requires that children be able to form a mental representation of action.¹² This progression, which takes place mainly by developing representations of reality using signs and symbols, coincides with the appearance of behaviours such as deferred imitation and symbolic play. This new, more intuitive approach to reality puts children on the path to logical thinking, but it remains dependent on their perception of reality. They do not have a complete

representation, even though they have preliminary knowledge. This stage is deemed to be preoperational.

Appendix I presents a brief description of the different stages of cognitive development, which must be interpreted flexibly depending on the specific situation. For example, students with a profound intellectual impairment present heterogeneous strengths, and have limitations caused mainly by related deficits and by their difficulty interacting with the environment. These factors alter the intelligence development process. This process may not develop in the usual sequence or in a linear fashion. Moreover, certain older students may develop abilities beyond sensorimotor intelligence, but may still fall into the statistical category classifying them as having a profound intellectual impairment.

Students with a profound intellectual impairment may be functioning at one of the six stages of development of sensorimotor intelligence. However, at certain periods in their development, they may have to learn behaviours relating to two stages at once, for example, learning to transfer an object from one hand to another (stage 2), and placing small objects in a container (stage 5).

Although the vast majority of these students function at the level of sensorimotor intelligence, they may also develop skills and knowledge beyond what sensorimotor intelligence permits. Certain interventions enable students to get around their related deficits, thereby increasing their ability to demonstrate their skills and find methods of accommodation.

The potential for students to acquire knowledge and skills beyond what is generally expected of them is also present if their learning mode is taken into account. They generally learn by experimenting with motor behaviours and associative intelligence. However, the knowledge and skills acquired will be derived from this mode of learning by association, and will therefore not necessarily lead to mastery of concepts but will generally remain contextual.

To maximize their intellectual potential, students will need support from an adult in the learning environment, as well as individualized learning, and an environment adapted to their ability to interact. Learning activities should give students ample opportunities for manipulation, exploration and experimentation. As they use these strategies and interact with their environment, students will acquire knowledge of the world around them.

10. Bärbel Inhelder, *Le diagnostic du raisonnement chez les débiles mentaux* (Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1963).

11. Virginie Laval, *La psychologie du développement : modèles et méthodes* (Éditions Armand Colin, 2002), 18.

12. Ibid., 21.

NEEDS

Support from an adult

- ▶ Assisting the student in his/her attempts to organize and formulate the expected response
- ▶ Helping the student to apply behaviours learned in different contexts and, if possible, to generalize application of these behaviours

Individualized, supported learning

- ▶ Taking into account each student's specific characteristics
- ▶ Helping the student learn things that will be useful and functional
- ▶ Using learning strategies such as exploration, manipulation, experimentation, awareness-raising, discrimination, and association exercises

Environment

- ▶ Rich in stimulation
- ▶ Structured and stable to promote development of perception and discrimination processes in the student
- ▶ Organized in a way that enables the student to make choices and have a certain amount of control
- ▶ Organized in a way that allows for adaptations conducive to learning

COMMUNICATION ASPECT

Most students with a profound intellectual impairment are very low functioning in terms of communication skills. Few of them use speech, and most use very simple methods of communicating. When these students want to express a request, discomfort or annoyance, they tend to yell, cry, smile, extend their arms, make sounds, or move about.

It is inconceivable that these students could spend whole days without needing to communicate. Communication is an essential part of living in society. To satisfy this need, students must have access to adapted methods of communication so they can be heard and understood. Although receptive communication is more frequently solicited from such students than expressive communication, both must be developed.

To develop communication skills in students with a profound intellectual impairment, people in their environment should use every available opportunity to communicate with them during daily activities, and give them the chance to express themselves.

NEEDS

Individualized, supported learning

- ▶ Communication methods adapted to each student's physical, sensory and cognitive abilities (for example, a student unable to use verbal language for communication should be offered technical aids such as pictographic, gestural or tactile systems)
- ▶ Exercises that promote acquisition of communication methods adapted to each student

Environment

- ▶ Organized to enable the student to communicate as frequently as possible
- ▶ Set up to give the student reasons to communicate, and to encourage him/her to play an active role

AFFECTIVE ASPECT

Students with a profound intellectual impairment have an affective side that includes individual needs, emotions and motivations. In the affective realm, it is important to pay particular attention to the emotional and motivational dimensions of students.

For a long time, little consideration has been given to what people with a profound intellectual impairment may be feeling. Unfortunately, not much research has been done on this topic. What is known is that they can feel most emotions, although these may be expressed in the individual's particular way. According to Corcoran,¹³ the main factors that delay the affective development of these individuals are perceptual difficulties, inopportune attitudes and reactions from people in their environment, and approaches that aim solely to eliminate socially inappropriate expression of emotion. The combination of these factors can significantly delay or even prevent emotional development.

Since students with a profound intellectual impairment are often dealing with the frustrations caused by their disabilities, they experience a significant level of emotional stress. One of the main causes of that stress is no doubt the lack of control they have over their lives. They are often unable to participate in decisions concerning them, which means that they have to live with the consequences of the choices made by others on their behalf. Unfortunately, the adults who make those decisions often forget to consider the emotional impact of their decisions on students.

Despite the difficulties that these individuals experience in trying to have a satisfying affective life, they do feel emotions but usually express them in inappropriate ways. According to L'Abbé and Morin,¹⁴ the difficulties that individuals with an intellectual impairment experience in expressing feelings (e.g. anger or frustration), making their wishes known, or resolving a problem, can lead to aggressiveness.

People in their environment sometimes react without fully comprehending the situation, by focusing on controlling the behaviour without trying to understand the emotion causing it. People tend to forget that emotions do not just happen by accident, but are related to a sensation, a person, a situation, or a specific object to which the subject gives a positive or negative value that will influence his or her social interaction. Thus, affective and emotional development is not a short-term proposition for students with an intellectual impairment, or for the general public for that matter.

Students therefore need help from an adult, as well as individualized, supported learning, to develop varied areas of interest, to learn to recognize their needs and emotions, identify them, distinguish them from one another, and express them. This type of learning will maximize students' affective development.

NEEDS

Support from an adult

- ▶ Helping the student express needs and emotions while allowing him/her to have experiences leading to both pleasant and unpleasant emotions, and helping him/her learn how to manage unpleasant situations
- ▶ Helping the student to develop new and broader areas of interest
- ▶ Helping the student make the link between emotions and expression of emotions, by providing tools for doing so, and offering interpretations of his/her behaviours

Individualized, supported learning

- ▶ Interventions designed to help the student identify his/her emotions and provide cues (gestures, postures, reflecting back the behaviour or body image, etc.) to help him/her understand and express the emotions that reflect his/her affective state

13. James R. Corcoran, "Affect abilities training: a competency base method for counselling persons with mental retardation," *Journal of Corder Education* (June 1982), 301-311.

14. Y. L'abbé and D. Morin, *Comportements agressifs et retard mental : compréhension et intervention* (Eastman: Behaviora, 1999).

SOCIAL ASPECT

Students with a profound intellectual impairment exhibit social interactions that are limited, difficult to understand, and rarely self-initiated. They are more likely to rely on adults than on peers to satisfy their social needs.

These students have limited social skills and may also have socially inappropriate behaviours that negatively affect the quality of their interactions. They take a long time to acquire new social skills and change socially inappropriate behaviours. They may need repeated demonstrations of the desired behaviours, and numerous opportunities to practise, before they can develop an attitude of openness toward others.

Throughout their development, these students need to be stimulated and guided to interact with the human environment. Each student requires individualized, supported learning to develop the skills needed for social participation.

NEEDS

Support from an adult

- ▶ Helping the student in his/her attempts to interact with the human environment

Individualized, supported learning

- ▶ Pedagogical interventions geared to acquisition of new social skills
- ▶ Practice activities to consolidate the social skills acquired
- ▶ Pedagogical interventions enabling the student to socialize in different situations of daily life
- ▶ Interventions to reeducate the student to change socially inappropriate behaviours

PHYSICAL AND MOTOR ASPECT

Neurological, genetic and other types of disorders are frequently observed in some students with a profound intellectual impairment. These disorders affect their overall development, their capacity for awareness (in the case of epilepsy), their attitudes (tendency to withdraw and be apathetic), and their behaviours (mannerisms, stereotypy, self-stimulation and self-mutilation). These disorders can result in significant motor limitations, sensory impairments, or precarious physical health.

Significant motor limitations

Many students with a profound intellectual impairment have severe motor limitations. Neurological conditions and muscular or osteoarticular subluxations such as hypotonia, hypertonia and spasticity have significant effects on limb mobility, vision, speech and hearing. Other effects include greater fatigability, restricted freedom of movement, difficulty to act on the environment, problems uncovering their actual potential, and discomfort or even intense pain.

Involuntary movements of the arms, legs or head can make it difficult if not impossible for them to make movements that seem very simple, such as repositioning themselves on a chair. Their lack of manual dexterity and difficulty coordinating movements make it very difficult for them to carry out the simplest functional gestures, such as carrying food to their mouth or moving an object. Their balance is also precarious, both while moving and while stationary. For certain students this results in total or partial dependence with respect to locomotion.

Motor skills are required to carry out even the simplest daily tasks. They are an integral part of the learning dynamic. By getting different parts of the body involved, students are able to perceive stimuli and react to them. Their physical responses are the concrete manifestation of the information decoding and organizing process in which they are engaged.

Many students are dependent to varying degrees with respect to daily activities related to eating, personal hygiene, mobility, and other everyday activities. Their intellectual and physical limitations restrict their ability to carry out activities essential to maintaining life, sometimes to a serious degree.

Students often require help to meet their basic needs. The care provided to them can be turned into a learning opportunity when it is given with an educational objective. For example, an adult can help the student to drink while at the same time teaching the student to hold the glass.

Related sensory impairments

Some students with a profound intellectual impairment also have a partial or total visual or auditory impairment. These sensory impairments are not necessarily apparent, and may take time to be diagnosed. Diagnosing them may be difficult because of students' intellectual and motor disabilities. Such impairments severely limit students in the five major areas of development: motricity, communication, affectivity, knowledge and socialization.

Sensory impairments and dysfunctions result in severe difficulties in collecting and processing information. These dysfunctions (hyposensitivity, hypersensitivity and interference) can also lead to partial or fragmented information gathering.

The other senses (smell, touch and taste) may also be altered. Although such disorders are difficult to perceive and quantify, they should still be taken into account, because these senses are important in situations where the student is manipulating objects and exploring.

Precarious physical health

Students with a profound intellectual impairment are more liable to have or contract various diseases (heart, lung and digestive problems, asthma, ear-aches, epilepsy, etc.). These health problems often oblige them to take medication and receive treatments that reduce their alertness and attention, and increase fatigability and stress. Absenteeism sometimes results, affecting the continuity of learning and the regularity of interventions.

When students have motor limitations, sensory impairments or precarious health, they need support from an adult, individualized and supported learning, therapeutic exercises and care, and learning activities and technical aids to overcome their motor impairments and accomplish activities essential to life.

NEEDS

Support from an adult

- ▶ Helping the student meet basic needs (eating, drinking, washing, etc.)
- ▶ Helping the student carry out a movement
- ▶ Helping the student with mobility
- ▶ Helping the student become aware of sensations (discomfort versus well-being)

Individualized, supported learning

- ▶ Providing individualized exercises to help the student learn to feed himself/herself, go to the bathroom, move about, dress and undress
- ▶ Helping the student learn skills to compensate for sensory and motor impairments

Therapeutic exercises and care

- ▶ Frequent changes in position to help the student breathe and be comfortable and to enable him/her to interact with the environment
- ▶ Exercises to strengthen muscles and reduce muscle tension
- ▶ Specialized medical care for certain health problems
- ▶ Regular verification of orthotic devices, posture seats, etc. to ensure the student's comfort and well-being

NEEDS (CONT.)

