

Help with the neurobehavioral screening tool
Starter strategies where findings are 3 to 5 on the Likert scale

The purpose of this handout is to provide examples of simple accommodations based on findings from the neurobehavioral screening tool, to show how strategies are based on understanding symptoms differently. The problem with this, as with all prescriptive “strategies” is that they inhibit people from thinking for themselves, and for being able to develop person-specific accommodations based on understanding the whole person -- in context, and in all different settings.

One-liner recommendations fail to recognize the whole person in their environment, and clearly fail to build on individual strengths and interests, which is why the use of this material is so cautionary. ***These are simply examples to be used for the purpose of illustrating “Trying differently” accommodations.***

1. Developmental level of functioning: Social skills and adaptive behavior

If: Social behaviors are like a person half their age Prefers younger friends May be seen as “irresponsible” for chronological age Interests and play are more like a younger person	Then: Think younger, reframe accordingly Provide appropriate social opportunities Adjust expectations to fit a younger person Accept and support at developmental age
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2. Sensory systems, sensory-motor integration

If: Easily overstimulated and slow to settle Oversensitive to touch, textures-- clothing tags, etc. Undersensitive to touch, doesn't seem to feel pain Highly sensitive to lights, sounds or smells Doesn't seem to understand boundaries Has trouble falling asleep, staying asleep	Then: Identify what is overstimulating: remove Evaluate and eliminate problems Observe; prevent problems Analyze settings for sensory input Provide visuals, consider social age Reduce stimuli, eliminate pre-bed TV
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3. Nutrition

If: Can't eat some foods –strong reactions to tastes Craves sugars, fats Needs to eat often Doesn't seem to know when hungry Doesn't seem to know when full, when to stop eating	Then: Stop fighting. Ask: sensory issues? Teeth? Recognize fatigue, provide healthy snacks Provide protein, complex carbs, no sugars, dyes Use routine, recognize emotional cues of hunger Monitor, hydrate, provide healthy foods, safety (May be related to early deprivation)
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4. Language and communication

If: Talks better than understands; may be “off topic” Confabulates—“Fills in the blanks” Has trouble finding words for feelings Doesn't seem to understand, “Just doesn't get it” Has difficulty reading or responding to body language Chatty, may talk but have difficulty in a conversation	Then: Use fewer words, check for understanding Breathe. Check by saying, “Show me” Try art, music, acting out Slow down, use concrete language Be specific, not indirect Recognize need to belong, accept and support
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5. Processing pace

If:

Listens slowly; often asks "What?"
Thinks slowly; may take minutes to answer questions
Slow halting speech

Then:

Slow down
Give time

Be patient, listen, avoid rushing, creating anxiety

6. Learning and Memory

If:

Poor short term auditory memory
Says one thing, does another
Inconsistent performance: "On" and "off" days
Needs to be retaught the same thing many times
Learns a rule in one setting, may not apply it elsewhere
Has trouble remembering and learning from experience

Then:

Give one direction at a time, regardless of age
Check for comprehension: "Show me"
Accept variability; this is like Alzheimer's
Reteach in different settings, show instead of tell
Reframe: Inability, not intentional

Recognize; prevent problems

7. Abstract thinking

If:

Learning math is hard
Making change or managing money is difficult
Often late, has difficulty planning time

Difficulty predicting outcomes
Making decisions is hard

Then:

Match task to ability, prevent failure
Who can help?
Use external supports, variety of assistive technologies
Remember this and assure safety
Recognize, validate, simplify

8. Executive functioning

If:

Difficulty organizing and planning a day

Difficulty with multi-step tasks

Setting and achieving goals
Gets "stuck," has difficulty stopping
Has trouble transitioning; shifting gears

Upset by unexpected change in schedule
Upset by changes in environments
Impulsive, difficulty inhibiting responses

Difficulty making links

Then:

Build on strengths, provide support, assistive technologies
Keep it simple, reduce complexity. Ask what would help, give time for responses
One thing at a time, one step at a time
Avoid power struggles; validate, anticipate, prevent
Provide transition time and closure, prevent problems
Forewarn, talk through next steps
Involve person in making changes
Accept; reduce anxiety to reduce impulsivity; provide safety; prevent problems
Accommodate; fit task with ability