

The Behavior of Nursery School Teachers While Playing with a Medically Dependent Child with Profound Multiple Disabilities in a Medical Environment

– The process of making non-verbal requests and the effects of
intervention –

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This study explores the value of play for children who are highly medically dependent, as well as to seek possibilities for the roles of nursery school teachers when interacting with such children in medical environments.

In this study, the play process between a nursery teacher and a medically dependent, three-year-old child was observed. Preliminary research was conducted by conducting interviews with nursery school teacher A, who is in charge of child (a), along with the administration of a written questionnaire.

The results show that the features of nursery school teacher A's interaction is interpreting child (a)'s minute movements, such as finger or eye movements, as non-verbal requests from the child. Then, an experimental one-on-one play environment was set up with two other nursery school teachers whose previous interactions with child (a) only entailed group play situations. The verbal interactions of the nursery school teachers were then categorized into three interpretations: agreement, rejection, and request. The interactions with child (a) were then compared with pre- and post-interventions. The interventions consisted of a recording of the child's movements, with a lecture by the author regarding the child's behavioral analysis. The post-intervention results revealed differences in the nursery school teacher's verbal interactions interpreting non-verbal rejections and requests by child (a). This study concludes that the process of interpreting a child's movement is an important aspect of a nursery school teacher's work behavior.