Technical aids

- Technical aids for mobility (wheelchair, walker, etc.)
- Technical posture aids for seated position
- Technical aids to support limbs to avoid contractures and deformations

SERVICES ADAPTED TO STUDENTS' NEEDS

Students with a profound intellectual impairment have many special needs. They need increasingly specialized, diversified services relating to physical, medical, behavioural and cognitive needs. They also have very specific needs with respect to personal development and their relationships with others and the environment.

Schools must therefore use teaching techniques that take into account the specific characteristics of these students, and must plan special educational services for the full range of needs. These services differ from those generally offered in schools since they must be geared specifically to students' needs. Because the services these students require are directly linked to the learning content of the adapted education program, they constitute excellent intervention opportunities that must be fully utilized.

The services required by these students cover three areas: education, well-being and care. These services are generally offered through complementary service agreements between the health and social services system and the education system.

Figure 2 shows the relationship between these services and the adapted education program.

Education

This aspect relates to the learning accomplished by students. The primary objective of interventions is to acquire the six competencies described in this adapted education program of the Ministère de l'Éducation.

Having a student manipulate and classify objects, or move his or her wheelchair, or point to a picture to express a request or choice constitutes a learning situation. The remedial interventions that are frequently necessary can also become learning situations. For example, remedial activities requiring movement of the head also provide an opportunity to strengthen the muscles and develop communication skills.

Well-being

The primary objective of services relating to well-being is to increase the student's receptivity to learning and his or her environment. Although interventions relating to well-being can have explicit learning objectives, they are primarily designed to put the student in an optimal state to allow development of all the competencies set forth in the adapted education program.

Varying the student's position to avoid discomfort and pain is an example of an intervention designed to ensure well-being. This same intervention also gives the student the opportunity to perceive his or her environment from a different perspective.

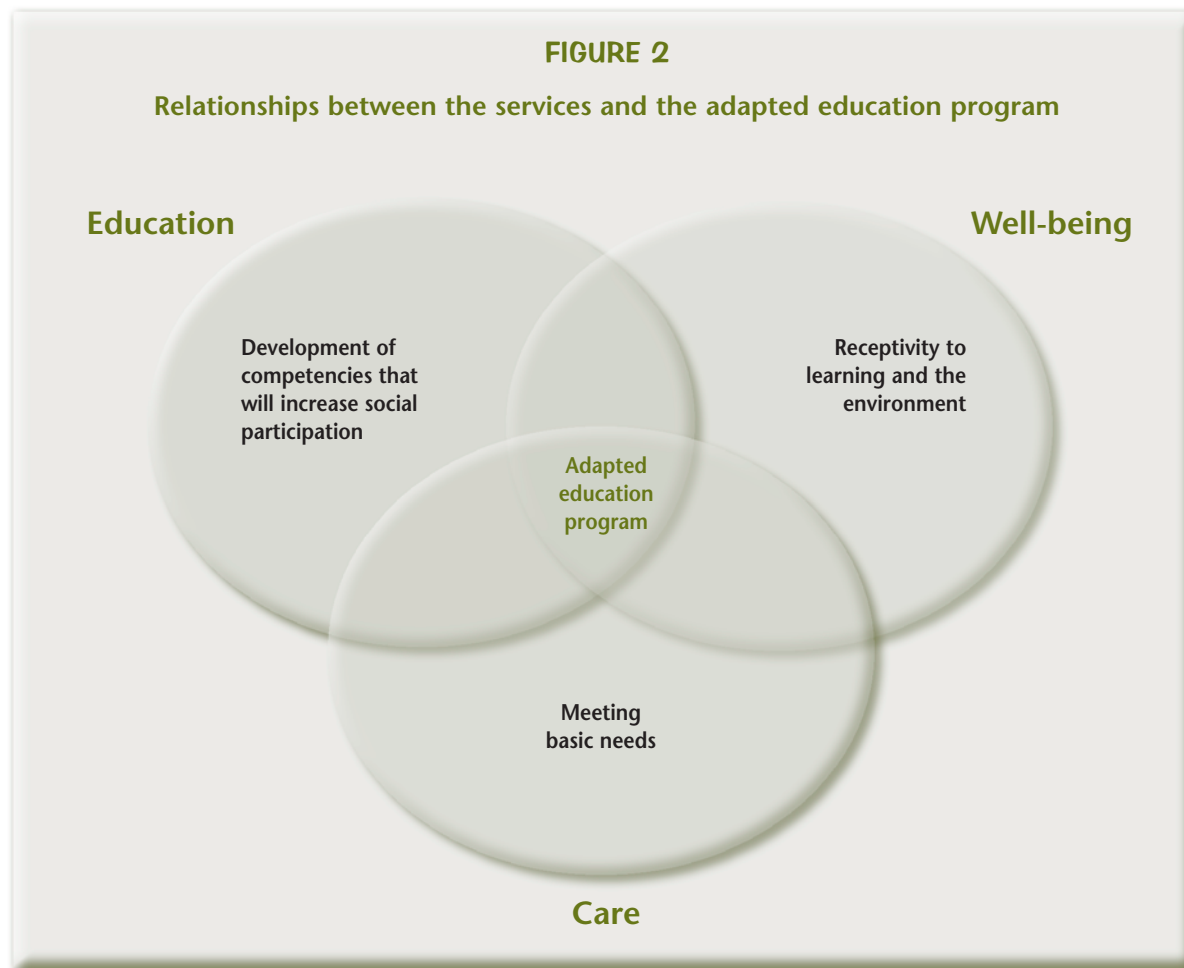
Care

The objective of these services is to satisfy the student's basic needs with respect to hygiene, eating and dressing, and to apply any necessary medical care protocols. Providing care contributes to the student's well-being and fosters the development of competencies.

For a student who is dependent, feeding is a care situation that can become a learning opportunity (learning to establish eye contact with the adult or make a request, etc.).

FIGURE 2

Relationships between the services and the adapted education program



Throughout each student's schooling, he or she needs services relating to education, well-being and care. There is no hierarchy for these services; they are complementary and indissociable. The interventions carried out by the various resource persons are not restricted to one area. Intervention with students who have a profound intellectual impairment

emphasizes collaboration between the different life environments (family, school, community, etc.). Parents, teachers, nonteaching professionals, support staff and the school principal all play important roles in the education community. By joining forces and sharing their skills, these partners can organize a service structure to meet the full range of students'

needs. Intervention priorities are established based on the type, frequency and extent of each student's needs. As these services are provided, ongoing changes will occur in the student. The resource persons must be attentive to these changes in order to adjust the intervention plan to the student's needs.

The way in which services are provided to persons with disabilities has been influenced by several schools of thought, and has thus evolved over time. First there was the philosophy of normalization (Bengt and Nirje, 1969), then integration (Reynolds and Birch, 1988), and then social role valorization (Wolfensberger, 1983). This evolution in thought has led to the concept of "social participation" that is current today. According to the Conseil de la santé et du bien-être, "social participation involves a reciprocal exchange between the individual and society . . . the various life environments, i.e. family and friends, the school, the workplace, community life, etc."¹⁵ Interventions must thus be designed to give persons with disabilities the means to interact with their environment and participate actively in society so that they can become full members of their community. That is the philosophy underlying this Adapted Education Program for Students With a Profound Intellectual Impairment.

15. Conseil de la santé et du bien-être, *La participation comme stratégie de renouvellement du développement social* (Québec, 1997), 3-4.



Part Two

General Orientations

This section describes the purpose of education, the general objective of this adapted education program, the guiding principles, and the underlying values.

PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

In keeping with the spirit of society's current aspirations, and with its specific mission, the Ministère de l'Éducation must meet its obligation to ensure that each individual receives an education that fosters optimal development of the whole person. The Ministère fulfills its mandate by developing education programs and ensuring that they are carried out.

The document entitled *The Schools of Quebec: Policy Statement and Plan of Action* states that the primary objective of education in the schools is "to enable children and young people to develop according to their own talents and their own personal resources, to evolve into autonomous and creative individuals and to prepare themselves for their role as citizens."¹⁶ This orientation also applies to students with a profound intellectual impairment, since they have the same right to receive appropriate educational services as other students.

For all students, no matter what their characteristics, education has three ultimate aims: to provide instruction, to socialize, and to provide qualifications. Schools are responsible for accomplishing all three aspects of this mission, and for implementing regular and adapted education programs.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE ADAPTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

The concept of social participation is increasingly being applied within all life environments of students with a profound intellectual impairment. This development is the basis for the new orientation that is informing education programs for these students. The school system must prepare them to be able to act appropriately in various life environments (work, leisure, family, etc.) and thus to participate actively in community life.

The objective of this education program is to enable students with a profound intellectual impairment (with or without related impairments) to acquire competencies relating to knowledge, communication, motor development, socialization, affectivity, and community life. The competencies that students acquire will enhance their autonomy in the various life environments and increase their social participation.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

An education program can meet its objectives only if its stated intentions are being acted upon daily, which in this particular case requires implementation of educational services that meet students' daily needs. The teaching process is therefore instrumental. It must be dynamic, and its elements must be well coordinated to produce an effective whole. The educational approach of all the partners in this process must be oriented by certain guiding principles:

- ▶ Each student must be offered a progressive, individualized educational path that takes into account his or her characteristics and learning pace.
- ▶ Services must be organized to meet the student's needs in the areas of education, well-being and care.
- ▶ Services must be coordinated to enable the various partners in the education community to get involved in the learning process and participate in it in a meaningful way.
- ▶ The various partners must apply in a concrete way the basic principles of educational practices carried out with students who have a profound intellectual impairment with or without related impairments.
- ▶ The planning process must consider all dimensions of the student.
- ▶ Interventions must respect the student's chronological age.

UNDERLYING VALUES

This type of program must be based on values that govern the selection of content and make it meaningful. These values do not replace the values underlying the school's educational project, but they complement the latter, support the aims of the program, and guide the pedagogical intervention.

16. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *The Schools of Quebec: Policy Statement and Plan of Action* (Québec, Gouvernement du Québec, 1979), 29.

The fundamental values underlying this program are autonomy, pragmatism, quality of life, social role valorization, respect for the integrity of the person in all his or her dimensions, and valuing the student as a learner.

AUTONOMY

An adapted education program for students with a profound intellectual impairment must be designed to foster autonomy. To avoid confusion, it is helpful to define the concept of autonomy based on recent research studies. Rocque et al., whose definition of autonomy has been adopted in this education program, describe it as a person's ability to make decisions, carry out those decisions, and meet his or her specific needs without being under the power and control of others.¹⁷ There are two aspects to this definition: the ability to make a decision, and the ability to carry it out. The first refers to making decisions based on the individual's preferences, beliefs and values. The second refers to meeting specific needs by carrying out actions, activities or tasks.

The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation (1992) states the following with respect to fostering autonomy:

"All educational activities, especially those that take place within the context of formal learning activities offered to students, must . . . be designed so that students will progressively develop autonomy, or the ability to take care of themselves, think and act for themselves, as

well as responsibility, or the ability to decide what action to take to meet certain goals and deal with the consequences of their choices."¹⁸

According to Rocque et al.,¹⁹ the path toward autonomy starts with a progressive reduction of various forms of dependence. Based on this approach, pedagogical interventions are planned not as ends in themselves, but according to the concrete situation of the person involved in the dependence reduction process.

