



# TEACHING PLAY© CONSULTANT & DUAL CERTIFICATION ORIENTATION

Thank you for participating in the Teaching PLAY (TP) Certification Training! Teaching PLAY is a classroom-based application of the 7 Circles of the PLAY Project. Teaching PLAY Consultants coach teachers and school support staff to incorporate a functional developmental approach in the classroom by applying the PLAY principles, methods, and techniques with students on the autism spectrum. It is a central tenet of Teaching PLAY that helping children with ASD improve their ability to interact and form relationships will enhance their academic readiness.

Your role as a Teaching PLAY Consultant (TPC) will be to train teachers and support staff in special education pre-school programs to help them to implement the Teaching PLAY program for children 3-5-years old who have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or other developmental delays. This orientation manual has important information that you will need to fulfill your role, so please read it thoroughly.

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## 1. Teaching PLAY Consultant Certification Training Tasks

### Task 1: Teaching PLAY Consultant Certification Training

#### Description:

- Attend a PLAY Project Intensive Workshop, Advanced Course and Implementation Course plus Unit 10: Teaching PLAY
- Orientation to TPC training manual and educator training materials
- Implementation and adaptation of PLAY in the classroom setting
- Working with schools
- Student assessment
- Teacher and support staff assessment
- IEP consultation: advocating for social-emotional IEP goals

### Task 2: Classroom Implementation

#### Description:

- A minimum of 5 classroom visits per child (6 visits recommended) consisting of coaching, modeling, and assessment
- 2 educator training sessions focusing on generating an individualized child profile and PLAY Plan for each child

### Task 3: Supervision

#### Description:

- Submission of 15 case study reports based on work in the school setting, or 5 case study reports if pursuing Dual certification as a PLAY Project Consultant



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## 2. Teaching PLAY Consultant Training SAMPLE Timeline

Timeline of Activities	
	<b>PLEASE NOTE: this is only a sample timeline. Individual Teaching PLAY Consultants will pace training and implementation based on their schedule and the school's needs.</b>
Timeline	Activity
Summer/ Early Fall	Preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify participating classroom</li> <li>• Provide school with description of expectations</li> <li>• Obtain necessary permissions for observation and video collection</li> <li>• Schedule classroom visits and in-services</li> </ul>
Early Fall	Participate in <b>Teaching PLAY Certification Training (TASK 1)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review training materials:</li> <li>• Written materials, including training orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teaching PLAY Classroom Suggestion Report: After each visit</li> <li>- Teaching PLAY Plan: Generated during 2 in-depth educator mtgs.</li> <li>- Full TP Video Review Form: To be completed for supervision case submission.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Participate in online training course (recorded and live sessions)</li> </ul>
Early Fall	Prepare for and coordinate classroom visits
October- May	<b>5-6 classroom visits (TASK 2):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.5-3 hours of classroom observation, coaching, and modeling</li> <li>• 30-45 minute debriefing session with teaching staff over lunch hour</li> <li>• Video collection and written report for each visit</li> <li>• PLAY School Environment Assessment completed during first and last visits</li> </ul> <b>Submit your case studies (TASK 3)</b>
October/ November	<b>Educator training session for teaching staff (TASK 2):</b> After FIRST classroom visit. Goal: generate a Child Profile and PLAY Plan.
April/May	<b>Educator training session for teaching staff (TASK 2):</b> After LAST classroom visit. Goal: re-assess Child Profile and PLAY Plan.



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## 3. Teaching PLAY Goals and Objectives

**GOAL 1:** Special education pre-school teachers and school staff will know the basic components of the Teaching PLAY model.

**OBJECTIVES for GOAL 1:**

- A. Describe the function of each of the 7 Circles of Teaching PLAY.
- B. List and describe the principles and methods of the PLAY Project.
- C. List and briefly describe the 6 Functional Developmental Levels (FDL) of
- D. Greenspan and Weider's DIR model.
- E. Describe the key elements of the child's profile.
- F. Give examples of appropriate techniques for each of the six FDLs.
- G. Give examples of appropriate activities for each of the six FDLs.
- H. Describe the difference between the process of interaction and the content of
- I. education.

**GOAL 2:** Special education pre-school teachers and school staff will implement PLAY Project principles, methods, techniques, and activities with 3-5-year-old children with autism spectrum disorders in the classroom setting.

