

## Intensive Intervention Practices for Students with Autism and Beyond

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### Presented by:



Sarah Haahr M.Ed., BCBA  
Central Region Behavior  
Specialist  
[shaahr@esu10.org](mailto:shaahr@esu10.org)



Ali Sweitzer M.Ed., BCBA  
Metro Region Behavior  
Specialist  
[asweitzer@esu3.org](mailto:asweitzer@esu3.org)



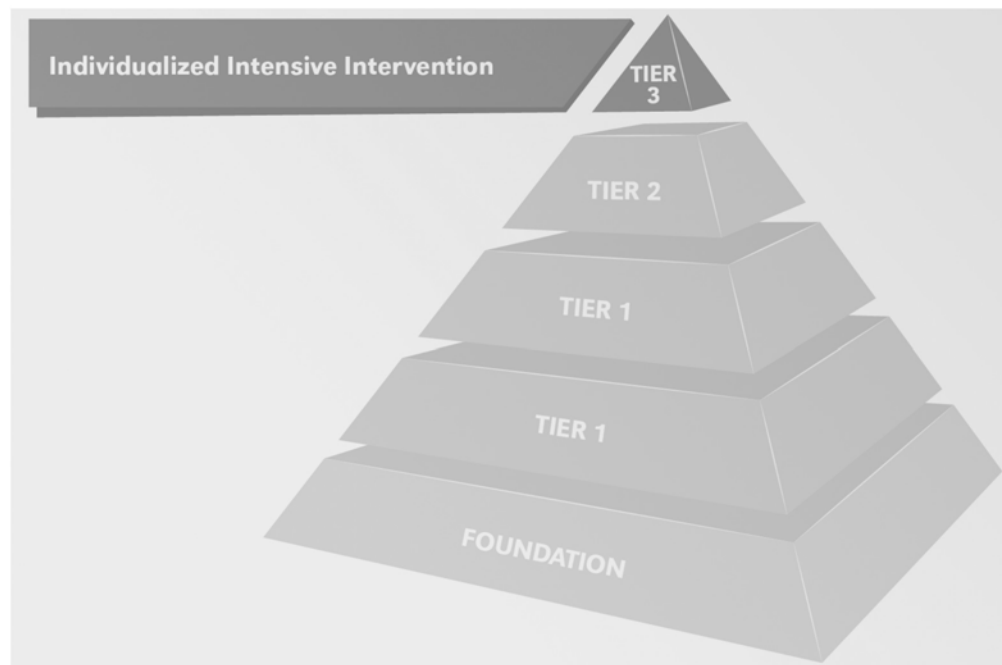
Annette Wragge M.Ed., BCBA  
State ASD Network  
Coordinator  
[awragge2@unl.edu](mailto:awragge2@unl.edu)

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# Objectives

<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Describe several high leverage, intensive interventions for students with autism</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Define/Understand the importance of functional communication and skill-based teaching in preventing problem behavior</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Understand the key components of the following: Balance Program, Practical Functional Assessment/Skills based teaching</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>Describe elements of the Universal Protocol</p>
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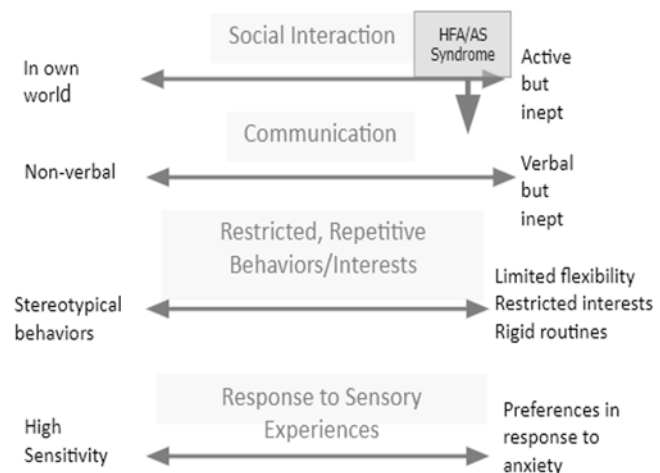
## SO..... WHAT EXACTLY IS AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER?

“Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges.”