When designing pedagogical interventions, the aim should be not only to reduce forms of dependence but also to help students acquire new behaviours that foster basic and functional autonomy.

Basic autonomy refers to actions and decisions essential for maintaining life. It is generally accepted that eating, dressing, personal hygiene, mobility and sleep are essential to maintaining life.²⁰

Functional autonomy refers to the type of autonomy that enables individuals to make the decisions and perform the activities required to live their life effectively within a group or society.²¹ It relates to leisure, mobility, private life and community life.

PRAGMATISM

Designing an education program around social participation implies that the competencies to be developed must have practical applications in various life situations, hence the notion of pragmatism as an underlying value.

QUALITY OF LIFE

The acquisition of knowledge, skills and strategies enables students to become more competent at meeting their needs and having their decisions respected. They gradually free themselves from being under the power and control of others. This increased autonomy in daily activities improves their quality of life.

SOCIAL ROLE VALORIZATION

In keeping with the objective of social participation and students' social needs, the program provides for acquisition of the aptitudes and skills they will need to function and develop in different environments.

To the extent that students can develop the skills they need to function in society, to work, and to participate in community activities, they will be increasingly respected and valued by the people around them. This will bring increased feelings of belonging and personal satisfaction.

17. Sylvie Rocque et al., *De l'autonomie à la réduction des dépendances* (Montréal, Éditions Nouvelles, 1999), 59.

18. Conseil supérieur de l'Éducation, *Pour une école secondaire qui développe l'autonomie et la responsabilité* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 1992), 1. [Translation]

19. Sylvie Rocque et al., *De l'autonomie à la réduction des dépendances* (Montréal, Éditions Nouvelles, 1999), 60.

20. Ibid., 71.

21. Ibid., 59.

RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON IN ALL HIS OR HER DIMENSIONS

When implementing the program, students' needs, personal characteristics and environment must be taken into account.

Interventions must respect students' characteristics and needs in order to preserve their physical and emotional integrity. The cognitive, individual, social, affective, physical and communicative dimensions of students must also be considered to foster optimal development while respecting the whole person.

VALUING THE STUDENT AS A LEARNER

Valuing the student as a learner means recognizing the importance of having the student participate actively in learning activities. If the student is to acquire new behaviours that enhance autonomy, he or she must be allowed to play a central role in his or her learning process.

To enable the student to participate actively, learning situations must be carefully designed. The student must be allowed sufficient time to act or react. Environments must be structured to facilitate the student's interaction with learning objects, and materials must be adapted. The student must be encouraged and supported. Teachers therefore play the role of facilitator and guide in this process.



Part Three

The Program

The educational process presented in this program is designed to prepare students aged 4 to 21 with a profound intellectual impairment to live as autonomously as possible within their physical and human environment. To meet this objective, they must develop the competencies that foster social participation.

COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM

This program includes six areas of intervention: knowledge, communication, motor development, socialization, affectivity, and participation in community life. In each area, there is a competency to be developed. The six competencies are interrelated, and their development is an integral part of the student's overall development process.

Competencies

The adapted education program defines a competency as “a set of behaviours based on the effective mobilization and use of a range of resources.”²² For each competency, the focus, key features, essential knowledge and evaluation criteria will be stipulated.

Focus of the competency

Each competency focuses on three elements: a description of the competency, the context for learning, and the educational path.

The description of the competency identifies it clearly and demonstrates its relevance within the adapted education program.

The section on the context for learning indicates the conditions, opportunities and places that will foster development and use of the competency.

The description of the educational path helps teachers recognize the indicators that show; that a competency is being developed throughout the student's schooling, from age 4 to 21. These indicators correspond to major stages in development of the competency, and provide information on what can be expected from the student by the end of his or her schooling. The expected results must be geared to students' specific characteristics; therefore the degree to which each competency is developed may vary depending on these characteristics.

Key features

The key features of a competency correspond to the stages of its development. Acquisition of a competency involves not only mastering each key feature separately but also being able to combine and coordinate them. Each key feature is defined by certain observable behaviours that help identify the key feature specifically.

Essential knowledge

Essential knowledge constitutes a repertoire of resources consisting of strategies and learning, which are indispensable to the development and use of a competency. This repertoire is not exhaustive. Students can draw upon other knowledge while developing a competency, and one area of essential knowledge can contribute to the acquisition of more than one competency.

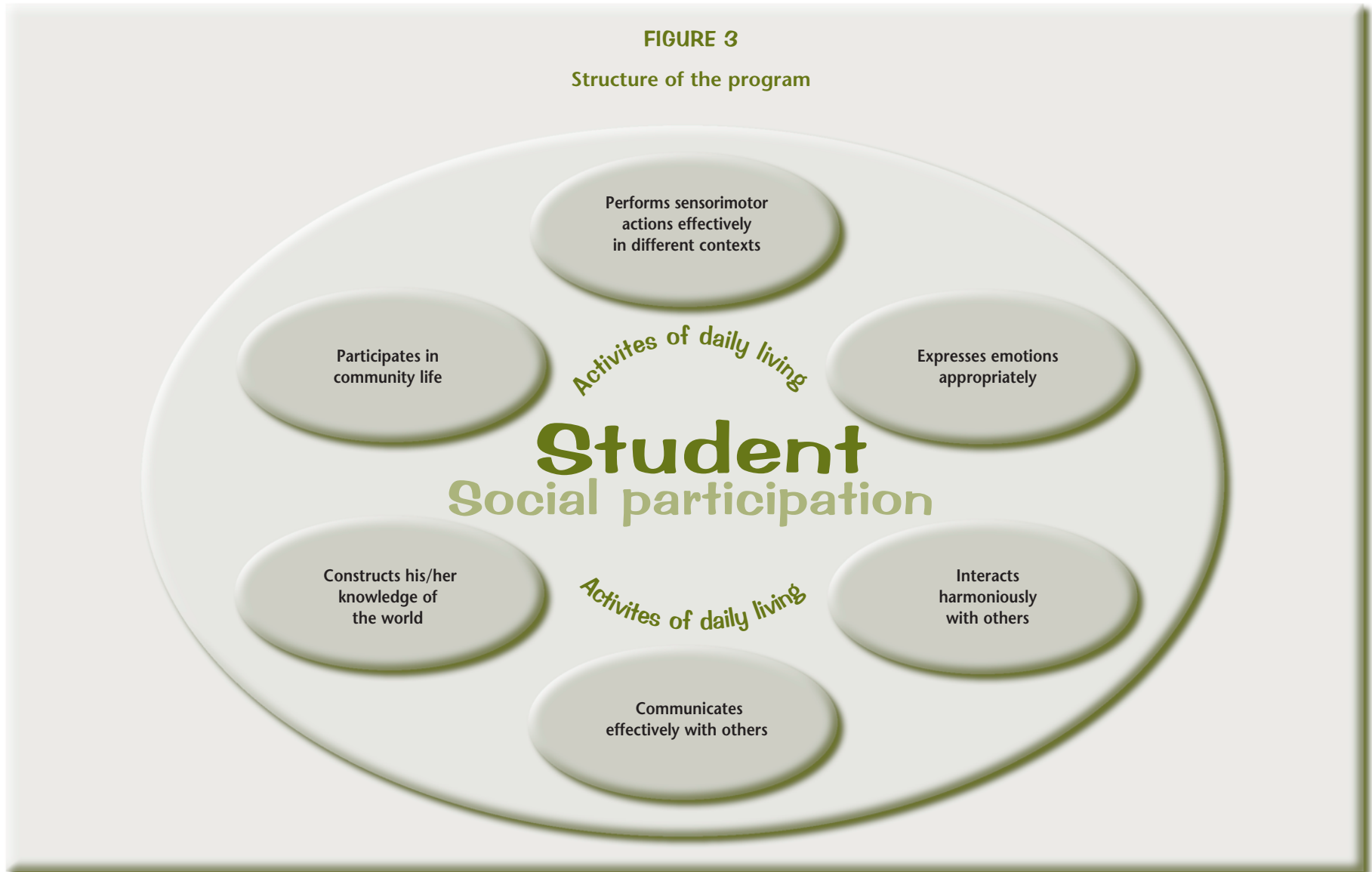
Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria are guidelines that enable teachers to judge the level of development of a competency. These criteria must, however, be defined by a certain number of indicators (observable, measurable behaviours). Teachers must collect data relating to these indicators in order to accurately assess the development of a competency.

Whatever the characteristics of students with a profound intellectual impairment, these students must attempt to acquire all of the competencies. However, the level to which a competency is developed may vary considerably from one student to another. Certain components of the competencies may be more difficult for some students to develop. It is also possible that some knowledge essential to developing a competency will not be acquired or will be acquired to varying degrees.

22. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Québec Education Program, Preschool Education, Elementary Education* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2001), 4.

Figure 3 presents the six competencies and their relationship to each other.



PROGRAM CONTENT

COMPETENCY 1: PERFORMS SENSORIMOTOR ACTIONS EFFECTIVELY IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Focus of the competency

Description

This competency relates to the psychomotor development of the student with a profound intellectual impairment. By relying on instinct to discover the world, the student learns to use the senses and makes increasingly precise motor gestures, which gradually enables the student to explore the surrounding space and coordinate his or her actions in order to use various objects. To the extent that the student's physical and sensory capacities permit, he or she also carries out simple tasks involving motor actions in his or her repertoire, thereby becoming more effective in daily activities.

