

# A Review of Studies Related to Parental Involvement in Early Intervention for Children with Special Educational Needs with Visual Impairment

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## Abstract

A positive relationship can be created in the development of children's skills if parents can be actively involved. Parental involvement is important for improving the development of children with special educational needs. Parents of children with special educational needs must always be active in the development of their own children's learning, i.e. parents follow activities at school together, take children to early intervention centers and apply learning skills at home. With this, parents who often involve themselves at school or at home can help the development of children with special education needs in a better direction. As we know, the involvement of parents in early intervention programs can reflect various parenting behaviors shown at home and school to improve learning outcomes and children's development. For children with special educational needs, parental involvement at every level of education and treatment is considered an important and indispensable component, especially for making decisions about the process of individual education programs, interventions at school and home and communication with teachers.

**Keywords:** Special Education, Visual Impairment, Early Intervention, Parental Involvement, Education

## Introduction

Parents play a major role in improving children's cognitive, social, motor and socio-emotional skills that have been learned in the early intervention program. This can be proven by Unlu's study. Engel et al (2018), a family training program was implemented for a group of families, parents were trained in delivering the Discrete Trial Training (DTT) method. Based on the results of the study, it can be found that this training program is effective because parents feel very satisfied with this DTT method which can help them together improve their child's learning skills. Meanwhile, the involvement of parents in early intervention programs can help

children with special educational needs to learn better. With this, parents need to actively involve themselves in early intervention programs that their own children participate in (Aziz & Bari, 2015). Parents can get involved with their children at early intervention centers. They can find out what skills and learning strategies their children have learned. With this, parents can train their children's skills learned in the early intervention program at home.

### **Parental Involvement in Implementing Early Intervention for Children with Special Educational Needs**

Parental involvement in early intervention programs can show that parents are very concerned about their child's development. This can be proven by the study of Rowberry et al (2015), parents show their children's social development sensitivity. In the study, there was a strong correlation between parents' reports of children's social dominance. Parents who show high sensitivity towards their children can have an impact on their children's social affectivity. Therefore, parental interaction and coordination between parents and children play an important role in early social and language development.

There are a number of studies proving that parental involvement can be linked to positive outcomes for children with special educational needs. Children can improve language ability, reading skills, and social competence, reduction of behavior problems and better skills and generalization (Benson, 2015; McRae et al., 2018). In addition, parental involvement is a two-way process between parents and teachers. Through communication between parents and teachers, parents understand and care about their children's situation and performance at school while teachers can also get information about children's strengths and preferences. This can enable teachers to implement more appropriate teaching and intervention programs.

Therefore, there are many studies that show that early intervention programs are more effective for children with special needs when family members such as parents are involved in early intervention programs. Not just engaging with experts. Early intervention programs should be done as early as possible for children with special educational needs. So, parents need to plan and identify the early intervention program that needs to be implemented by the child. Not only that, parents can gain skills to manage the emotions, behavior and cognition of children with special education needs. Experts or therapists can give suggestions or training to parents (Zaid et al., 2019). With this, the quality of life of parents of children with special educational needs can be improved. Based on Zaid et al (2020), parents of children with special educational needs experience high stress compared to parents of typical children. Parents of children with special needs also have their own responsibilities and roles.

The increase in self-confidence for children with special educational needs can be increased if the involvement of parents in early intervention programs. Children can be more confident in speaking, getting along with others and expressing their feelings. Typically, children with special educational needs have difficulty communicating and expressing their own opinions to others. They lack eye contact and poor facial expressions and non-verbal sign language (Davenport et. al., 2018). In addition, children with special educational needs who are young and just following the early intervention program, they need time to adapt to a new environment. Some children have difficulty expressing their feelings about unexpected changes and some of them have difficulty adapting to changes in their environment (Di Renzo, et al., 2020). For example, children with autism spectrum disorder experience problems and limited communication and social interaction (Christensen et al., 2018). Children with autism spectrum disorder need more time to adapt in a new environment. With the involvement of

parents, children will feel in a safe place because they are accompanied by their parents. They do not feel afraid and can adapt themselves in a new situation or atmosphere.

### **Discussion**

The role of parents to children is very important and parents are the main teachers for children. Therefore, the involvement of parents in the child's early intervention program can provide a different role for the child. Based on the study of Mosbiran et al (2021) parents can play four types of roles for children, namely parents are teachers, planners, supporters and referees. In the meantime, parents involved in early intervention programs can play the role of teachers to their children. In addition, parental involvement in early intervention programs can change children's perceptions of their parents. Children can learn that parents are not only their companions at home but parents can be educators for them. In fact, parents can find out what needs to be taught to their children at home and practice the activities that have been learned at the intervention center. However, most parents have no idea to educate their children to do activities to improve their children's skills, parents will give smart phones to their children. Children in the age of sophistication with information technology, children have spent more time with media than with other activities (Davenport et al., 2018).

### **Conclusion**

Parental involvement can help children be more courageous to do something. Children will be more active in intervention activities, carrying out activities set by experts or teachers and children will be more confident in themselves. Parents who regularly follow the child's early intervention program allow them to better understand their child's wants and needs. Children's development can also be known by parents from time to time. Therefore, the involvement of parents and children in the early intervention program can help parents in knowing the development of the child's skills at the early intervention center. Parents can also provide guidance to children at the center as well as practice the skills learned at home. Therefore, the involvement of parents is very important to know the development of children's skills and strengthen their children's mastery as teachers.

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