Center for Disease Control and Prevention website:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/facts.html>

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## Autism Spectrum Disorders



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## Triad of Characteristics



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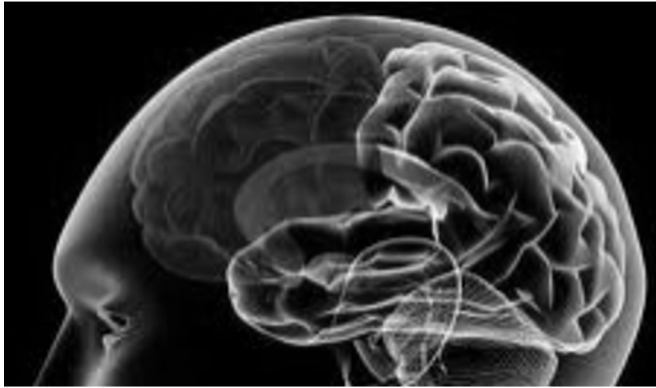
## Sensory Differences



- Sensory Differences in:
- Seeing
- Hearing
- Smelling
- Tasting;
- Touching
- Body position and balance (proprioception)
- Movement (vestibular)

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## Cognitive Differences



- Rote memory
- Academic levels
- Problem solving skills
- Generalization
- Executive functioning
- Special interests

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## Motor Differences



- Poor handwriting skills
- Awkward gait
- Athletic skills deficits
- Unusual body postures, movements or
- Facial expressions

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## Emotional Vulnerability



- Difficulty identifying and understanding feelings
- Trouble reading emotional situations
- Co-morbid mental health issues
- Anxiety/depression
- Rages/aggression

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## Features That Directly Impact Learning



- Attention difficulties
- Communication impairments
- Lack of social skills understanding
- Auditory processing impairments
- Generalization of skills
- Difficulties imitating behavior
- Behavioral issues
- Trouble with task/event sequencing
- Transitions and time concepts

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## Strengths

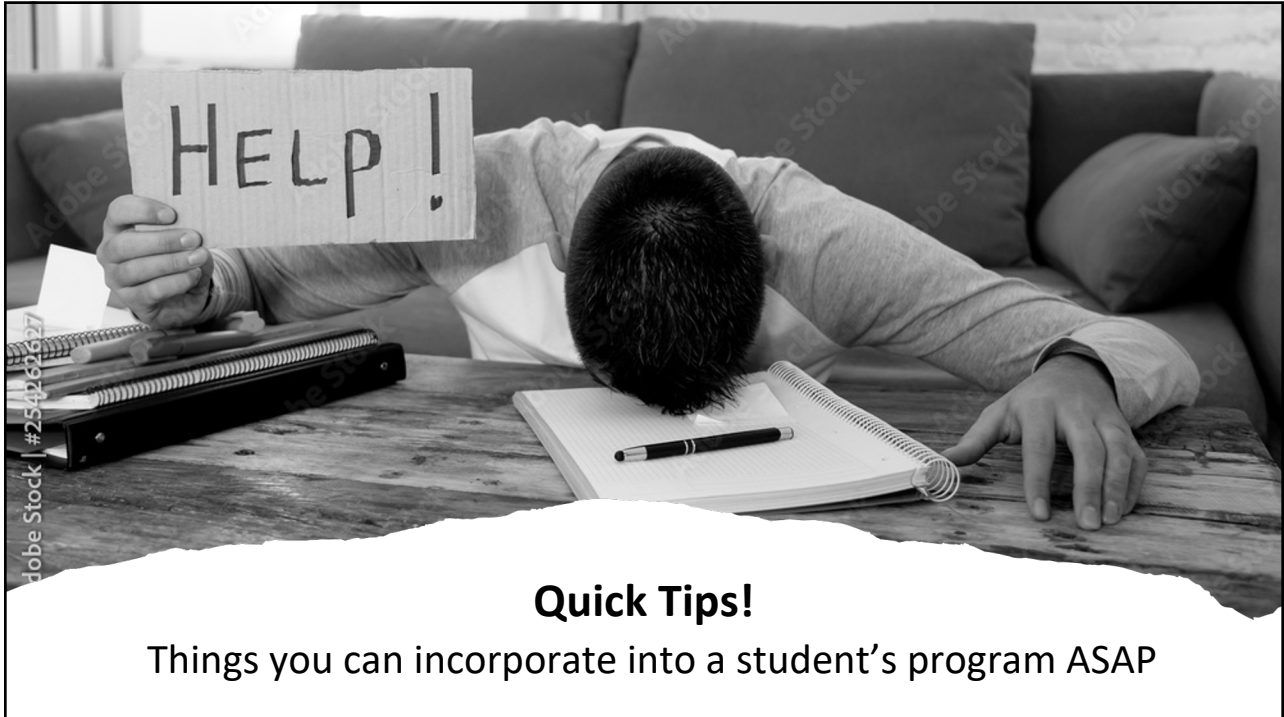
- Strong visual performance skills
- Ability to learn and follow rules
- Focused attention related to special interests
- Rote memory
- Honesty