Context for learning

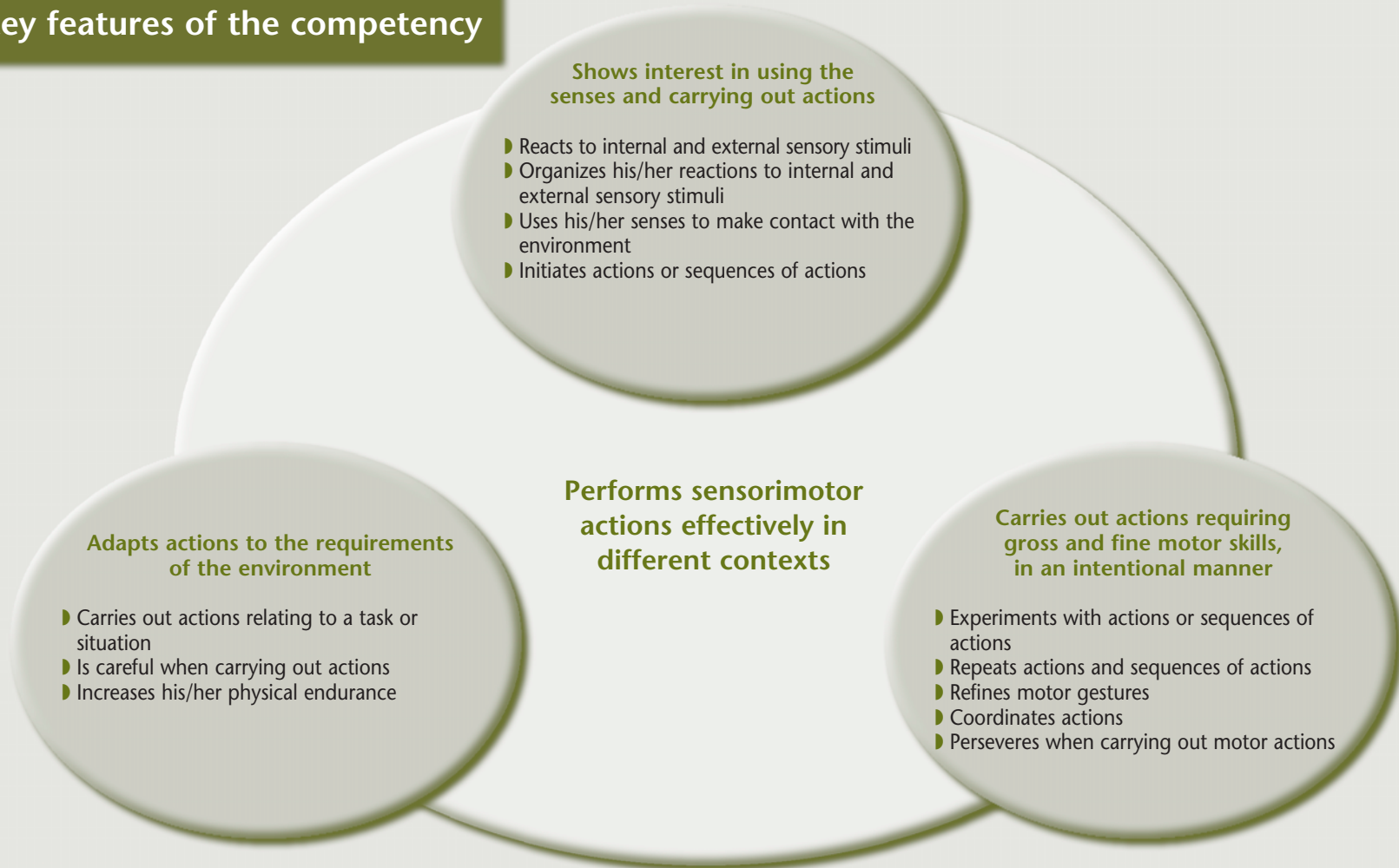
This competency is developed through activities of daily living, via games or structured activities taking place in various places such as the classroom, gymnasium, schoolyard, and even public places and service environments. During these activities, the student carries out various actions that may or may not involve the use of objects.

Educational path

Throughout the student's schooling, body awareness increases. The student discovers his or her body's capabilities by having diverse sensory experiences in different contexts and by experimenting with a variety of actions requiring gross or fine motor skills.

By the end of the student's schooling, the student is an adult and is utilizing his or her full sensory and physical potential. The student has more or less mastered a range of actions involving gross or fine motor skills. This mastery enables the student to act effectively in various situations of daily living, thereby contributing to personal health and well-being and fostering social participation.

Key features of the competency



Evaluation criteria

- ▶ Reaction to stimuli
- ▶ Use of the senses
- ▶ Carrying out of actions or sequences of actions
- ▶ Adaptation of actions or sequences of actions
- ▶ Increase in physical endurance

Essential sensorimotor knowledge

Strategies

- ▮ Using sensory capacities
- ▮ Using motor capacities
- ▮ Using materials appropriately
- ▮ Performing gestures or actions to protect oneself
- ▮ Using physical capacities

Knowledge/learning

- ▮ Parts of the body: head, legs, feet, hands, eyes, ears, mouth, etc.
- ▮ Sensory experiences: relax, taste, touch, see, hear, feel, etc.
- ▮ Actions using gross motor skills: creeping, turning, walking, climbing, pivoting, mounting, descending, running, jumping, swinging, sliding, etc.
- ▮ Actions using fine motor skills: holding, squeezing, releasing, dropping, depositing, pointing, throwing, catching, tearing, gluing, etc.
- ▮ Physical needs: eating, drinking, dressing, eliminating, moving about, etc.
- ▮ Body positions: lying on the floor, sitting, standing, on his/her side, kneeling, etc.
- ▮ Safety rules: manipulating tools, instruments or objects, avoiding obstacles, going up and down stairs, etc.

COMPETENCY 2: EXPRESSES EMOTIONS APPROPRIATELY

Focus of the competency

Description

This competency relates to the affective development of students with a profound intellectual impairment. Until now, this dimension of the person was integrated with the development of social and communication skills. Hereafter, it will be treated independently.

For this category of students, expressing their pleasure or displeasure is the basis of their affective experience. Differentiation between “self” and “not self” may not be fully acquired. Recognizing themselves as distinct and unique individuals with their own needs, emotions and interests is a challenge for them. Given the characteristics of these students, they need to be encouraged to develop themselves and to diversify their interests. To acquire this competency, they also need to develop the ability to manage frustration and adapt to changes in their environment.

Context for learning

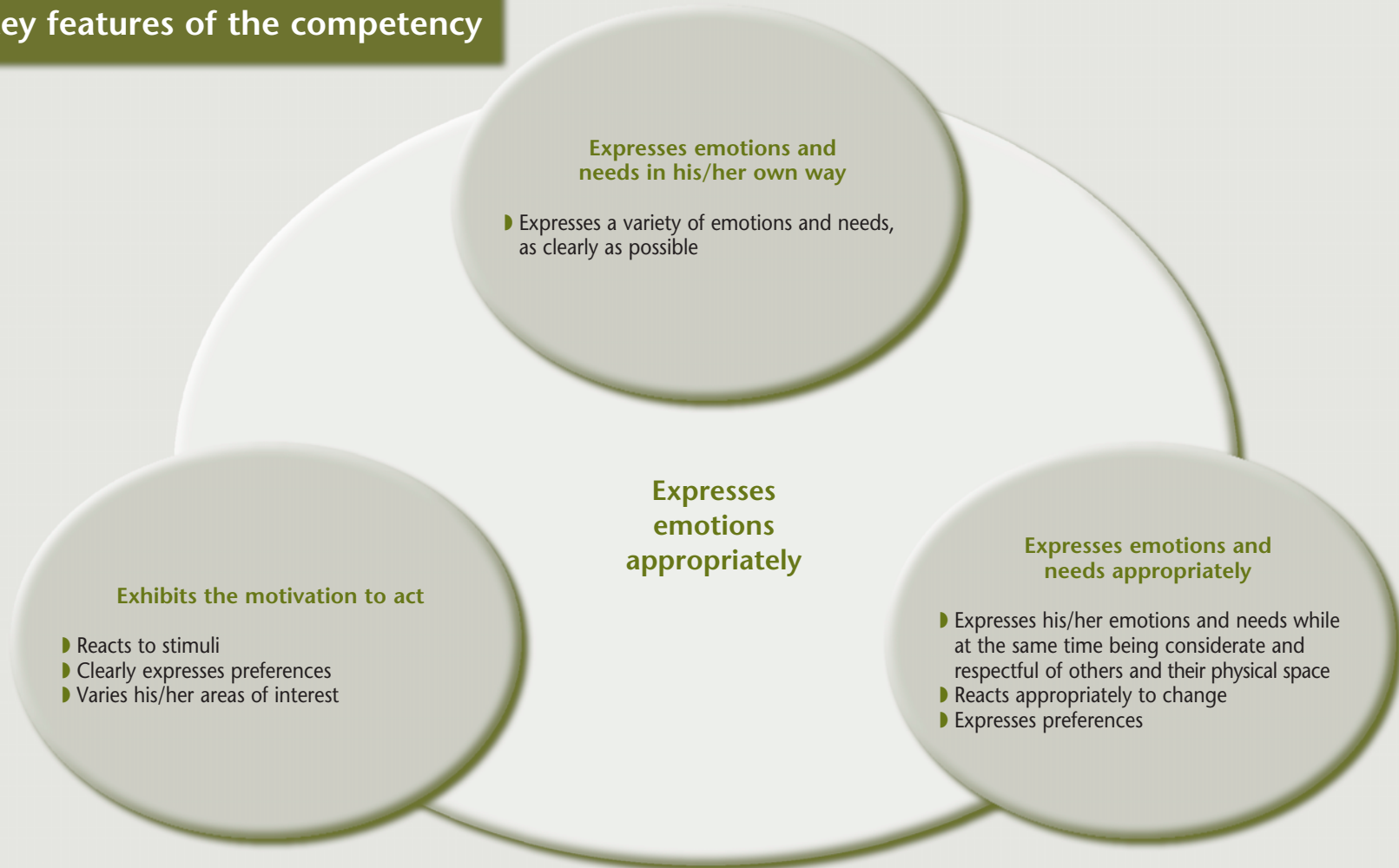
This competency is developed through daily activities via games or structured activities that can take place at school or in the community. During these activities, the student experiences a range of emotions that he or she learns to express in appropriate ways.

Educational path

Throughout the student’s schooling, he or she discovers that other people exist and learns to differentiate himself or herself from others. This helps the student construct a personal identity. The student gradually learns to recognize what belongs to him or her and what he or she is feeling. The student develops and diversifies areas of interest, and makes choices based on personal tastes and preferences.

By the end of the student’s schooling, the student is an adult and is expressing emotions, tastes and needs more frequently and appropriately, in a greater variety of situations of daily life. The student is also asserting his or her individuality.

Key features of the competency



Evaluation criteria

- Variety of emotions and ways of expressing emotions
- Clear expression of emotions and needs
- Appropriate expression of emotions and needs
- Ability to adapt to change
- Evidence of diverse areas of interest

Essential knowledge in the affective realm

Strategies

- ▶ Making choices
- ▶ Adapting to change
- ▶ Using modes of expression that appropriately reflect his/her emotions, desires and interests
- ▶ Being interested in activities, people, his/her environment

Knowledge/learning

- ▶ Emotions: joy, anger, sadness, fear, surprise, anxiety, etc.
- ▶ Physiological sensations: hunger, thirst, fatigue, need to eliminate, rest, need to move about, etc.

COMPETENCY 3: INTERACTS HARMONIOUSLY WITH OTHERS**Focus of the competency****Description**

This competency relates to the student's social development. The limitations of a student with a profound intellectual impairment constitute obstacles to interaction with others, making it difficult to develop social skills. Thus, the people with whom the student interacts tend to be those upon whom he or she is dependent in situations of daily living, which is why it is important for the student to learn to open up to others and interact more with the people around him or her. Step by step, the student learns to adapt his or her behaviours to situations in order to interact harmoniously with others.

