



Mike Fain
Director of
School Psychology
Services

740-452-4518
mike.fain@mvesc.org

Preschool Autism Programs

Little Feats/Big Leaps

Little Feats/Big Leaps is a specialized program for preschool children with autism. It was established in September 2000 and is a cooperative venture of the five local school districts in Muskingum County, Zanesville City Schools and Morgan Local Schools. The program was developed because educational leaders in the MVESC service area recognized that children with autism have unique educational, social and behavioral needs. As the number of children with autism increased dramatically, our educational system responded by creating this specialized program.

Our program consists of two classrooms offering a continuum of instructional options, from one-to-one intensive instruction to large group instruction and learning activities with typical peers. Depending on individual needs, children may spend all or part of their day in one or both of the classrooms, as well as other regular or special educational settings.

Little Feats Classroom

Little Feats is a classroom that uses intensive, one-to-one instruction. We use behavior technicians who are paraprofessionals who receive extensive training in autism and the methodology used in our program. The cornerstone of Little Feats is the use of applied behavior analytic (ABA) principles. Specifically, we use the applied verbal behavior approach (AVB). AVB is based on B. F. Skinner's theory of language and is designed to develop functional communication skills in children. Intensive behavior modification procedures are used to systematically motivate children and teach them a broad range of essential skills that every child needs. Emphasis is placed on teaching skills, such as attending, imitating, requesting, labeling, following direction, playing and interacting with others.

Big Leaps Classroom

The Big Leaps Classroom has one preschool special education teacher and two assistants. It is designed for children who have developed some communication skills but need help developing classroom skills and appropriate peer relationships. It offers a variety of instructional paradigms, including natural environment training, verbal behavior training, highly structured, teacher-directed instruction, peer mediated intervention, small and large group instruction and limited one-to-one instruction.

