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IPG Seminar – workshop

Autism Institute on Peer Socialization and Play



Integrated Play Groups® Training, Research & Global Outreach

www.AutismInstitute.com

- Presenter:** Professor Pamela Wolfberg, Ph.D. San Francisco State University & Autism Institute on Peer Socialization and Play
- Date & Time:** September 21, 9.00–16.00
- Place:** Aula Konradsberg ("K-aulan"), Ellen Key-huset ("K-huset"), Konradsbergsgatan 7A, Campus Konradsberg (T-Thorildsplan).
- Language:** English
- Organizer:** Department of Special Education, Stockholm University
www.specped.su.se

Description of Seminar

This introductory seminar addresses the unique needs of children on the autism spectrum in the areas of peer socialization, play and imagination, and inclusion in childhood culture. Participants will become familiar with the principles and practices of the Integrated Play Groups® (IPG) model. IPG is an empirically validated model designed to support children with autism in mutually engaging experiences with typical peers and siblings in natural settings. Based on award-winning research, the IPG model has been found to be effective in enhancing socialization, communication, play and imagination in children across the spectrum representing diverse ages, abilities, socioeconomic groups, languages and cultures. Extensions of the IPG model include innovations, drama, art, video and other creative activities of high interest for children, teens and adults.

Target Audience

Professionals (educators, therapists, related practitioners), parents/family members

Session Overview

This initial one-day seminar is open to a wide range of participants. The primary purpose is for participants to become familiar with the principles and practices comprising the IPG model. This session provides a basic overview of theory and methods. Lecture, slides, video,

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hands-on activities and interactive discussion are used to illustrate concepts, tools and techniques. Participants will receive handouts to serve as a guide throughout the session and as a resource for future use.

Learning Outcomes

Participants will gain basic knowledge of

- Theories on the nature of peer socialization and play and the autism spectrum
- Principles of the Integrated Play Groups model
- Methods to assess social, communication and play variations in children with autism
- Methods to guide children's peer socialization, communication, play and imagination
- Methods for designing supportive play environments
- Methods for designing quality peer play programs in diverse settings

Agenda

I. Introduction – IPG Conceptual Foundation

- Overview of IPG model
- Nature of peer socialization and play and the autism spectrum
- Play's prominent role in childhood

II. Setting the Stage for Play – IPG Program and Environmental Design

- Planning IPGs
- Gathering and preparing the players
- Preparing the play setting

III. Observing Children at Play – IPG Assessment Methods

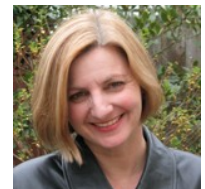
- IPG Observation Framework
- IPG Assessment Tools and Techniques

IV. Guided Children's Socialization and Play - IPG Intervention Methods

- Structuring the Play Session
- Guided Participation in Play

About the Presenter

Pamela Wolfberg, Ph.D. is Professor in the Autism Spectrum Program at San Francisco State University and faculty advisor for the Joint Doctoral Program in Special Education at the University of California, Berkeley with SFSU. She earned her Ph.D. from U.C., Berkeley in 1994 where she received a distinguished award for outstanding doctoral dissertation.



Her research interests are centered on peer relations, play and imagination, and childhood culture as related to the social inclusion of children on the autism spectrum. As originator of the Integrated Play Groups (IPG) model and founder of the Autism Institute on Peer Socialization and Play, she leads research, training and development efforts to establish inclusive peer play programs worldwide.

She has published extensively in peer reviewed journals and academic texts focused on these

topics. She is the author of *Play and Imagination in Children with Autism and Peer Play and the Autism Spectrum: The Art of Guiding Children's Socialization and Imagination* and co-editor of *Learners on the Autism Spectrum: Preparing Highly Qualified Educators*.

She serves as principal investigator on major research and training grants and as associate editor for *Autism: International Journal of Research and Practice*. She has an active agenda as an invited international speaker and is the recipient of several eminent awards for her scholarship, research, and service to the community.

The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation, which should be directed to the same purpose as education; society and public authorities shall endeavor to promote the employment of this right.