Context for learning

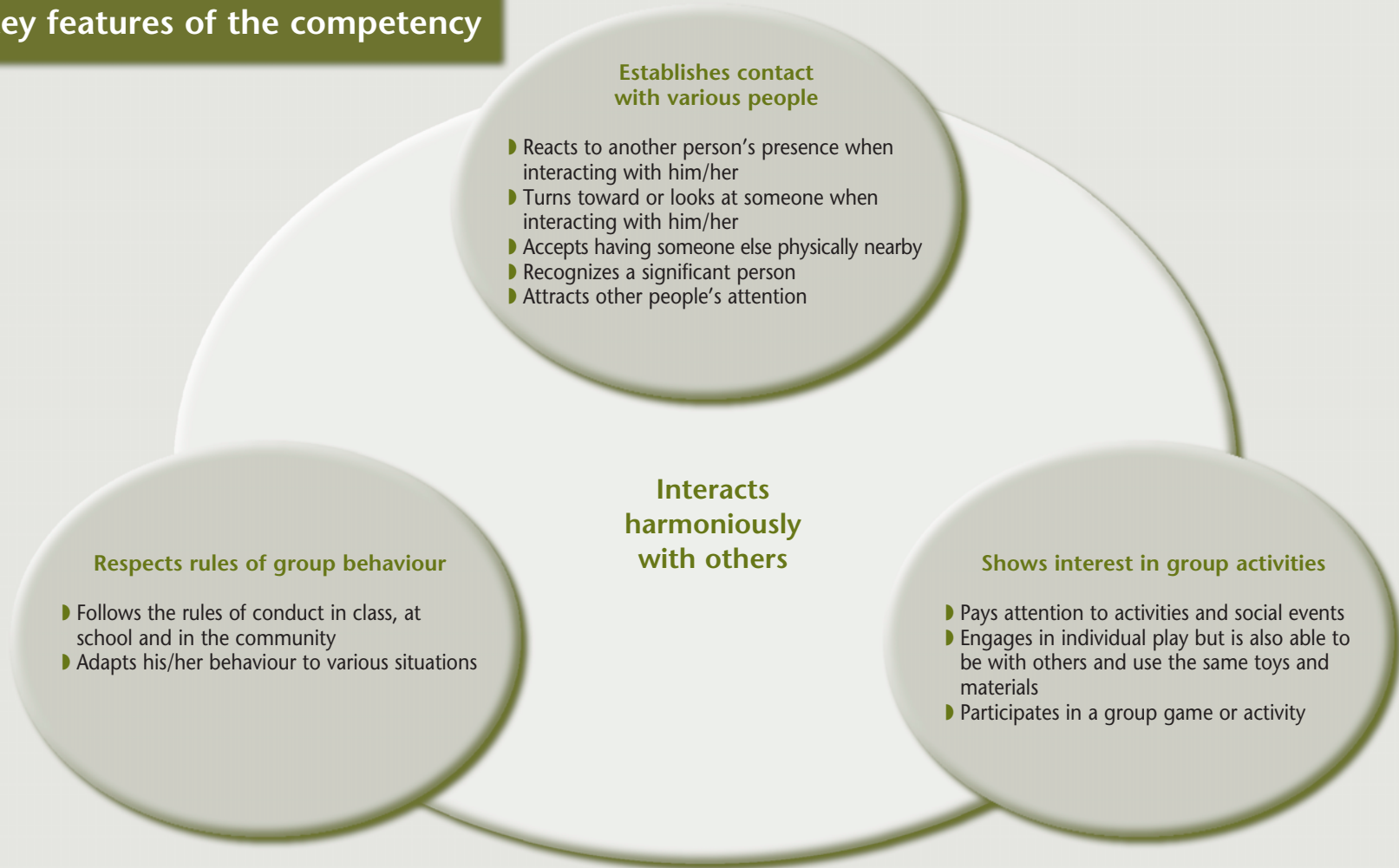
This competency is developed through activities of daily living, via games and structured activities that can take place in class, at school or in the community. These activities give the student opportunities to learn how to interact with others.

Educational path

During the student's schooling, he or she learns to be considerate of others, create interpersonal relationships, and have socially acceptable behaviours. The student adapts his or her behaviours to situations, and respects established rules when participating in social activities.

By the end of the student's schooling, he or she is an adult and is better able to accept the presence of others. The student interacts more frequently and appropriately with other people, and has attitudes and behaviours that enable him or her to participate in community life.

Key features of the competency



Evaluation criteria

- Interaction with others
- Participation in group activities
- Respect for rules of conduct

Essential knowledge in the social realm

Strategies

- ▮ Collaborating in situations involving care and well-being
- ▮ Paying attention to others and to activities
- ▮ Waiting his/her turn
- ▮ Choosing socially acceptable behaviours
- ▮ Communicating with others

Knowledge/learning

- ▮ Names of significant others: teacher, friends, parents, aide, etc.
- ▮ Table manners: sitting at the table, eating with cutlery (spoon or fork), eating one mouthful at a time, chewing food well, keeping the food on the plate, etc.
- ▮ Rules of conduct during transportation: staying seated, speaking in an appropriate tone of voice, etc.
- ▮ Basic rules of hygiene: asking to go to the bathroom or getting there by himself/herself, washing hands, brushing teeth, combing hair, blowing nose, wiping mouth, etc.
- ▮ Forms of politeness and proper ways of saying hello, thank you, goodbye, etc.
- ▮ Socially acceptable sexual behaviours: undressing at appropriate times, respecting others' privacy, not masturbating while others are around, etc.
- ▮ Gestures of cooperation: tolerating the presence of other students around them, sharing objects, toys and snacks, encouraging others, etc.
- ▮ Gestures of participation: distributing and putting away materials, participating in the activity, tolerating physical contact, etc.
- ▮ Rules of group activities: waiting his/her turn, maintaining appropriate distance from others, respecting others' physical integrity, etc.

COMPETENCY 4: COMMUNICATES EFFECTIVELY WITH OTHERS

Focus of the competency

Description

This competency relates to the student's communication development. Students with a profound intellectual impairment have extremely limited communication skills. Most of them cannot use speech, and habitually use primary and sometimes inappropriate modes of communication that people in their environment find difficult to understand. To make themselves understood, these students must use personalized, organized modes of communication. Since communication is the way in which people engage with others, it is crucial that these students progressively develop the ability to make themselves understood and to understand messages from others.

Context for learning

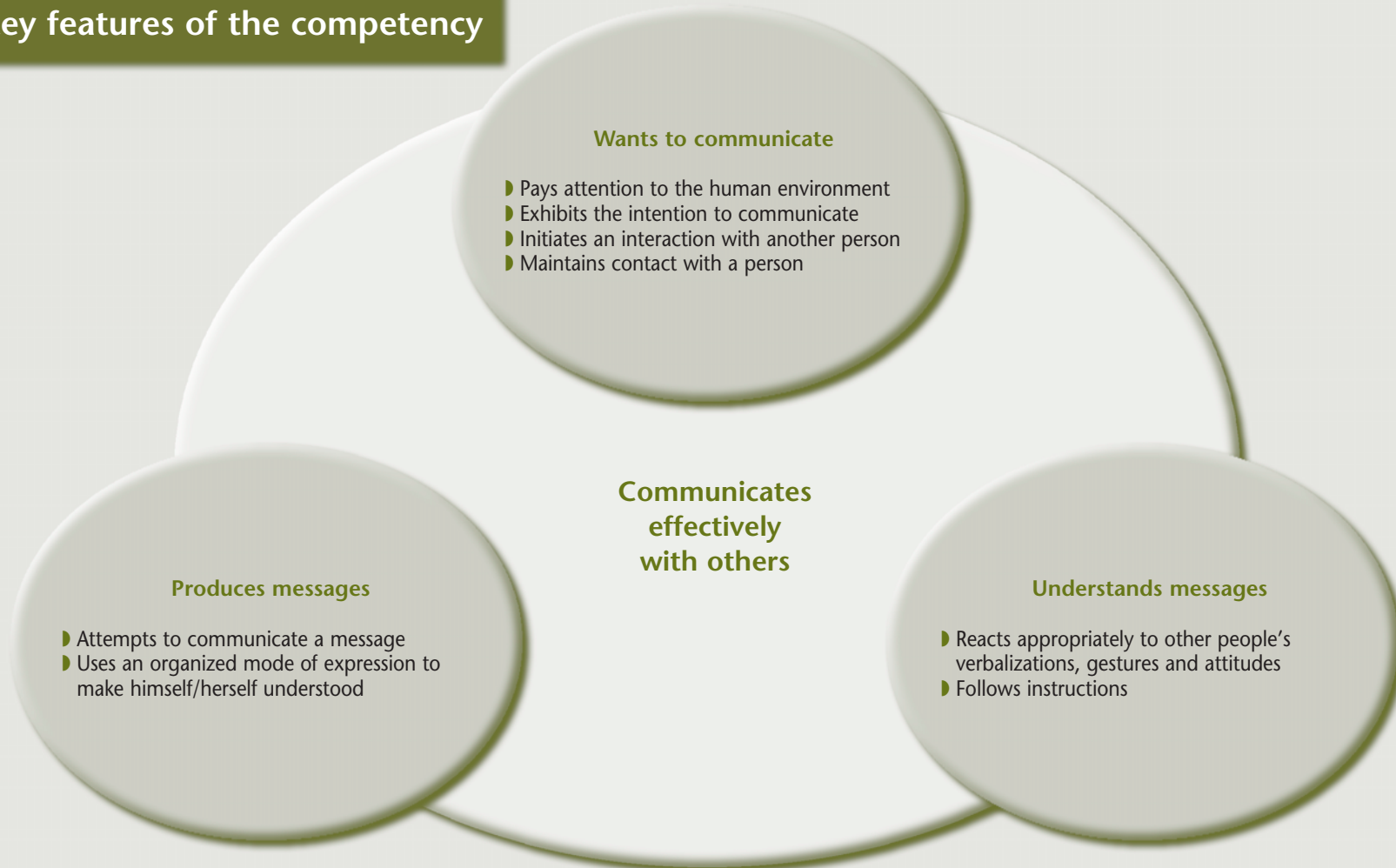
This competency is developed through activities of daily living, via games and structured activities. In these situations, the adult must take into account each student's characteristics, capacity to communicate, and mode of communication. Through daily interaction, especially with adults, the student practises the ability to communicate effectively.

Educational path

Throughout the student's schooling, he or she develops the ability to pay attention to messages directed at him or her, to understand these messages, and to formulate short messages in return. The student builds a repertoire of communication skills, and increasingly comes to enjoy communicating with others.

By the end of his or her schooling, the student is an adult and is able to understand a greater number of messages. The student is also able to produce more intelligible messages by using his or her own functional mode of communication.

Key features of the competency



Evaluation criteria

- ▶ Interest in communicating
- ▶ Comprehension of messages
- ▶ Production of messages

Essential knowledge with respect to communication

Strategies

- ▶ Paying attention to other people's verbalizations, gestures and attitudes (looking at them or turning one's head toward them)
- ▶ Expressing understanding of words, gestures, images, simple directions, or questions (touching an object, pointing to an object or image, verbalizing, raising a hand or foot, standing up, extending a leg, etc.)
- ▶ Associating a word with an object, picture, gesture or pictogram
- ▶ Using a verbal, gestural, pictographic or technological mode of expression to communicate
- ▶ Expressing a message appropriate to the context

Knowledge/learning

- ▶ Body language: facial and bodily expressions, miming, natural gestures, etc.
- ▶ His/her first and last names
- ▶ Names of important individuals: father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, brother, sister, friend, etc.
- ▶ Everyday functional words: action words, names of common objects (switch, candies, etc.), names of animals, places, etc.
- ▶ Name of his/her pet: Fluffy, Fido, etc.
- ▶ Signs from different sign languages or pictographic systems

COMPETENCY 5: CONSTRUCTS HIS/HER KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD**Focus of the competency****Description**

This competency relates to the cognitive development of students with a profound intellectual impairment. The cognitive development of most students in this group is at the level of sensorimotor intelligence. They construct knowledge of the world via this mode of thought. Their comprehension, which is acquired through sensory input, experimentation and action, initially remains contextual, general and undifferentiated. With time, their conception of the world becomes increasingly organized as they develop the ability to anticipate consequences and associate perceptions. This leads to better understanding of their physical and human environment, and increased ability to act on that environment.

Context for learning

The student with a profound intellectual impairment acquires knowledge through activities of daily living, via games and sensory integration activities. These activities take into account chronological age and level of intellectual functioning, and are designed to enable the student to compensate for his or her disabilities. Through these activities the student becomes more aware of the world around him or her, observes that world, and tries out different ways of understanding it.

