

Charting A Reasonable Dream

**for a Child or an Adult
with Moderate-to-Severe Disabilities
including Autism**

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**To those who view this slideshow
or those who attend a presentation
of which it is a part...**

**I am speaking directly to parents,
with the hope that this will serve
as a guide for practitioners
as they do the same...**

Patrick McGreevy

Let's begin with two definitions...

A Reasonable Dream

includes expectations based on empirical evidence (your child's performance), awareness of the range of skill and behavioral repertoires often associated with specific conditions or syndromes, and a proper interpretation of the scientific literature

A Dream that is not Reasonable

Includes expectations that are not empirically-based (not based on your child's performance), not based on an awareness of the range of skill and behavioral repertoires often associated with specific conditions or syndromes, not based on a proper interpretation of the scientific literature, and that often result in lack of progress or the acquisition of skills that are not useful

Charting a reasonable dream for your child or your adult child with a disability begins with an examination of your expectations...

**These expectations
are shaped by information
from a variety of sources**

**Physicians, Psychologists,
Teachers, Care Providers,
Advocates, Behavior Analysts,
Research Studies,
List Serves, Chat Rooms,
Organizations, Conferences**

**And, these expectations
...and this dream
may change**

**If your 2-8 year old child
has been described as having autism,
these initial expectations
and your initial dream
'may' include some or all of the following¹:**

**full or partial, academic inclusion
in a regular classroom,
continued academic progress,
graduation from high school or the equivalent
and, an undergraduate or graduate degree**

¹ which may have been directly influenced by Lovaas. O.I. (1987). Behavioral treatment and normal educational and intellectual functioning in young autistic children. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 55(1), 3-9.

These expectations suggest...

A developmental curriculum,
such as the **VB-MAPP**

And
Early and Intensive
Behavioral Intervention

The **VB-MAPP** guides instruction through a sequence of language, social, and pre-academic skills that parallels what occurs in typically-developing children, and that prepares children for pre-academic and academic settings

As long as your 2-8 year old child continues to receive high-quality intensive behavioral intervention and continues to make significant progress

on the VB-MAPP

Your expectations and your dream should be considered reasonable

If, on the other hand, your child does not continue to make significant progress

on the VB-MAPP

even with high-quality, behavioral intervention...

...and, if your child is not experiencing generalization across settings or people, is not exhibiting 'novel' responses (responses you never taught), and is having difficulty making discriminations, understanding abstract concepts, and acquiring intraverbals (answers to questions) without scripts...

As difficult as it may be...

“and it may be...”

It may be time to gradually change your expectations and your dream to something more reasonable...

such as...

enrollment in a special education program,
partial, social inclusion in a regular classroom,
graduation from high school or the equivalent,

and

skills that may result in employment,
supported employment, supported living,
a greater degree of independence
and community participation,
and an improved quality of life.

notice that these expectations do not include...

full or partial, academic inclusion
in a regular classroom

These expectations suggest...

A gradual change to...
A functional skills curriculum,
such as



and

Continued behavioral intervention
or instruction in school guided by
behavior analysts



guides instruction through a series of
functional skills, including – speaking,
listening, social, daily living, leisure,
vocational, academic, and tolerating skills – that
prepare learners to...

effectively interact with others,
function more independently in residential and
vocational settings, and
actively participate in community activities

**If your 2-8 year old child
has been described as having autism,
but is also known to have a pervasive developmental
disability, such as Down Syndrome, Angelman's
Syndrome, Microcephaly, Rett Syndrome,
PDD, or PDD-NOS, that almost always results
in moderate-to-severe disabilities...**

or

**If your child is known to have
a moderate-to-severe developmental disability
but has not been described as having autism**

**Reasonable expectations,
'from the beginning', include...**

**Early and intensive behavioral intervention,
enrollment in a special education program,
partial, social inclusion in a regular classroom,
graduation from high school or the equivalent,**

and

**skills that may result in employment,
supported employment, supported living,
a greater degree of independence
and community participation,
and an improved quality of life.**

**These expectations suggest,
From the beginning....**

**A functional skills curriculum,
such as**



and

**Continued behavioral intervention
or instruction in school guided by
behavior analysts**

**And, always remember, that
reasonable expectations and
A Reasonable Dream
are based
on empirical evidence
(your child's performance),
and a change in that evidence
could easily effect a change
in your expectations and your dream...**

**If your adult child
has been described as having autism,
but is also known to have a pervasive developmental
disability, such as Down Syndrome, Angelman's
Syndrome, Microcephaly, Rett Syndrome,
PDD, or PDD-NOS, that almost always results
in moderate-to-severe disabilities...**

or

**If your adult child is known to have
a moderate-to-severe developmental disability
but has not been described as having autism**

Reasonable expectations include...

**skills that may result in employment,
supported employment, supported living,
a greater degree of independence
and community participation,
and an improved quality of life.**

And, these expectations suggest....

**A functional skills curriculum,
such as**



and

**Intervention guided by
behavior analysts**

Thank you.

**I am always open
to your comments
and your suggestions**

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