United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, Principle 7

Fact Sheet on Integrated Play Groups® (IPG) Model

What is the IPG model?

Integrated Play Groups® is a research validated model originated by Pamela Wolfberg, Ph.D., professor of the Autism Spectrum program, San Francisco State University and founding director of the Autism Institute on Peer Socialization and Play. The IPG model is designed to promote socialization, communication, play and imagination in children on the autism spectrum while building relationships with typical peers and siblings in natural inclusive settings. Extensions of the IPG model include such innovations as drama, art, video and other creative activities of high interest for children, teens and adults. The IPG model has been widely adopted at the local, national, and international level.

What is the IPG model rationale?

Research shows that peer socialization and play experiences are a vital part of children's learning, development and culture. The IPG model was developed out of deep concern for the many children on the autism spectrum who are missing out on these essential experiences. Core challenges in social interaction, communication, play and imagination place children with autism at high risk for being excluded by peers. Social isolation further deprives children of opportunities to meet their full potential to socialize and play. The IPG model maximizes each child's developmental potential and intrinsic motivation to play, socialize and form meaningful relationships with peers. Equal emphasis is placed on supporting peers to be accepting, responsive and inclusive of children's unique differences.

How is an IPG conducted?

An IPG brings together children with autism (novice players) and competent peer partners (expert players) who are led by a qualified adult facilitator (IPG Guide). Each IPG is individualized as a part of a child's education/therapy program. Using sensitive assessments, IPG sessions are tailored to children's unique interests, abilities and needs within a specially designed play environment. Play activities may include pretending, constructing, movement, interactive games, art, music, drama, video and other creative pursuits. Guided participation (systematic intervention inspired by Vygotsky) is used to facilitate mutually engaging experiences that encourage increasing capacities for socialization, communication, play and imagination. Gradually the children mediate their own social play experiences with minimal adult guidance.

Who may participate in an IPG?

The IPG model was originally developed for preschool- through elementary-aged children, and is now being adapted for teens and adults. Groups are made up of 3 to 5 children, with a higher ratio of expert to novice players. Novice players include children of all abilities across the autism spectrum. Expert players include typical peers and siblings with strong social, communication and play abilities.

Who is qualified to deliver the IPG model as a program or service?

Qualified IPG providers include professional partners (organizations and individuals) who meet the minimum standards and requirements for an IPG trademark license through successful completion of the Integrated Play Groups® Master Guide training program (see www.autisminstitute.com).

What are the benefits of the IPG model?

Based on award-winning research, the IPG model has been found to be effective in supporting a wide range of children representing diverse ages, abilities, socioeconomic groups, languages and cultures.

Novice players have demonstrated gains in the development of social interaction, communication, language, representational play and related symbolic activity (writing and drawing). Expert players have benefited by showing greater self-esteem, awareness, empathy and acceptance of individual differences. Both novice and expert players have formed mutual friendships while having fun together.

Publications

Pamela Wolfberg, *Play and Imagination in Children with Autism*; Teachers College Press, Columbia University (SECOND EDITION - 2009) *Based on Award-Winning Research: Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award, University of California, Berkeley.

Pamela Wolfberg, *Peer Play and the Autism spectrum: The Art of Guiding Children's Socialization and Imagination: Integrated Play Groups Field Manual*. (ENGLISH EDITION - 2003) Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

Kari Dunn Buron & Pamela Wolfberg (Editors) *Learners on the Autism Spectrum: Preparing Highly Qualified Educators*. Autism Asperger Publishing Company. (2008)
*Recipient of Autism Society of America Literary Work of Year.

Articles

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Yang, Tsung-Ren; Wolfberg, Pamela J.; Wu, Shu-Chin; Hwu, Pey-Yun (2003). Supporting Children on the Autism Spectrum in Peer Play at Home and School: Piloting the Integrated Play Groups Model in Taiwan. *Autism: The International Journal of Research and Practice*, 7, 4, 437–453.

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Neufeld, D. & Wolfberg, P. J. (2009). From novice to expert: Guiding children on the autism spectrum in Integrated Play Groups. In Schaefer, C. (Ed.) *Play therapy for preschool children*. Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association.