Educational path

Throughout his or her schooling, the student becomes more aware of the physical and human environment via the senses, which he or she learns to use to observe and explore his or her surroundings. The student must learn how to react to relevant stimuli, manipulate objects, and try out and combine different behaviours. Acquisition of these skills enables the student to understand his or her environment and progressively acquire a certain degree of autonomy in carrying out tasks requiring more than one skill at a time.

By the end of his or her schooling, the student is an adult and has greater self-awareness as well as more awareness of the physical and human environment. The student's perceptual abilities have improved, and his or her knowledge and conception of the world are better organized. This improves the student's ability to use the full range of available resources for carrying out the tasks that he or she is assigned.

Key features of the competency

Reacts to stimuli in his/her environment

- Reacts to different types of external stimuli
- Reacts in a more differentiated way to external stimuli
- Reacts in an intentional manner to various external stimuli

Acts upon his/her environment

- Explores surroundings and acts upon objects in an undifferentiated manner
- Explores surroundings and acts on objects in a coordinated manner
- Explores surroundings and acts on objects in an intentional manner

Constructs his/her knowledge of the world

Develops understanding of his/her environment

- Recognizes and identifies elements in a familiar context
- Recognizes and identifies elements in various contexts
- Anticipates consequences based on cues

Applies different types of knowledge in a functional manner

- Distinguishes the characteristics of objects
- Uses objects in a functional manner
- Uses one or more strategies to obtain a desired object
- Sorts objects or pictures
- Accomplishes a sequence of actions in a task

Evaluation criteria

- Reacts to his/her environment
- Explores his/her environment
- Understands his/her environment

- Uses knowledge and strategies to carry out a task

Essential knowledge in the cognitive realm

Strategies

- ▮ Imitating sounds, gestures, facial expressions, etc.
- ▮ Observing the human and physical environment
- ▮ Associating shapes, colours, sizes, temperatures, textures, etc.
- ▮ Exploring: bringing something to the mouth, touching different textures, tasting, manipulating objects, etc.
- ▮ Comparing shapes, colours, sizes, temperatures, etc.
- ▮ Anticipating events based on cues
- ▮ Memorizing and remembering places, odours, procedures, noises, words, etc.
- ▮ Applying acquired knowledge in new situations
- ▮ Applying the notion of object permanence
- ▮ Applying cause-and-effect or means-and-end relationships to overcome difficulties and reach a goal
- ▮ Collaborating in procedures: lying still when his/her corset is put on or removed, lifting his/her arms so the wheelchair tray can be set up, etc.
- ▮ Following procedures: dressing, going to the bathroom, setting the table, carrying out a task, etc.

Knowledge/learning

- ▮ Parts of the body: head, legs, feet, hands, eyes, ears, mouth, etc.
- ▮ Objects: ball, glass, shoe, chair, sand, water, orthotic device, eyeglasses, table, protective headgear, hearing aid, etc.
- ▮ Places: home, school, pool, classroom, bedroom, etc.
- ▮ Name of certain people: self, father, mother, siblings, friends, teachers, helpers, etc.
- ▮ Words relating to quantities, time, weather, space, events, modes of transportation, etc.
- ▮ Actions: standing up, walking, giving, touching, sitting down, eating, drinking, turning his/her walker, maintaining a position, manipulating objects, moving his/her wheelchair, etc.
- ▮ Function of objects and places: a fork is for eating, mittens are for keeping hands warm, the park is for playing, the bedroom is for sleeping, etc.
- ▮ Steps to take when getting dressed, going to the bathroom, setting the table, carrying out a task, etc.

COMPETENCY 6: PARTICIPATES IN COMMUNITY LIFE

Focus of the competency

Description

This competency relates to the fact that the student with a profound intellectual impairment grows older and his or her learning needs evolve. As soon as the student starts school, he or she begins to participate in activities in the community. The student develops the skills needed to function in the home, in leisure activities, and eventually at work. With time, the student's community life expands. The student gradually develops basic functioning abilities, work skills and social skills that enhance his or her social participation. This competency is an extension of the five others.

Context for learning

This competency is developed through activities relating to home life, games, leisure or work activities that can take place in the classroom, class workshops, training placements or public places. By its very nature, this competency must be developed through partnerships between the school and the community.

Educational path

Early in his or her schooling, the student acquires a variety of sensorimotor, social, affective, cognitive and communication skills. The student continues his or her education by applying knowledge and strategies to other situations and in other places. Thus, the student acquires skills that make it possible to participate in community life or at least have access to it.

By the end of his or her schooling, the student is an adult and is able to use the acquired attitudes and functional skills at home, in leisure activities and at work. This allows the student to be more active within the community.

Key features of the competency**Evaluation criteria**

- ▶ Completion of a task or activity
- ▶ Safe, appropriate behaviour
- ▶ Active participation

Essential knowledge relating to community life

Strategies

- ▶ Agreeing to do or redo a task
- ▶ Agreeing to change a routine
- ▶ Accepting comments
- ▶ Adjusting his/her behaviour to instructions given
- ▶ Moving about safely in public places
- ▶ Carefully handling (or avoiding touching) potentially dangerous objects: pointed objects, cutlery or utensils, pencils, tools, etc.
- ▶ Moving away from places or objects that are labelled dangerous by a pictogram or symbol
- ▶ Using cleaning products or equipment safely
- ▶ Persevering in a task or activity
- ▶ Recognizing the stages of a task or activity (beginning and end)
- ▶ Following procedures: putting away toys or materials, sweeping the floor, handling an audio-visual device, etc.
- ▶ Adjusting his/her social behaviour to particular places or situations
- ▶ Getting to know new people or places

Knowledge/learning

- ▶ Safety rules in leisure, work and home environments
- ▶ Dangerous objects: knives, matches, electrical appliances, electrical outlets, etc.
- ▶ Public places: grocery store, restaurant, pharmacy, recreation centre, etc.
- ▶ The function of public places: grocery stores are for buying food, cinemas are for seeing movies, etc.
- ▶ Household chores: making the bed, vacuuming, wiping and drying the table, putting away his/her clothes, washing the dishes, etc.
- ▶ Sports activities: cycling with an adapted tricycle, snowshoeing, walking, bowling, swimming, etc.
- ▶ Art activities: colouring, drawing, cutting, painting, doing crafts, etc.
- ▶ Recreational activities: board games, card games, television, music, cinema, dancing, zoo, park, etc.
- ▶ Basic rules of hygiene: asking to go to the bathroom or getting there on his/her own, washing hands, brushing teeth, combing hair, etc.
- ▶ Steps to follow when putting away materials, sweeping the floor, setting the table, getting dressed, going to the bathroom, handling audio-visual equipment, etc.



Part Four

Pedagogical Interventions

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE A PROFOUND INTELLECTUAL IMPAIRMENT

Education that meets the needs of students with a profound intellectual impairment necessarily implies an adapted educational process, and must have concrete effects on daily life. The basic principles of educational activity with these students have been developed according to this objective.

Eleven basic principles have been developed to govern pedagogical interventions for students with a profound intellectual impairment. They involve certain rules, methods and techniques that must be considered to make interventions more effective and productive. These principles govern all educational activity, no matter which approach is used. They are presented in table form in Figure 4. The document by Lemay entitled *Principes fondamentaux de l'action éducative auprès des élèves présentant une déficience intellectuelle profonde et multi-handicapés*²³ explains these principles in detail, and provides concrete examples to enhance understanding and provide a pragmatic interpretation of the concepts involved.

23. Jacques Lemay, *Principes fondamentaux de l'action éducative auprès des élèves présentant une déficience intellectuelle profonde et multi-handicapés* (Québec, 2001).

FIGURE 4

Basic principles of educational practices with students who have a profound intellectual impairment with or without related impairments

Stimulate visual perception

- ▶ Establish eye contact before commencing interventions.
- ▶ Design interventions that focus on situations that facilitate eye contact with the adult or with objects.
- ▶ Use stronger visual cues (e.g. larger or more colourful object).
- ▶ Arrange the classroom so that stimuli can be seen during interventions or routine activities such as dressing, meals or snacks.

Make learning activities meaningful

- ▶ Set core objectives that have useful, functional effects when met and that directly reduce the student's dependence.
- ▶ Use daily routines as natural learning situations.
- ▶ Establish daily routines that are conducive to pursuing the objectives.

Help the student express preferences and make choices

- ▶ Provide opportunities to exert control over the environment by placing the student in situations in which he/she can make choices and decisions.
- ▶ Structure the environment to enable the student to interact with elements in the environment.
- ▶ Adapt materials to enable the student to exert control over his/her environment.

Foster communication

- ▶ Take the time to learn how to communicate with each student.
- ▶ Be receptive to signs of communication.
- ▶ Try to establish optimal eye contact during communication.
- ▶ Use strategies that promote communication.
- ▶ As often as possible, provide the student with the means to communicate with his/her environment via modes of communication accessible to him/her.

Guide the learning process

- ▶ Support expected action through direct guidance.
- ▶ Modulate guidance interventions.

Promote social interaction

- ▶ Provide group activities in the classroom.
- ▶ Organize outings, and activities where students can converse and discuss.

View learning as an active, evolving process

- ▶ Provide opportunities for the student to manipulate objects, and create situations that stimulate awareness.
- ▶ Provide guidance when the student attempts an action.
- ▶ Give the student enough time to act.

Attract and sustain students' attention

- ▶ Use meaningful, attractive materials.
- ▶ Eliminate or control stimuli that are not relevant to the task.
- ▶ Individualize interventions.

Sustain motivation

- ▶ Provide constant encouragement to the student.
- ▶ Point out small successes and praise the student for them.

Ensure consistency in interventions

- ▶ Ensure consistency in stimuli.
- ▶ Structure interventions by establishing routines.

Design activities for skill transfer

- ▶ Increase opportunities to apply skills.
- ▶ Work in close collaboration with parents.
- ▶ Ensure that interventions done in class are also carried out in the student's other life environments.

In Part One of this document, it was stressed that students with a profound intellectual impairment (with or without related impairments) constitute a heterogeneous group, and that each individual has different learning capacities based on his or her specific characteristics. In recent years, an individualized pedagogical approach has been used with these students because it takes into account each student's learning style, pace and way of thinking.

THE INDIVIDUALIZED PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

Research on pedagogical interventions for students with intellectual impairments clearly demonstrates the importance of ensuring that education programs and approaches with these students be based on individualized teaching.

The individualized pedagogical approach favours personalized intervention. This type of intervention is carefully targeted and is reserved for particular types of learning or therapeutic actions. Direct intervention makes it possible to meet each student's specific needs and develop his or her areas of interest. Expectations of students are adapted to each one's capacities, and the learning content may be adjusted minimally or significantly.

This approach is not only used for individual intervention. It can also be adapted for work in pairs or small groups.

Because of its orientation, the individualized pedagogical approach enables each student to have a progressive, individualized educational path.

The individualized pedagogical approach is carried out through intervention methods that help students acquire the six competencies, and organization methods that promote contact between the student and the elements in the learning situation.

PEDAGOGICAL INTERVENTION METHODS

Here are some examples of pedagogical intervention methods.

BASAL STIMULATION

Individuals with a profound intellectual impairment have great difficulty establishing contact with their environment and the people around them. It is difficult to find appropriate ways of communicating with them. These students are frequently limited to stimulations coming from their own body.

