



REFOCUS™

Rebuilding Educational Foundations

of Common Untapped Skills

School Training Manual - Version 1.0
2019

www.REF4Schools.com

HISTORY

The birth of special education in United States schools occurred in 1975 with the passing of Public Law 94-142 (previously known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act - EHA). For the first time in US history, children with special needs would now be included in the public school system and receive the benefits of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The new law reached out to more than one million children across the country who previously had been entirely excluded from our education system. Improving access became a guiding force in assuring that the rights of students with disabilities (SWDs) were protected. The EHA was reauthorized in 1990 changing the name to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

In 2001 President George W. Bush formed the Commission on Excellence in Special Education to investigate issues related to special education. This is the only time a federally funded commission has examined special education since the inception of IDEA. In July of 2002 the Commission released a report of their nine major findings and three general recommendations as follows: 1) Focus on results – not on process, 2) Embrace a model of prevention not a model of failure, and 3) Consider children with disabilities as general education children first.

In 2004, [IDEA](#) was amended and aligned to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. This is the federal law that guides our work today. There are 12 data collections authorized under IDEA Section 618 and include:

Part B:

1. Child Find;
2. Educational Environments;
3. Personnel;
4. Exiting;
5. Discipline;
6. Assessment;
7. Dispute Resolution;
8. Maintenance of Effort (MoE) Reduction and Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS); and

Part C:

9. Child Find;
10. Settings;
11. Exiting; and
12. Dispute Resolution.

On a more personal note in history. In 1983 Teri Turner Pettit graduated from college with her first degree in special education. Determined to change the lives of special needs and at-risk children (having been a visually impaired student herself) she

embarked on years of study and development of programs and systems designed to improve outcomes for these deserving children.

In 2002 Teri co-created a program designed to address early learning failure in students destined to become statistics in special education. This program worked exactly like the Response to Intervention (RtI) programs later required in the reauthorization of IDEA. Teri was able to secure a federal grant and thus disseminate an early intervention program throughout the state of Michigan. Utilizing several programs over a period of years, substantial gains were shown in the academic, social emotional, and physical ability of students who received specialized instruction, pull-outs, and classroom assistance.

Teri went on to work as a teacher consultant, principal of a K-8 building, and as a special education director. She has held jobs with the Office of Special Education (OSE) in the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), for the National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools (NCSECS), served as the chairperson for the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) in Michigan, and assisted with written guidance to states with the National Administrators of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE). While the compliance work was important, it never quite got back to implementing change in the individual lives of those students who struggle with learning.

Over the years as people began to retire, programs or “flavors of the month” as they are frequently called in the world of education, began to disappear. And with them the wisdom that brought individual components of learning success together to provide profound learning experiences that could change lives.

With all of these experiences and life-long learning opportunities, Teri knew it was finally time to use everything learned in her many travels and experiences to create a program that would guarantee success to students struggling with learning. She created the LLC “Rebuilding Educational Foundations” and traveled to various locations nationally to assist in the betterment of compliant systems to meet the needs of children through appropriate programming and services. She then began to hire staff and consultants with a like mission, ***“Providing hope to all students by tapping into, growing, and maintaining skills, guaranteeing success for a lifetime.”***

The creation of the **REFOCUS** program (Rebuilding Educational Foundations of Common Untapped Skills) brings all of the many years of learning into one program designed to assist children in developing motor skills, learning skills, and reading skills to diminish the likelihood of these at-risk students finding their way into a special education setting where labeling and failure abound and instead set them on a course where high expectations are the norm and success is more than just a verb – it’s a life-long promise!

We are pleased that you have decided to join us in our mission and look forward to the opportunity to work with staff and students in your school.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

This **REFOCUS** Training Plan establishes procedures to plan, develop, implement, and maintain the **REFOCUS** training program and curriculum. The following objectives have been established for this plan:

- Train school personnel to incorporate purposeful movement into their student's day.
- Assess all children from the lowest grades through third grade.
 - Pre-testing to determine levels in first month of contract.
 - Standardized assessment for students who fail pre-testing.
 - Post-testing in last month of contract to show growth.
- Provide collected data to teachers and administrators so they are aware of who needs additional assistance. Use comparative data for planning and implementation of programs.
- Determine (with school personnel) what assistance to provide to children determined to be at-risk.
- Provide follow-up with the teachers in the following ways for a period of one year:
 - ongoing email support,
 - ongoing phone support,
 - ongoing technical support for online program,
 - monthly classroom visits and observations, and
 - quarterly newsletter.

1.1.1 PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Various scenarios were considered to form a basis for the plan, and multiple assumptions were made. The applicability of the plan is predicated on:

- Support and oversight from building administrators.
- 2-day training of all participating teachers and administrators from **REF** consultant(s).
- Pre-, post-testing by **REF** consultant(s) of youngest students through 3rd grade.
- Daily participation and input from classroom teacher(s) with an online calendar of activities.
- Parent participation (optional but encouraged).
- Monthly observations and consulting services provided by **REF** consultant(s).

