

## ALSUP Guide

- The *Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems* (ALSUP) is best used as a *discussion guide* rather than as a free-standing checklist or rating scale.
- Meetings should be focused almost totally on identifying lagging skills and unsolved problems. It is not the goal of the meeting to try to explain *why* a child has a particular lagging skill or unsolved problem, so hypotheses and theories about *cause* are to be avoided. It is also counterproductive to have participants go into great detail about the *behaviors* that a child exhibits in response to a given unsolved problem so story telling is to be avoided as well.
- It's best to discuss each lagging skill (rather than "cherry-picking"), starting at the top
- If a lagging skill is endorsed, don't continue moving down the list of lagging skills...move *over* to identify the unsolved problems associated with the lagging skill
- An unsolved problem is an *expectation a child is having difficulty meeting in association with a particular lagging skill*
- To identify unsolved problems, begin with the stem, "Can you give some examples of expectations (Theresa) is having difficulty meeting when you think of her having (then restate the endorsed lagging skill. For example, "Can you give some examples of expectations Theresa is having difficulty meeting when you think of her having difficulty making transitions?"
- Identify as many unsolved problems as possible for each endorsed lagging skill... don't move on after identifying only one unsolved problem has been identified.
- Many lagging skills may contribute to the same unsolved problem...don't spend valuable meeting time trying to be precise about which lagging skill best accounts for a given unsolved problem.
- Don't write the same unsolved problem in more than once, even if a later lagging skills reminds you of the same unsolved problem.
- There are some important guidelines for writing unsolved problems:
  - ⇒ **They usually begin with the word *Difficulty***, and the word *Difficulty* is usually followed by a verb, for example:
    - *Difficulty getting started* on the double-digit division problems in math
    - *Difficulty completing* the map of Europe in geography
    - *Difficulty participating* in the discussions in morning meeting
    - *Difficulty moving* from choice time to math
    - *Difficulty ending* computer time to come to circle time
    - *Difficulty coming* into school in the morning
    - *Difficulty going* to the nurse for your medication before lunch

- Difficulty *walking* in the hallway between classes
- Difficulty *keeping* hands to self in the lunch line
- Difficulty *lining up* for the bus at the end of the school day
- Difficulty *sitting* next to Trevor during circle time
- Difficulty *taking turns* during class discussions in Social Studies
- Difficulty *raising* hand during class discussions in Science
- Difficulty *remaining* quiet when a classmate is sharing his or her ideas in English
- Difficulty *waiting* for his turn during the four-square game at recess
- Difficulty *putting* away the Legos after choice time
- Difficulty *retrieving* his Geography notebook from his locker before Geography class
- Difficulty *arriving* at school on time at 8:30 am

- ⇒ **Some verbs should be avoided:** accepting, appreciating, staying calm, asking for help, listening, paying attention, focusing, considering, understanding, persisting, controlling
- ⇒ **They should contain no reference to the child's *challenging* behaviors**, though reference to *expected* behaviors is fine (so you wouldn't write *Screams and swears when having difficulty completing the word problems on the math homework*...instead write *Difficulty completing the word problems on the math homework*)
- ⇒ **They should contain no adult theories** (so you wouldn't write *Difficulty writing the definitions to the spelling words in English...because his parents were recently divorced*)
- ⇒ **They should be split, not clumped** (so you wouldn't write *Difficulty raising hand* but rather *Difficulty raising hand during social studies discussions*)
- ⇒ **They should be specific**...there are two strategies to help:
  - Include details related to who, what, where, and when
  - Ask *What expectation is the child/student having difficulty meeting?*