The objective of basal stimulation is to stimulate the child at the level of basal perception to awaken an increasing number of receptors and thereby try to compensate for the lack of activity in the child, thus fostering the development of vibro-acoustic, acoustic, oral and tactile orientations, as well as opportunities for olfactory, gustatory and visual perception.²⁴

According to Baudenne, individuals with multiple impairments need another person to be physically near them in order to have experiences and perceive their environment. When teachers or helpers are in close physical proximity, they make the environment accessible to students with a profound intellectual impairment.²⁵

The objective of stimulation is not necessarily to improve the student's functioning or to meet particular objectives at a specific time. The goal is more to enable the student to have contact with others, develop self-awareness, move about, and use his or her perceptive abilities.

This intervention approach has become increasingly widespread. It is most frequently used with students who have a profound intellectual impairment and related physical or sensory impairments.

24. A. Fröhlich, Paper given at I.Q.D.I. symposium, November 1997.

25. B. Baudenne, *La démarche « Snoezelen » : démarche d'accompagnement des personnes polyhandicapées*, Document given to participants during a training session (Québec, March 2000).

THE SNOEZELN APPROACH

The Snoezelen approach is an intervention approach that creates a balance between stimulation and relaxation. It provides sensorimotor stimulation within a safe environment where care is taken to ensure the individual's well-being. It is not intended to develop skills or performance, but to provide experiences involving bodily sensations, interaction with others, communication and perception.

This approach enables the student with a profound intellectual impairment to have a variety of sensory experiences within a reassuring environment where interactions are based on trust, mutual respect and listening. It emphasizes the quality of the relationship with the teacher or helper, and is designed to provide the student with feelings of satisfaction, pleasure and relaxation.

The Snoezelen approach offers three types of areas, each with its own purpose. The relaxation area offers a secure, comfortable environment where the student can be in close physical proximity to the teacher or helper. The discovery and adventure area offers games that engage motor skills to get the student to execute movements in all kinds of positions. The interactive area helps the student to discover cause-and-effect relationships and to control effects (lights, breath, sounds, etc.).

The Snoezelen approach complements and integrates well with basal stimulation.

SENSORY INTEGRATION

The senses play a crucial role in learning. They enable the student to establish initial contact with the elements in a learning situation.

The sensory deficits and dysfunctions in students with a profound intellectual impairment create major difficulties in the gathering, processing and organization of information. The resulting sensory integration deficit can manifest itself in various ways, such as sensory defense reactions, or behaviours that are under-reactive to sensory stimulation. Other possible manifestations are hypersensitivity to touch, motion, visual or auditory stimuli, or an abnormally high or low level of activity or awareness.

Sensory integration is an intervention method that offers a promising alternative for individuals with sensory impairments.

Sensory integration is the neurological process that enables us to utilize sensory stimuli in an organized way. The brain organizes the information perceived by the senses so that we can produce a behaviour or an adapted response. Sensory integration theory suggests that learning depends on effective functioning of sensory mechanisms.²⁶

In learning situations, the student will need help to process and organize the information perceived by the senses, in order to respond appropriately to the requirements of different situations and the constraints of the environment. The sensory integration method offers interventions that put the senses in an optimal state of awareness. This results in improved perception of stimuli, which are thereby made meaningful. The sensory integration method also offers ways of intervening on environmental factors (e.g. intensity of surrounding activity, quality of sensory stimuli, risk of unplanned or irritating types of contact) that can affect the proper functioning of sensory mechanisms.

Sensory stimuli will play a positive role in the learning process to the degree that the student uses them in an organized manner to adapt to his or her environment.

In order to use sensory integration as an intervention method, educators and practitioners need to have a good knowledge of the theory, as well as a thorough understanding of sensory systems and the mechanisms involved. Using certain specific techniques as part of a therapeutic approach requires supervision by someone with professional expertise in this area.

26. S. Brunet and A. M. Couture, *Retards de développement et intégration sensorielle : un processus thérapeutique interactif et holistique* (January 2000).

PEDAGOGICAL ORGANIZATION METHODS

THEME ACTIVITIES

Activities organized around a theme make learning more meaningful because they are introduced and conducted from the perspective of exploring a particular subject. Students learn skills related to the content via activities that make direct reference to the theme.

The theme is generally based on events that are taking place in society and have widespread visibility. Events such as “Back-to-school,” religious holidays (Christmas and Easter), Halloween, sugaring off and festivals can easily serve as themes.

STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES

This pedagogical modality works well when applied to daily activities of school life. Transportation, arrivals and departures, snacks, lunch and recess are situations that offer learning opportunities. The teacher can take advantage of these situations to help the student develop skills relating to self-care and autonomous behaviour. These routines of daily living thus become learning activities.

This modality also applies to time-limited interventions, particularly during activities requiring specialized materials found in special facilities such as rooms offering motor activities, computers, sensory stimulation, and so forth.

WORK STATIONS IN CLASSROOM WORKSHOPS

Work stations can be used to help prepare adolescents with a profound intellectual impairment for the labour market. By trying out a variety of work stations, these students learn social behaviours appropriate to the workplace and acquire the skills they will need.

This modality enables students with a profound intellectual impairment to carry out partial or complete production of a product, alone or as part of a team.

TRAINING PLACEMENTS

A training placement is the best pedagogical modality for preparing adolescents and adults with a profound intellectual impairment for the workplace. Of course, not all students can benefit from a training placement, but different formulas are used (individual or group in-house placements, group external placements, etc.) to enable the largest possible number of students to have access to this modality.

A training placement is a pedagogical modality that is both situational and global. It obliges the student to deal with all of the variables present in real work situations while at the same time drawing upon behaviours already acquired. Since it places the student in a situation with broader scope for social interaction, a training placement enables him or her to apply social skills and behaviours previously acquired.



Part Five Evaluation

In the special education policy entitled *Adapting Our Schools to the Needs of All Students*, the basic orientation is as follows:

“To help students with handicaps or social maladjustments or learning disabilities succeed in terms of knowledge, social development and qualifications, by accepting that educational success has different meanings depending on the abilities and needs of different students, and by adopting methods that favour their success and provide recognition for it.”²⁷

Evaluation of students with a profound intellectual impairment is to be conducted from this perspective.

NATURE OF EVALUATION

In the document entitled *Evaluation of Learning at the Preschool and Elementary Levels: Framework*, evaluation of learning is defined as “a process that leads to a judgment on the knowledge acquired by a student and the competencies developed. This judgment serves as a basis for decisions and actions.”²⁸ This definition also applies to evaluation of students with a profound intellectual impairment.

Using activities of daily living, games or other structured activities, teachers can gather a sufficient amount of relevant information to adapt their pedagogical interventions to these students to promote development of their competencies and to make judgments about the degree to which each competency has been developed.

PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

The purpose of the evaluation process is to aid learning and to recognize the competencies that have been developed.

SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

Evaluation as a support for learning refers to the use of evaluation to support the student in the acquisition of the knowledge and strategies associated with development of a competency. The role it plays is one of regulation. Several types of regulation are possible. Regulation can be provided by the teacher or the student, but given the cognitive characteristics of these students, only the first option is feasible, i.e. teachers adjusting their pedagogical intervention and planning. This function is closely linked to the teaching and learning processes.

RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCIES

Evaluation for the purpose of recognizing competencies makes it possible to identify the degree to which each competency has been developed. Teachers produce a progress report that takes into account all relevant information gathered at predetermined times during the student's education path. This information is interpreted according to the evaluation criteria established in Part Three of this document, entitled “The Program.”

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

According to the Framework, there are five steps to the process of evaluating learning: planning the evaluation, gathering information, interpreting the information, making judgments, and making decisions.²⁹

Although there are five distinct steps to the evaluation process, this process is not necessarily rigid or linear. It is possible to follow a few of the steps, then return to one of the previous steps to complete it, and then continue following the rest of the steps until the end. The evaluation process is presented in the next few pages.

27. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Adapting Our Schools to the Needs of All Students, Policy on Special Education* (Québec, 1999), 15.

28. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Evaluation of Learning at the Preschool and Elementary Levels: Framework* (Québec, 2002), 7.

29. Ibid., 12.

FIGURE 5

The evaluation process

Planning

The teacher plans evaluation of learning based on the competencies to be developed in the student with a profound intellectual impairment.

This stage is very important, since the data gathered will make it possible to adjust pedagogical intervention and identify the degree to which each competency has been developed.

**To integrate
evaluation into
the learning process**

Gathering information

The teacher gathers and records a sufficient amount of relevant information to support his/her judgments, both during the learning process and at predetermined stages of the student's schooling. The information gathered enables the teacher to adapt learning activities and to identify the degree to which each competency has been developed.

Information is gathered mainly during activities of daily living, games or other structured activities, in a spontaneous or formal manner, using specific tools.

**To support
judgments**

Making decisions

Once a judgment has been made, the teacher can make a decision. During the learning process, decisions consist in adjustments that must be made to pedagogical intervention based on the student's progress.

At the end of the student's schooling, the decisions that are made relate to the degree to which each competency has been developed.

Interpreting information

This stage consists in making the gathered information meaningful by analyzing it and comparing it with a reference point.

In this program, the reference points are defined in Part Three, in the sections entitled "Educational path."

In the course of learning, the student's progress in developing one or more competencies is analyzed.

At the end of the student's schooling, the interpretation process makes it possible to judge the degree to which the competencies have been developed.

Making judgments

A judgment is a qualitative assessment of the student's mastery of the competencies. It must convey the student's progress as accurately as possible.

It is only possible to judge the development of competencies if the student has been given many opportunities to develop them, in various learning situations.

Judgments are not completely objective. Every effort should be made, however, to ensure that judgments are made fairly. Specific goals should be established, appropriate tools should be used, sufficient information should be gathered, and the information should be interpreted according to clear points of reference.

To take
action

To make
the gathered
information meaningful

To support learning
To recognize learning

EVALUATION METHODS AND TOOLS

The Framework for the evaluation of learning presents three types of tools: “information gathering tools, record keeping tools, and interpretation tools.”³⁰

The following sections describe some of the tools that can be used to evaluate students with a profound intellectual impairment. They describe information gathering tools and record keeping tools.

INFORMATION GATHERING TOOLS

a) Observation checklist

The observation checklist helps the teacher identify specific aspects of an action, product or process based on a list of observable elements and a fixed way of recording the observations made. It also helps the teacher keep track of information on the student’s behaviour in various situations.

b) Portfolio

The portfolio is a collection of work produced by the student, and it therefore shows how his or her competencies have developed. The teacher builds the portfolio on a regular basis, noting the student’s accomplishments and adding comments on his or her efforts and progress. The portfolio thus enables the teacher to keep a record of everything the student has produced, and provides material for discussions with the parents.

c) Verification list

The verification list is a memory aid. It is a list of elements to check whenever a student performs an action or series of actions, or a list of qualities or characteristics relating to the aspect being evaluated. It enables the teacher to keep track of the presence or absence of an element, but does not enable the teacher to comment on the quality or frequency of the element observed.

INFORMATION RECORDING TOOLS

a) Teacher’s logbook

The teacher’s logbook is a document in which the teacher writes information and observations about a student, the activities done, and the context in which these activities were done. The teacher writes all of the information he or she deems relevant. To be useful, a logbook must be updated regularly.

b) Anecdotal records

Anecdotal records include a brief description of facts observed in a situation involving a student, or elements relating to a particular difficulty that the student is having. Recording these facts or elements enables the teacher to analyze the situation or difficulty more objectively. Anecdotal records differ from the logbook in that they refer more to targeted situations and are often used with students who have specific learning or behaviour difficulties.