1.1.2 ASSUMPTIONS

Below are statements **REF** Consultants believe to be true and from which a conclusion was drawn to define this plan:

- All children are considered general education students first with the general education teacher being the primary provider of services except in rare cases.
- Staff agrees to provide hope to struggling students by tapping into skills that guarantee success not only for today, but for a lifetime.
- Support personnel (including **REF** consultants) work in the classroom, out of the classroom, and at meetings to support the teacher.
- Purposeful movement is often overlooked in the attempt to meet state criteria for success in the classroom - yet what we fail to see is purposeful movement will:
 - improve behavior,
 - assist children who lag behind developmentally,
 - release stress and trauma,

- lay the groundwork for future demands of fine motor and cognitive skills,
- develop social interaction and cooperation,
- positively impact emotional growth,
- increase imagination,
- promote mental clarity,
- boost problem solving skills,
- advance cognitive processing,
- elevate concentration,
- raise test scores, and
- improve academic ability.

1.1.3 CONSTRAINTS

Limitations that must be taken into consideration regarding the content of this plan.

- Administration must believe in the efficacy of **REFOCUS** and agree to work alongside teachers and other staff in the implementation and maintenance of the program.
- Budgetary constraints may interfere with the immediate implementation of training due to timelines when budgets are previously developed, submitted, and approved.
- Documentation is critical. We have made it as easy as possible, but to show lasting effects for students, it is important that documentation occurs daily. All documentation received will be used in research reporting. Student and school identities will be kept strictly confidential.
- Extensive tardies and/or absences of students and/or staff will negatively impact student progress and should be reported to **REF** Consultants.
- Any inability of the school to predetermine students and/or schedules will greatly interfere with the timely completion of screenings thus delaying the distribution of results to school teachers and administrators.

2 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

REF CONSULTANTS:

- Will provide 2 days of full staff training at the onset of the program.
- Will provide pre- and post-screening for all students from preschool to 3rd grade.
- Will provide standardized gross motor assessment for all students not meeting developmental expectations and passing the pre-screening.
- Will make available screening results for classroom teachers and administrators.
- Will visit the school monthly to work with individual teachers in classrooms regarding students in their care.
- Will provide email and phone support between visits.
- Will provide quarterly newsletters to school.
- Will provide log-ins to website to assure staff has access to calendar and assessment for training.

SCHOOL PERSONNEL:

- Will make copies of the training manual and power point presentation for all participants at their own discretion. Materials are meant to be distributed only to school personnel and parents.
**Improper distribution of copyrighted material is strictly prohibited and is a violation of federal copyright law.
- Will prepare student demographics on testing protocol prior to screening of students.
- Will check the daily calendar and provide an honest response as to whether the activity was used on that particular day.

- Will support one another to allow movements to be imitated in various areas of the school throughout the day.
- **REF** Consultant(s) will require a schedule of classrooms to be assessed so there is no interference with lunch or recess schedules.
- Provide a “runner” to bring students into and out of screenings/assessments for easy flow of students.
- Will pre-populate screening protocols.
- Will provide **REF** Consultant(s) with staff information for log-in (to calendar and testing protocol) purposes.

PARENTS:

- Will be provided access to calendar items to use with their children in their homes.
- Will commit to having their child(ren) at the school on time every day.
- Will participate in any training the school might wish to provide regarding the **REFOCUS** program.

3 REQUIREMENT & PREREQUISITES

There is no level of pre-training or understanding necessary to successfully complete the **REFOCUS** program. All that is required is a belief that all children can and will learn. Any school staff are invited to join us as determined by school administration. Parents may also join us if the school would like to have them participate.

4 STRATEGY & APPROACH

4.1 ON-SITE TRAINING

On-site training is delivered, in person, by **REF** Consultant(s) to trainees as determined by administration. The number of trainees is at the discretion of administration and does not affect the training itself providing physical space is available for larger groups. The training is designed to meet the needs of any sized group and last for 2 days, four hours each day with a one hour break for lunch.

The two-day training is devoted to developing a fundamental understanding of how to meet the needs of at-risk students before they filter into the special education pipeline, as well as how to meet the needs of students already receiving services through an individualized education program (IEP).

Attendees will learn the importance of basic physical skills and how these skills impact learning. This includes locomotor, balance, vision, and object control skills. Benefits and downfalls of several layers of skills are investigated so teachers know not only what to look for, but how to correct insufficiencies before they lead to physical, social/emotional, and/or academic struggles.

Training space is needed that allows participants a place to write notes and see a presentation on a screen, as well as a place for movement.

