

SENIA Manila 2013

New!

LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD:



Structured Play Dates for Children with Autism

Author: Maria Rosario E. Gonzales, Ed.M.

This workshop aims to introduce the Structured Play Date (SPD) as a home-based, parent-run social skills intervention for children with autism spectrum disorders. This resource speaker will describe the SPD's salient features and provide clips of actual sessions she facilitated with a young child with autism.

Background

Motivation

I have a child who was diagnosed with High Functioning Autism when she was 9 (speech and language disorder when she was 2 and PDD-NOS when she was 7). She had been attending speech therapy since she was 2 and some occupational therapy for sensory issues when she was 7. Like many parents of special needs children, my husband and I were always on the lookout for opportunities to help our child. – Charro Gonzales

A Master's Paper:

“Introducing the Home-based Structured Play Date for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder”

- conceptualized as a **home-based intervention** that parents like me could implement to help our children with autism spectrum disorders acquire social skills

Major Influence

Integrated Play Groups (IPG) by Dr. Pamela Wolfberg

Model for the Home-based SPD

I ran 10 sessions of the SPD over a period of 3 months on a 5-year old boy with autism, together with his mom, caregivers and playmates (they were volunteers). Towards the later part, I let the mom run the sessions because that was the idea after all--to empower the parents.

My anecdotal reports and feedback from the boy's mom, caregivers, and unsolicited comments by his teachers and speech and occupational therapists, show that there were positive shifts in the child's behavior (and his peers too), in the aspect of making and/or prolonging eye contact, attending to play interactions and initiating play through gestures and/or verbal utterances that approximated words. The results were really quite encouraging!

It's still premature to make any conclusions so I hope to run more of the SPDs with other children with autism spectrum disorders.