



Introductory Level - Option 1
IPG Seminar Day 1

Presenter: Pamela Wolfberg, Ph.D.
San Francisco State University & Autism Institute on Peer Socialization and Play

Description of Seminar: This introductory seminar addresses the unique and complex challenges children on the autism spectrum encounter in peer relations and play. Participants will become familiar with the principles and practices comprising Integrated Play Groups, a model designed to support children with autism (novice players) in mutually enjoyed play experiences with typical peers/siblings (expert players) within home, school, community and therapy settings. Based on award-winning research, the IPG model has been found to be effective in enhancing reciprocal social interaction, communication, play and imagination in children of diverse ages and abilities with autism, Asperger's and related social-communicative needs.

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, 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 become familiar with:

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

Agenda:

- I. Introduction – IPG Conceptual Foundation
 - Nature of play and the autism spectrum
 - Play's prominent role in childhood
 - Key features of the IPG model
- II. Setting the Stage for Play – IPG Program and Environmental Design
 - Gathering and preparing the players
 - Preparing the play setting
 - Structuring the play session
- III. Observing Children at Play – IPG Assessment Methods
 - Fundamentals of the IPG assessment approach
 - IPG Observation Framework
 - IPG Assessment Tools
- IV. Guided Participation in Play – IPG Intervention Methods
 - Monitoring play initiations
 - Scaffolding play
 - Social-communication guidance
 - Play guidance