INFORMATION INTERPRETATION TOOLS

The educational success of students with a profound intellectual impairment is not manifested in the same way as it is with other students. Thus, the information collected is interpreted differently.

According to the above-mentioned Framework, teachers interpret the information gathered using competency levels. Nonetheless, the notion of competency levels must be reconsidered in the case of students with a profound intellectual impairment because of the heterogeneity of these students’ abilities.

The information gathered will be interpreted according to the evaluation criteria established for each competency, but adapted competency levels must be used. The criteria must nevertheless be based on observable behaviours that provide information on how the competency has developed, at pre-determined points throughout a student’s education (ages 4 to 21) and at the end of his or her schooling.

30. Québec, Ministère de l’Éducation, *Evaluation of Learning at the Preschool and Elementary Levels: Framework* (Québec, 2002), 27.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

REPORT CARD AND PROGRESS REPORT

The report card is an official communication sent to parents at the frequency set forth in the Basic School Regulation.

The report card issued at the end of students' education gives a progress report based on the expectations set forth in the Adapted Education Program for Students With a Profound Intellectual Impairment.

OTHER TOOLS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

Because of the particular characteristics of these students, it is important to use other methods of communicating with parents, such as a school agenda, a communication notebook, meetings, telephone calls, etc. These interactive methods of communication between teachers and parents help both parties arrive at a better understanding of certain situations experienced by the student at home and at school. This mutual understanding helps teachers design their interventions, and fosters transfer of learning.



Appendixes

APPENDIX I

DESCRIPTION OF SENSORIMOTOR INTELLIGENCE AND PREOPERATIONAL THOUGHT

SENSORIMOTOR INTELLIGENCE

Stage 1 – Reflexes and responses

Reflexes are unconscious responses to internal and external stimuli. They are innate, not learned. Reflexes are children's first mode of action. They enable children to become increasingly efficient in their activities.

MOTOR SKILLS	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	ORAL MOTOR SKILLS
Reacting to various light intensities	Moving limbs, head or eyes in response to a verbal stimulus or noise	Executing an efficient sucking motion
		Coordinating suction, deglutition and breathing movements

APPENDIX I (cont.)

Stage 2 – Primary circular reactions to the environment, or first habits

This is a stage during which perceptions are organized. The student develops new reflexes that are not triggered by external stimuli as during the previous stage, but by internal stimuli. These reflexes help the student adapt to his or her life environment.

The student is now ready to learn, interacting with his or her environment and developing certain skills. The student can repeat certain behaviours. At the end of this stage, the student is able to combine two different behavioural movements.

At this stage, the student starts to imitate movements. He or she does not (at least observably) show progress in other areas. The student is interested mainly in his or her body, and having passed the stage of sensations, starts to enjoy action.

SENSORIMOTOR SKILLS	COGNITIVE SKILLS	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	MOTOR SKILLS
Establishing eye contact with a face or soft light	Bringing the hands up to the mouth	Making sounds	Kicking with both feet, alternating between the two
Establishing contact between the fingers of both hands while observing them	Looking at an object while holding it		
	Transferring an object from one hand to the other		

APPENDIX I (cont.)

Stage 3 – Secondary circular reactions

The student's attention now moves from sensations to objects. If the student makes an unintended gesture, instead of limiting himself or herself to the sensation that the action caused, he or she tries to prolong the effect of this action by repeating it. During this stage, the student begins to identify objects by the purpose for which they are used

during an activity. The student is more interested in familiar objects than new ones.

Subject to the limits of the student's skill repertoire, he or she can easily imitate movements involving body parts that are visible, as well as sounds that are audible. Since the student has a mental image of a

familiar object, he or she can leave an activity to look for that object. The ability to follow visual stimuli with the eyes is developed. The student is increasingly aware of the space around him or her and the place that each element in that space occupies. The student starts to perceive cause-and-effect relationships.

COGNITIVE SKILLS	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	MOTOR SKILLS	AUTONOMY
Hitting objects	Imitating sounds	Removing an ankle from a board with holes	Holding a spoon (autonomy in eating)
Imitating hand movements		Stretching to reach for an object (gross motor skills)	
Reaching for a partially hidden object			
Trying to touch parts of another person's face			
Watching an object fall on the floor			

APPENDIX I (cont.)

Stage 4 – Coordinating two movements and applying them in the environment

The student is now taking action toward specific objectives. He or she is developing the ability to coordinate movements while doing activities. One movement is linked to the next in a logical manner, allowing greater versatility, creativity and resolve in the student's actions.

At this stage the student becomes interested in novelty, taking pleasure in exploring with learned gestures, and attempting to imitate (though imprecisely) new sounds and movements. The student may, however, be able to imitate certain learned motor movements without prompting. The student tries to find an object by looking for it in the place where he or she first found it.

The student reacts, and understands certain spatial concepts, particularly relating to familiar objects. The student also makes the link between various actions relating to social skills, and is able to choose certain behaviours that will make it possible to meet his or her objectives.

COGNITIVE SKILLS	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	SOCIAL SKILLS	MOTOR SKILLS	AUTONOMY
Examining a new object	Recognizing and imitating the sound of syllables combining consonants and vowels	Establishing contact with another person through touch	Pointing (fine motor skills)	Chewing with lateral tongue movements (autonomy in eating)
Imitating faces	Imitating various sounds, including throat clearing and tongue clicking (informal communication)	Participating in games that associate gestures with nursery rhymes	Scribbling (fine motor skills)	
Imitating new movements with varying degrees of ease			Moving from one place to another (gross motor skills)	
Pulling on a string to bring forward a ring				

APPENDIX I (cont.)

Stage 5 – Tertiary circular reactions

The student is starting to learn by trial and error, discovering new behaviours and varying them according to continually changing objectives. Constantly seeking novelty, the student reproduces numerous sounds directly or from memory, and imitates gestures involving parts of the body that may or may not be visible to him or her, succeeding after many repetitions.

The student is now able to use certain objects in the immediate environment because he or she is capable of establishing a link between his or her own position in space and the location of elements in his or her environment. The student is therefore able to pile, fill, overturn and pull objects. At this stage, the student is aware of the effects of gravity and inertia. The student is able to use objects to interact with the environment.

COGNITIVE SKILLS	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	MOTOR SKILLS
Imitating a body movement by playing with a doll or puppet	Imitating sounds, producing onomatopoeia, reproducing parts of familiar words	Reproducing a pencil mark (fine motor skills)
Imitating a new movement		Inserting ankles in a board with holes, and stacking cubes on top of each other (fine motor skills)
Finding an object that was hidden from sight		Stacking blocks Filling a container
Manipulating objects efficiently and placing them in a container		Pulling objects
Using an object (stick) to reach another object, and overturning a container to take one of the objects inside		Overturning an object

Stage 6 – Creating new ways of doing things using mental combinations

The student is now able to make mental representations, and no longer requires such frequent modelling. The student carries out a form of mental planning before doing an activity. Actions are spontaneous and result from a stage in the problem solving process.

The student can easily reproduce actions and behaviours witnessed in the past. The student can determine by deduction where an object has been placed, and get around obstacles to reach it. He or she is now able to relate cause to effect and to predict an event based on a cause.

MOTOR SKILLS	COGNITIVE SKILLS
Inserting small objects in an opening, a container, etc. in a relatively short time (fine motor skills)	Accomplishing simple tasks after observing how they are done
Reproducing body movements after observing how they are done (gross motor skills)	Trying to set an object in motion

APPENDIX I (cont.)

PREOPERATIONAL THOUGHT

The student develops mental images that make it possible to imagine objects that are absent. The student gradually creates a memory image of each object for reference purposes, thereby carrying a personal world around in his or her mind. However, that world corresponds only to the student's own reality. Since words are not concepts for the student at this point, this type of thought is said to be egocentric.

COGNITIVE SKILLS	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	SOCIAL SKILLS
Representing actions in thought (mental experience)	Developing his/her own personal language	Bringing others to adopt his/her viewpoint
Using signs and symbols		
Playing make-believe with or without objects		

APPENDIX II

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

PHILOSOPHY

Humanistic school of thought inspired by valorization of social roles and focusing on social participation

PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

To foster optimal development of the whole person based on three ultimate aims: to provide instruction, to socialize students, and to provide qualifications

GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAM

To help each student with a profound intellectual impairment acquire competencies relating to knowledge, communication skills, motor skills, social skills, affectivity and community life, in order to increase his/her autonomy in various life environments

VALUES

- ▶ Autonomy (making and carrying out decisions)
- ▶ Pragmatism (useful, functional effects)
- ▶ Quality of life (improving or maintaining it)
- ▶ Social role valorization (feeling of belonging)
- ▶ Respect for the integrity of the person in all his or her dimensions
- ▶ Valuing the student as a learner

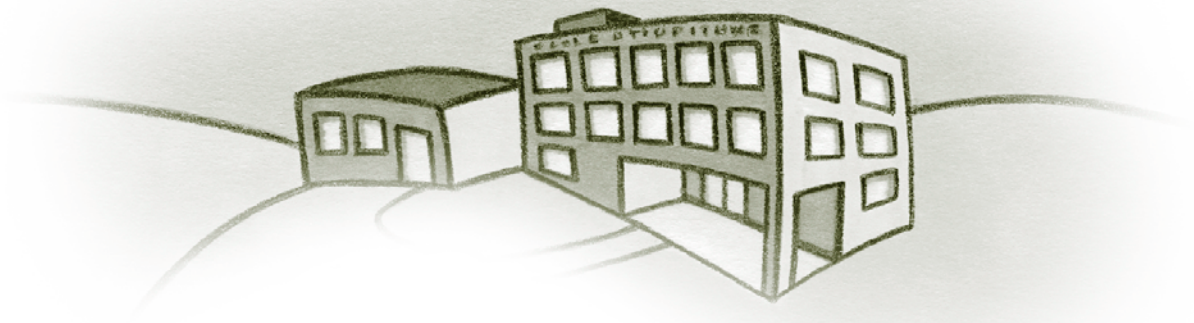
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ▶ Providing a progressive, individualized educational path
- ▶ Responding to the student's needs in the areas of education, well-being and care
- ▶ Ensuring participation of various partners in the education community
- ▶ Applying the basic principles of educational practices
- ▶ Taking into account all dimensions of the student
- ▶ Taking into account the student's chronological age

APPENDIX II (cont.)

AREAS FOR INTERVENTION AND COMPETENCIES

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT	AFFECTIVITY	SOCIALIZATION	COMMUNICATION	KNOWLEDGE	COMMUNITY LIFE
Competency 1 Performs sensorimotor actions effectively in different context	Competency 2 Expresses emotions appropriately	Competency 3 Interacts harmoniously with others	Competency 4 Communicates effectively with others	Competency 5 Constructs his/her knowledge of the world	Competency 6 Participates in community life
Key features of the competency - Shows interest in using the senses and carrying out actions - Carries out actions requiring gross and fine motor skills, in an intentional manner - Adapts actions to the requirements of the environment	Key features of the competency - Expresses emotions and needs in his/her own way - Expresses emotions and needs appropriately - Exhibits the motivation to act	Key features of the competency - Establishes contact with various people - Shows interest in group activities - Respects rules of group behaviour	Key features of the competency - Shows the desire to communicate - Understands messages - Produces messages	Key features of the competency - Reacts to stimuli in his/her environment - Acts upon his/her environment - Develops understanding of his/her environment - Applies different types of knowledge in a functional manner	Key features of the competency - Participates in leisure activities - Helps with various tasks relating to family life - Demonstrates work-related skills and attitudes



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NOTES

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