**OBJECTIVES for GOAL 2:**

- A. Profile the identified student with ASD or developmental delay in the classroom according to their Comfort Zone, Sensory Motor Profile, and Functional Developmental Levels.
- B. Sensitive respond to the child's intentions by reading the child's cues and following the child's ideas.
- C. Increase the number of contingent reciprocal social interactions (circles of communication) during every encounter with the child throughout the day in both structured and unstructured settings.
- D. Use at least 3-4 techniques during face-to-face interactions.
- E. Create fun activities that are appropriate for the child based on his/her profile.



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## 4. Preparing for Classroom Visits

### What should teachers and school personnel know before I begin school visits?

Before your school consultation the school administrators should have been contacted and made aware of the program. The teachers and/or key school personnel should have attended the TP introductory workshop or be oriented to the 7 Circles of PLAY. They should have taken the PLAY Project pre-test. In short, they should be oriented to the TP program and have begun accomplishing Goal 1.

### What will I be doing during the classroom consultation visits?

Key Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Half-day classroom consultation: observe, coach, model</li><li>• 10-15 minutes of video recording</li><li>• Video feedback and debriefing after class is over</li><li>• Complete <b>Classroom Suggestion Report</b></li></ul>

Here's a checklist:

- ✓ Call or email ahead to make sure participants know you are coming.
- ✓ Be early so you have time to meet with the teacher before her/his busy day begins.
- ✓ Upon arrival, go to the office and sign in. Get a nametag. You will probably be escorted to the classroom.
- ✓ You will likely schedule to be there for a **half-day consultation**. Discuss your schedule with the teacher. Roughly there will be 4 periods:
  - Introduction
  - Observation
  - Modeling and coaching
  - Video feedback (after the class is over)
- ✓ Take your cues from the teacher. Ask her/him when would be a good time to model? Coach? Review the video feedback?
- ✓ Make sure the teacher knows that you will be **video recording 10-15 minutes** of the interaction with the child. The video should capture the experience of the classroom for the child and emphasize moments to implement the PLAY approach.
- ✓ The video(s) should capture the key adults who typically interact with the child, as well as the TPC modeling. Try to capture some coaching on video.
- ✓ **Video feedback** will take place after the class time is over (typically at the lunch hour). You will likely need to end the classroom visit 20-30 minutes before the lunch hour in order to prepare your videos to be viewed. The video feedback and discussion should be collaborative: share what you were doing during your modeling time and be sure to ask the teaching staff what they were feeling, thinking, trying to achieve during their time.



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- ✓ Take notes so that you can fill out the **Teaching PLAY Classroom Suggestion Report** for your observations and recommendations.

## What do I need to bring to the classroom visits?

You will need the following materials and tools for classroom visits:

- ✓ A video recording device.
- ✓ A laptop or other device for viewing the videos during the post-visit review.
- ✓ **Classroom Suggestion Report:** enough copies for you and all participants to have one.
- ✓ **Child Profile and PLAY Plan forms:** enough copies for you and all participants to have one.
- ✓ **PLAY SEA:** If doing pre & post assessment you will bring the PLAY School Environment Assessment (PLAY SEA) on the first and last visits. You will use Appendix 3: Notes to document observations during the classroom period.
- ✓ Do NOT bring toys.

## What methods will I use to help the special education pre-school teaching staff achieve their goals and objectives?

Summary of Training Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Observation:</b> Before jumping in, watch and learn about the environment and student; collect video of key interactions</li><li>• <b>Didactics:</b> Teaching key concepts and terms</li><li>• <b>Modeling:</b> Engage the child directly during the classroom sessions</li><li>• <b>Coaching:</b> Support and guide school staff in their direct interactions</li><li>• <b>Video and written feedback:</b> Use video footage and brief written documents to provide encouragement and constructive feedback</li></ul>

It is important to realize that the job of teachers and schools is to *teach academics*. We are coming in to their territory and, in an important and different way, introducing the idea of **interactional process instead of academic content** into the classroom. This means that we are not going to be focused on academics! This is a big shift for many teachers. So this needs to be a conversation up front with the teachers.

As a TPC you might say something to the effect of: “Thank you so much for allowing me to come into your classroom. I know that a school’s goal is to help children achieve their IEP goals and that most of those goals focus on academic or pre-academic content. Our goal as Teaching PLAY Consultants is not to focus on academic content but to focus on *interactional process*. (They should be familiar with this distinction from the workshop.)



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Are you OK with this? We really want to make sure that what we are doing here is OK with you.”

