

Case Study 1

Bennett

Bennett is a six-year old repeating Kindergarten student whose second language is English. His family speaks Mandarin at home, so he only hears English in the school environment. This is his third year at an English speaking school.

During large-group instruction, Bennett wanders around the classroom and rarely stays on his carpet spot. While wandering the room, Bennett often picks up common classroom items and puts them into his mouth. When the group is given instructions, Bennett does not begin the task with the group until the teacher redirects him to his seat and then models the expected outcome for him. If the task is paper/pencil, he rarely begins. He has poor handwriting skills and dislikes drawing pictures.

Bennett will respond to a direct question with a word or short phrase, but rarely initiates conversation with an adult or peer. When he does speak, he speaks loudly.

Bennett has few friends. He doesn't follow rules of games or activities. He also has difficulty noticing when he hurts others with his words or actions. Bennett has difficulty regulating his emotions when he perceives others have hurt his feelings or when things don't go his way.

Case Study 2

Jack

Jack is a seven-year old boy in the second grade. Jack's parents report that he started speaking at the age of one, and he hasn't stopped since. All conversations revolve around his particular areas of interest; trains and sports teams. He is not interested in continuing a conversation that does not relate to one of these topics.

Jack will ask questions that he already knows the answer to and will repeat the same question over and over again. When speaking to another, he looks down or to the right of the person with whom he is conversing.

Jack seems to enjoy talking with adults, but is rarely seen conversing with his peers. Socially, he has few friends, and is unaware that this may be a problem.

When there is a change in the schedule, Jack gets upset and refuses to participate in the unscheduled activity. Jack prefers things be done his way. Teachers often report non-compliant behavior.

Academically, Jack is at grade level, and does particularly well with rote memorization. He has more difficulty with comprehension.

Case Study 3

Ally

Ally is a four-year old girl in a developmentally appropriate preschool program. She is very social and happy most of the time. When she sees a picture in a book, she wants to tell the class what she thinks. However, it is often hard for the teacher and her peers to understand what she is talking about. She appears to have difficulty coming up with the appropriate vocabulary to share her idea.

Ally likes to play with the other children, but she often doesn't seem to understand the game they are playing, or the role they want her to play. She finds it difficult to take turns and share. If prompted by an adult, she will do so. When another student does something Ally does not like, Ally will instantly become physically aggressive by pushing, hitting, or grabbing the child. When upset, she does not follow adult directions, and often becomes rude to staff members. After such an incident, it may take her one hour to calm down and to be able to process the situation with an adult.

Case Study 4

Chris

Chris is a three-year old boy in the three-year old preschool program at an international school. His parents report that he was a very easy baby with a normal delivery. He rarely cried. Chris is the second child. He has an older sister who started speaking at 9 months of age. Chris's home environment consists of his parents, his sister, and a live-in nanny who speaks to him in another language. Both parents are working, and report that when they get home in the evening, Chris "punishes" them by ignoring their presence, not allowing them to hug him, and not giving them any eye contact. The family used to enjoy playing peek-a-boo, hide and seek, and other such games with the children, but when Chris turned two, he stopped participating.

In class, Chris plays with two toys. He plays with cars, but only bangs them together or turns them over to spin the wheels. He is often seen lining the toy cars up and gets upset when someone moves them. Chris also enjoys watching the toy train go around the track.

Chris has very few words. When he speaks, he speaks loudly and using phrases he has already learned, such as, "Be careful. That's dangerous!" or "No more monkeys jumping on the bed." He will often repeat the phrases again and again.

Chris seems fascinated with light switches or anything mechanical such as stereos or fans.

Chris is not interested in other children. He will times play in a parallel manner.

Behaviorally, Chris runs away when disengaged or upset, and will show anger by biting or pulling an adults hair. He does not follow verbal instructions.

Case Study 5

Bella

Bella is a six-year old girl in the first grade attending an international school. Bella is very articulate and strong socially. She is popular and a good friend to all. She appears to understand concepts easily and comprehend well when books are read aloud. She did well when tested on the concepts of print at the beginning of the school year. Bella comes from a very supportive and involved family. She has had a lot of exposure to literature and pre-reading skills.

Although it is January, Bella still cannot rhyme words, recognize the letters in her name, or identify letter sounds. The teacher reports that Bella will identify a letter and sound one day, but when asked the same letter the next day, Bella is unable to do so.