Participants will want to bring to training:

- Bottle of water
- Note taking material
- Comfortable clothing - including soft soled shoes
- Computer

There will be a good deal of movement throughout both days, so the ability to physically

participate is important.

Staff will be introduced to an online calendar that promotes a particular activity for each day of the week. Time will be devoted to learning how to use the online calendar for the benefit of students, including a data collection portion to track student progress for the year with a simple daily click.

4.2 SCREENING

All students from the youngest up through the third grade will be evaluated using a standardized instrument that has been adapted to meet the needs of the **REFOCUS** program. The screening will be completed by **REF** Consultants and the time spent in this activity will be directly related to the number of children to be screened.

The screening instrument that **REF** has developed is an online program that **REF** consultants enter scores into, ultimately creating classroom reports for teachers so they will be able to see what the specific needs are with their students in order to plan accordingly.

Schools will be asked to pre-populate the testing protocol prior to the screenings taking place in order to expedite the screening process.

REF Consultant(s) will require a schedule of classrooms to be assessed so there is no interference with lunch or recess schedules.

Pre-screenings will take place, and reports will be provided, within one month of original training.

Post-screenings will take place at the end of the school year for the same students who receive the pre-screenings in order to determine growth patterns over the course of the time **REFOCUS** was delivered.

Students will be brought by a “runner” to the screening area, 5 at a time per consultant. This person will be responsible for assuring that all students in a classroom are brought to and taken from the screening area in order to provide a continuous flow of students into the screening area. The consultants will remain very busy screening all of the students and it is important to have a person in place to assist in the quick and easy acquisition of students to screen.

A parent letter will be provided to the school to alert parents of the upcoming screening, asking parents to assure their child(ren) is/are appropriately dressed for the screening - most important is that the children are wearing comfortable clothing and rubber-soled shoes.

4.3 TRAINING MANUAL

Schools will be provided one copy of the training manual and powerpoint presentations so copies may be provided to trainees on the days of the training. Trainees are encouraged to use these materials understanding that this is for their own use and is not to be copied or distributed any further.

**Improper distribution of copyrighted material is strictly prohibited and is a violation of federal copyright law.

4.4 ONLINE CALENDAR

A year-round online calendar is available which includes several components:

- Activities for each day of the week focusing on a different skill set each day of the week including:
 - crossing the midline
 - locomotor skills
 - manipulative / object control
 - static & dynamic balance and coordination
 - brain boosters
 - reading skills
 - mixture of parent activities
- Parent participation is encouraged and the calendar may be shared with parents who will find activities to use with their child(ren) on the weekends and holiday/vacation periods when there is no school, including through the summer months. Classroom teachers may assign permissions to parents for calendar access.
- Children's books are recommended throughout the calendar for use in both home and school. A full list of the books and where to purchase additional copies will be provided electronically to the school.
- Calendar activities often include inexpensive items. A **REFOCUS** Activity Box of samples will be provided to each school including an electronic list of where additional items may be purchased. These items range from a wiggle seat, to a balance board, to a scarf, to a marble fidget.

4.5 CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Classroom support will be available for the school year and will include:

- Monthly on-site supports and observations with a **REF** consultant.
- Email access to **REF** consultants for questions/concerns, etc. for duration of contract. We strive to maintain a 24-hour turnaround time during the weekdays.
- Quarterly newsletter.

5 TRAINING RESOURCES

5.1 MATERIALS

The school will be given an easily reproducible copy of the **REFOCUS** Training Manual and power point presentation to copy for training participants.

****Improper distribution of copyrighted material is strictly prohibited and is a violation of federal copyright law.**

Computerized screening protocols will be available to the school prior to screening dates so they may be populated for students to be assessed.

5.2 PARTICIPANTS

Training is designed for teachers and other ancillary staff that may be involved in pull-outs or other types of student support throughout the school day. Additional staff is welcomed to attend and can be instrumental in assuring that the skills learned in the training are utilized throughout the school day from walking down the hall to getting a drink of water, to working in the computer lab.

No training works completely unless there is 100% buy-in from the administration. It is expected that the school administration will attend, participate, and encourage their staff not only during the training, but throughout the school year.

Parents are other possible participants. We have all seen those parents who come in every day and laminate, cut out figures, hang around in the office. So, let's put them to good use for students. Teach parents how to use this program at home or with children in school. There is a parent component considered and built into the online calendar, so we recommend schools encourage their active participation. School staff may also choose to hold a parent training at a later date.

The only requirement for participation in the training and delivery of the program is that adults must be physically able to accurately demonstrate skills to children.

5.3 EQUIPMENT

Training Equipment:

REF Consultants will need the use of the following on training days:

- Projector
- Screen or wall on which to project, and
- Computer

Additional equipment needed will be brought in by **REF** Consultants.