Once you have ‘buy-in’ from the teacher, the TPC role in the pre-school setting will use similar methods for transmitting the model to teachers and staff as PLAY Project Consultants do in the parent coaching program. In many ways your role will be similar and your methods will be the same, namely:

1. **Observing.** Your first task is simply to see what is occurring and gain a sense of the classroom and the teacher’s style, just as you would on a first home visit with a parent. The parallels will be obvious. Notice the number of children, how involved socially and developmentally they are, how many staff are available, which staff look like they would ‘get it.’ Be an astute observer and plan your approach. On your first and last visit, you will also capture your observations with the PLAY School Environment Assessment.

2. **Didactics (teaching the teachers!)**—Make sure that teachers/staff know the PLAY principles, methods, techniques, and activities.

- There should be an emphasis on **profiling the individual child** in the classroom and connecting that profile to the process of interaction. Share your mind: “I always try to get a quick profile of the child in order to know how to approach the child in an interaction.”
- There should be an emphasis Circles of Communication (COCs) as the key to turning content into process.
- You will show the teachers that by understanding the child’s FDL that that will change how you interact and what your IEP goals are going to be. Keep it simple: Lower (1,2,3 FDL), Middle (4,5 FDL), Higher functioning (5,6 FDL). If they can profile the children, follow their lead, get COCs, and provide appropriate activities, you will have accomplished a lot!
  - Give the 1-2-3 Checklist in the packet for the FDL 1-2-3 level children
  - Discuss how, for middle functioning children, the emphasis should be on longer interactions and problem solving (see the one page handout on Teaching PLAY Tips)
  - For the higher functioning children, the pre-school setting is usually well suited for them, but we emphasize the importance of using imagination and a focus on social interaction with peers. You’d be surprised how few circles occur between peers. (But get a feel for whether the teacher would welcome silliness!)
- Give suggestions for specific techniques and activities. Always emphasize practical application, rather than focusing too much on theory. Make sure they know the basics, such as the “Rabbit Hole” techniques.



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3. **Modeling**—demonstrating the approach yourselves. You might consider modeling before coaching so that the teacher/staff are not ‘on the spot.’ Put yourself out there first (unless there are opportunities to praise interactions). Talk about what you are doing while you are doing it. Share your mind!

4. **Coaching**—giving feedback *in the moment* to help school staff improve interactions with child with ASD in the classroom setting. Always begin with positive feedback. Catch the staff doing well. We don’t want to discourage staff before they even get started!

5. **Video and written feedback**—You are supposed to capture interactions on video, but the privacy rules are fairly strict in public school setting so make sure you have permission. Your role is to collect footage at each visit. Reviewing the video for Teaching PLAY differs from home consultation. You will review the video at the end of the school session with the team, using the same methods as you would with families, but providing feedback in person.

- **Use video to pinpoint the ‘keys to the case’** and show the school staff what they are doing well and where they need to improve. Then write your advice for the teaching staff using the Visit Review Form provided.
- **A Teaching PLAY Classroom Suggestion Report will be generated during the discussion after the classroom visit.** Bring enough copies of the Teaching PLAY Visit Review Form for all participants, so each person can fill it out. Content should be generated collaboratively.

## 5. Preparing for Educator Training Sessions

You will conduct two more in-depth educator training sessions during the training period, each lasting 1-3 hours, depending on the availability of the school staff and your own time constraints.

### What is the purpose of the first educator training session?

The first training session will be toward the beginning of training period (after the first or second classroom visit) and will focus on creating a PLAY Plan for the individual student, including the in-depth Child Profile (CZ, SMP, FDL), and a plan of Methods, Techniques, and Activities appropriate for the child’s profile. This will be the roadmap for the teaching staff that will guide their approach to the student throughout the classroom visits. You will have time to watch and discuss the video footage of the student, and collaboratively generate a PLAY Plan.





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## **What is the purpose of the second educator training session?**

The second training session will be at the end of the training period (ideally, after all classroom visits are complete) and will revisit the PLAY Plan and give an opportunity for the teaching staff to reflect on lessons learned and changes in the student. You will select key video clips to review with the group that capture implementation of the Teaching PLAY training. This is also an opportunity to discuss possible social-emotional IEP goals to include for the next school year.

## **What do I need to bring to educator training sessions?**

- Video clips to discuss with the group
- Child Profile and PLAY Plan document: enough copies for you and all participants to have one
- Satisfaction surveys