

## Exceptional Strategies for Success - Children


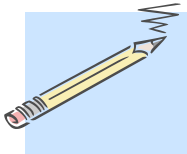

Marcia gave a very interesting talk on this subject mostly dedicated to working with children and young people with fragile X, although there were some pointers for working with adults and Jane will cover them in her article.

One of the most important points that Marcia Braden was to teach to children's strengths. As she said

“If you teach to weaknesses, you will get low functioning learners  
as well as behavioural interferences”

And so what are these strengths?

- **Children with fragile X like predictability.** They like to be able to anticipate what is going to happen during the day and during each lesson. Using visual timetables in class alerts children what is going to be happening during the day and using things like an individual schedule or a tick list shows the breakdown of a task and what they are expected to do.. If your child's school would like more information on these we have articles here or they are more than welcome to call me e.g.

		
date	writing	colouring

Picture or symbols or words (whatever best suits your child) can also be used to show a child what is going to be happening at home/let them know the order in which to do something e.g.

		
TV	dinner	bath

- **Children with fragile X like to know when something is going to be finished and also to finish things.** The strategies mentioned above show a clear finishing point. As Marcia said in a previous newsletter article, once the deal has been made do not break it. This strength can also be used in the teaching of writing e.g. getting children to fill in missing

words rather than having to write the whole thing, gradually teaching them to write their name by filling in the last letter, then the last 2 etc e.g

Alex

Ale\_

Al\_\_

A\_\_\_

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This skill can also be used in doing things like puzzle – begin by getting them just into put in the last piece, then the last 2 pieces etc. It can also help to play to this strength when you are asking your child what happened in the school day or trying to get to the bottom of something they may have done. e.g. “Today Alex went to school. After the register Alex did.....”

- **Children with fragile X are visual learners.** The strategies mentioned above play to this as does a visual strategy to teach reading e.g. matching words to pictures.

This may be more successful if high interest materials are used e.g. name cards to the trains from the Thomas series, name cards to pop stars or footballers (though possible not England’s football players – I am writing this after that fateful game against Germany!!!). This can be developed by matching sentences to photos, maybe using photos depicting child themselves e.g.

Alex is running

Alex is eating


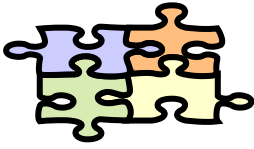

Alex is watching TV.

Visual learning can also apply to Maths e.g. having the right number of dots attached to numbers








The use of high interest materials can also be applied to Maths e.g. counting things they like e.g. cars or pictures of characters from their favourite DVDs.


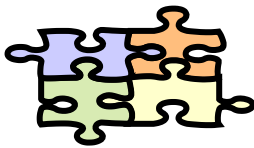

- **Children with fragile X are simultaneous learners.** This means that they are better at learning the whole thing rather than learning something in parts and then putting the parts back together in the right order. This means that they often find it easier to learn whole words rather than learning to read by learning letter sounds and then putting the sounds together to make the word (the phonic approach). Having said that Marcia did speak about teaching an initial word and then learning a word group based on the word i.e. words that have the same ending and sound the same e.g. learning cat and then learning mat, bat.
- **Children with fragile X have the capacity to take in incidental learning.** They may pick up on shop logos and signs and this can be used in the teaching of reading by using the logo in its special type initially and then teaching the word in plain type.
- **Children with fragile X like to please.** Token boards can be used to reward a child for tasks completed and desired behaviour e.g. This chart uses the star as the token

		
writing	puzzle	star

The tokens can then be removed and put on another chart. When a certain number are collected then comes the reward

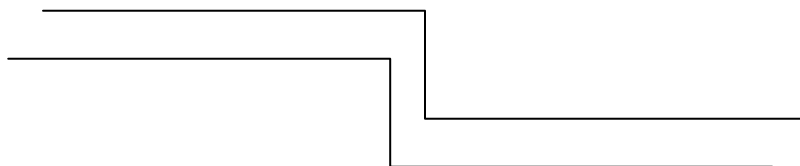
				
				Play with trains

Such a chart can only be used if the child has the capacity to wait for the reward – some may need it a little more immediate e.g.

		
writing	puzzle	train

### **Other tips from, Marcia**

- Children with fragile X can find the mechanics of writing difficult. Are there other ways they can record what they have done e.g. sticking words or sentences together in the right order? Pencil control can be taught in interesting ways, again using high interest materials e.g. tracing the path of a car to get it to the garage



- If the child has an individual LSA/sometimes works with a particular adult, it can sometimes be better if this person remains at a distance rather than always hovering over a child once a child knows what to do and can do some of the task independently.
- Sometimes children with fragile X get anxious receiving direct instructions from the teacher. Can a peer be used as middle man?