Screening Equipment:

REF Consultants will provide access to the online screening protocol and will need each classroom to complete the identifying information for the children to be screened prior to **REF** Consultants coming into the school.

Additional screening equipment (i.e., balance beam, balls, cones, etc.) will be brought in by **REF** Consultants so there is no need to borrow from the PE department.

5.4 ENVIRONMENT

Prior to administering training, administration will designate an area for use that allows adult participants to be both sedentary (working on their computers) and lively (movement activities).

Screening of students (on different dates) will require a 50-square foot open area free of obstruction with a flat surface that may be used for the entire day by two consultants.

This area should meet the following specifications as closely as possible:

- Low noise level
- Free from interruptions
- Free from distractions
- Adequate lighting to complete tasks
- Temperature somewhat on the cooler side as children will be active
- Open floor plan

The area should be close enough to classrooms to easily and quickly move children in and out of the screening area.

5.5 SCHEDULE

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Instructor(s)</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Date/Time</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Training for Staff (1 of 2)	<TBA>	<TBA>	/	4 hrs. + lunch
Training for Staff (2 of 2)	<TBA>	<TBA>	/	4 hrs. + lunch
Prescreening	<TBA>	<TBA>	/	5-8 mins per student
Full Assessment	<TBA>	<TBA>	/	20 mins. per student
Monthly Visits	<TBA>	<TBA>	/	1 prearranged day/mo

6 EVALUATIONS

Various evaluations will be utilized to gather information including the following:

- **Training Evaluation** through *Survey Monkey* will provide anonymity to the participants while affording **REF** Consultants information to improve training components of the program.
- **Student Pre-Screenings** through an online program designed for **REFOCUS** will provide a wealth of qualitative and quantitative information on student strengths and weaknesses and may be manipulated to show specific demographic groups such as race, age, grade level, and at-risk characteristics throughout a classroom or the entire school. This information will be gathered to assist classroom teachers in designing lesson plans that will specifically meet the needs of the classroom as a whole, as well as individual students. The metric used looks at both gross motor and visual skills that may have a positive or negative impact on student learning. Teachers will be granted permissions to view any of the students in their classrooms, while administrators may view all students evaluated in the school.
- **Standardized Assessment** will be completed using the same online program detailed above, but will be more comprehensive in its analysis of potential problems. Any student who fails the screening will be administered this assessment which is a standardized measure providing additional input regarding individual student need. Teachers will be granted permissions to view any of the students in their classrooms, while administrators may view all students evaluated in the school.
- **Student Post-Screenings** through an online program designed for **REFOCUS** will provide a wealth of qualitative and quantitative information on student strengths and weaknesses and may be manipulated to show specific demographic groups such as race, age, grade level, and at-risk characteristics throughout a classroom or the entire school. Comparisons made will show individual student growth for the school year and provide information for planning in the next school year.

- **Wind-Up Evaluation** through *Survey Monkey* will provide anonymity to the participants while affording **REF** Consultants information to improve delivery components of the program

7 TRAINING UPDATES & SECURITY

7.1 ACCESS TO MATERIALS

- Training materials will include one copy of the training manual and the powerpoint presentation for use in the building where training is delivered. Schools may make copies for the employees in their building.
**Improper distribution of copyrighted material is strictly prohibited and is a violation of federal copyright law.
- Online access to the regularly updated calendar will be available to all school staff and parents (if applicable) for 365 days from the date of the signed contract.
- Student screening and assessment results will be available to teachers for their specifically assigned students, and to administration for all students in the school.
- Materials needed for the training, screenings, and assessments will be provided by **REF** Consultants.
- Suggestions and lists of possible books and other materials schools may consider purchasing will be provided to administration of the school.
- A quarterly newsletter will be sent out to all personnel with emails associated with their school's account which will include an information section, resources, what you need to know from the state and local perspectives, and lastly any professional development that is upcoming around the state that may be of interest to those working with at-risk children.

7.2 UPDATING RESOURCES

- **REF** Consultants regularly update items on the calendar to reflect current best practices, curriculums, and thoughts related to the academic, social/emotional, and behavioral needs of a child's development.
- Quarterly newsletters will keep subscribers aware of all upcoming important issues and dates for strengthening their daily practices with children and for improving their own learning.
- Any revisions or updates to the actual training will be noted in the newsletters.

7.3 SECURITY

All computer programming for **REFOCUS** has been completed with the assistance of a team of IT experts. We have built a sophisticated and scalable application in the cloud to help us move quickly and securely in both our calendar and our assessment protocols, as well as our website: www.ref4schools.com. Our secure browser uses the most advanced and comprehensive browser and firewall antivirus protection with real-time protection against malicious and fraudulent attacks from Malware, Spyware, Trojan, and Ransomware. In addition, the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) will be strictly adhered to by all **REF** employees and consultants.

8 CONTACT US

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