

**TSBVI Residential Program, Beyond the Classroom:
Innovative Approaches to ECC Instruction
Presented at the TAER Conference
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Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC)

Review of the 9 areas:

Compensatory or functional academic skills,

including communication modes

Orientation and mobility (O&M)

Independent living skills

Social interaction skills

Expanded Core Curriculum (cont.)

Review of the 9 areas:

Recreation and leisure skills

Use of assistive technology

Self-determination

Sensory efficiency

Career education

Role of the Residential Teacher

To develop, implement, and support instruction that occurs after school hours, e.g., IEP goals and objectives and programming (PIs=performance indicators).

To evaluate and identify student strengths and areas of need in the ECC.

To oversee and ensure quality, timely collection of data and reporting.

To serve as a resource for dorm managers and other residential staff.

To improve collaboration and communication with daytime staff.

To provide individual, small- and large-group staff training.

Instructional Focus

1. **Independent Living Skills (ILS)**
2. **Recreation & Leisure Skills**
3. **Social Interaction Skills**

Crossover into other areas:

1. **Orientation & Mobility**
2. **Assistive Technology**
3. **Self-Determination**
4. **Career Education**

Benefits of a Residential Environment

Natural environment: hands-on experiences to learn and practice skills

Time: 5 days a week, 24 hours a day (plus alternate weekends for some)

Wealth of resources:

State-of-the-art on-campus facilities

Austin community at our doorstep

Staff talent and expertise

What We Do “After Hours”

Examples of innovative programs & activities:

Residential Employment (Work) Program

Healthy Relationships Groups

and Social Skills Groups

Transition Seminars

Classes, e.g., housing, self-advocacy

What We Do “After Hours” (cont.)

Examples of innovative programs & activities:

Competitive, Recreational, Adventure Sports

Music Classes and Performance Groups

Service Organizations

Drama Club

Other

Residential Employment (Work) Program

Introduced during the 2015-2016 school year, now at the end of its third year

Process includes: group orientation, application, one-on-one interview, supervisor feedback (2x/year), and end-of-year student self-evaluation

Average # of active participants: 10 middle and high school students

Pay range: \$2 to \$3.50 to \$5/hour, based on complexity of task, performance, communication with supervisor(s), and level of independence

Monthly timesheets completed and approved; paid by check

Residential Employment (Work) Program (cont.)

Examples of student jobs performed on campus during 2017-2018 year:

General housekeeping chores (dorms, cafeteria) & clerical tasks

Assistance with elementary students' cooking programs

Production of braille menus for area restaurants

Sweep and neaten outdoor pavilion area

Clean vans, weight room equipment

Residential Employment (Work) Program (cont.)

Observed student outcomes include improvements in:

Sense of pride in a job well done

Communication skills

Time management

Accountability

Healthy Relationships Groups

Total of 8 groups, average 4 to 8 students (age 12-22 years), single-sex or coed

Meet biweekly for conversation and pizza; led by TVI and behavior specialist

Direct instruction of interpersonal skills as they relate to family dynamics, friendships, and romantic partnerships from a variety of resources:

- ***Boyfriends + Girlfriends: A Guide to Dating for People with Disabilities***
- **Social Thinking curriculum (M.G. Winner)**
- **High School FLASH curriculum**
- **YouTube videos/role plays**

Social Skills Group-Middle School Girls

Meets weekly w/ teacher/facilitator, assistant, volunteer, 6 middle school girls

Combination of on-campus groups and off-campus activities

Lessons developed with Boys Town social skills curriculum

Incorporation of sighted peers (GSA), when possible

Explicit instruction of specific skills, e.g., how to get attention appropriately, how to join a conversation, and how to apologize

Reinforcement of table manners, etiquette

Social Skills Group-Middle School Boys

Meets monthly with dorm manager, staff, and up to 15 middle school boys

Lessons/activities developed with Boys Town social skills curriculum

**Explicit instruction of specific skills, e.g., getting along with others,
your body and personal space, and “public, private, or never?”**

**Games and team-building activities with discussion, prizes
(gingerbread houses, marshmallow-spaghetti towers)**

Transition Seminars

Collaboration between Transition Coordinator and Residential Teacher

Identified areas of need for older, soon-to-graduate students

Target audience: 12 high school seniors plus select juniors

Held monthly, combination of on- and off-campus

Topics: apartment locator service, TWC college support/resources, personal finance management (credit union), disability rights

Small-Group, Focused Classes

Needs identified by *Assessment & Ongoing Evaluation for Independent Living*

Direct instruction by Residential Teacher with groups of 4 to 6 students

Target of at least 20% growth in selected performance indicators

Group discussion with brief “homework” assignments

2016-2017: Housing (6 sessions + field trip)

2017-2018: Self-Advocacy (6 sessions)

Competitive Sports

Track & Field*

Cheerleading*

Wrestling*

Goalball

Swimming

Tennis

Dragon Boat-Festival on Lady Bird Lake, April 28th & 29th

***South Central Association of Schools for the Blind (SCASB) member**

Recreational & Adventure Sports

Indoor (Simulated) Skydiving

Stand-Up Paddle Boarding

Horseback Riding

Tandem Cycling

Rock Climbing

Bowling, Yoga

Music Classes/Performance Groups

Individual Lessons:

Guitar (also classical group)

Piano

Group Ensembles:

Barbershop Quartet

Steel Drums

Jazz Band

Choir

Plus: Synthesis & Sound Design, Music Mania, Audio Recording classes

Service Organizations

Mufasa Leo Club, affiliated with Austin Founder Lions Club:

Overnight work trip to camp site in Kerrville

Evaluation/sorting of donated eyeglasses

Student Council:

Student and staff talent shows

Clothing drives, bake sales

Drama Club

Directed by English/speech/theater teacher, also a TVI and an actor himself

Students audition and are cast in acting, singing, and other support roles:

- **Musical direction, choreography**
- **Costumes, hair & makeup**

For the 2017-2018 school year:

- **“A Century to Celebrate” (written by 3 TSBVI high school students)**
- **“A Year with Frog and Toad”-showing April 25th-28th in Austin**

Other

Academic Connections:

Creative Writing

Book Groups

Mad Science

Coding Club

Robotics

Leisure Activities:

Improv Comedy

Coffeehouse

Movie Night

Game Night

Poker

How Could This Take Place in Local Public Schools?

Look for opportunities, a.k.a. “teachable moments,” throughout the school day.

- **Is there a task a student could complete to develop work and social skills?**
- **Perhaps s/he could teach classmates about O&M, AT, sensory efficiency?**
- **“Five-minute lessons” can be taught at school and practiced at home.**

Consult with coaches/club advisors to make necessary accommodations.

Connect with other TVIs & COMS to bring area VI students together.

Don't forget!!! TSBVI STP offers school-year & summer programs.

Think “Outside the Box”

Almost any lesson can be “tweaked” to address the ECC.

Individualize to student need(s).

Make learning fun!

Get creative!!!

Now, let’s share . . .

Now, What About Funding?

All Blind Children of Texas funds, all or in part, programs and activities that address ECC areas of need for students with visual impairments statewide.

- **Applications accepted from TVIs, COMS, and other VI professionals**
- **Requests based on need with no other funding source(s)**
- **Inclusion of sighted peers encouraged**

For more information, or to apply:

<http://www.abctx.org/>

Questions???

**Thank you for your attention
and participation.**

Enjoy the rest of the conference!