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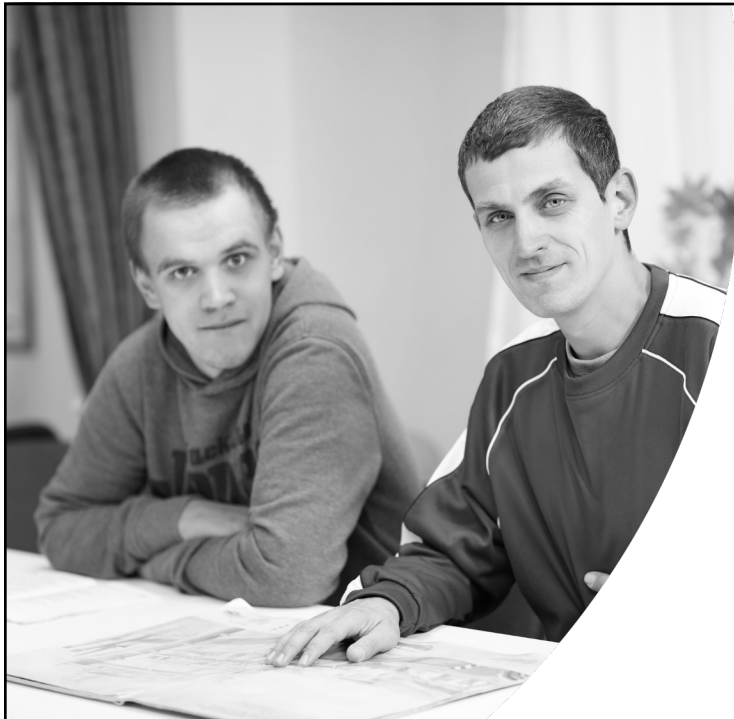
Intensive Evidence  
Based Supports for  
Individuals with  
ASD and Beyond



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Individualize or intensify current behavior supports that are working (or have worked previously)

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## Structure and Visual/Tactile Supports

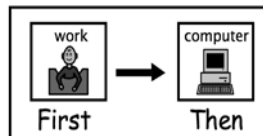
Create Predictability  
Use Visual vs Verbal Reminders

When given a direction you need to...

- Say "OK"
- Start right away
- Do it in the right amount of time
- Do it correctly



5 4 3 2 1 All Done



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## Work on Relationship Building with the Student (Pairing)

1

Show interest in  
their life and  
activities

2

Spend time doing  
activities the child  
likes

3

Find reinforcement  
that the student  
likes

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## Consider Task Demands

### Is the task:

- Too hard or too easy?
- Too long?
- Boring for the student?
- Lacking success / access to reinforcement?

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## Errorless Teaching

Teaching in a manner that minimizes the possibility of errors by ensuring that the student is successful.

### Errorless Learning Reduces:

- The number of errors
- The risk that errors will be repeated in future trials
- Frustration and increases opportunities for reinforcement by ensuring success

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## 80:20 Rule

80% of the tasks that we work on with students should be MASTERED / EASY tasks

20% of the tasks that we work on with students should be NEW TARGET / MORE DIFFICULT tasks

80% positive comments and 20% corrective/redirection comments (4:1 ratio)

- This keeps it successful and positive! The student gets regular access to reinforcement!

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Prime for  
Upcoming  
Events

Priming is a strategy where adults help students know of what is coming up ahead of time.

Priming can be used for

Academics

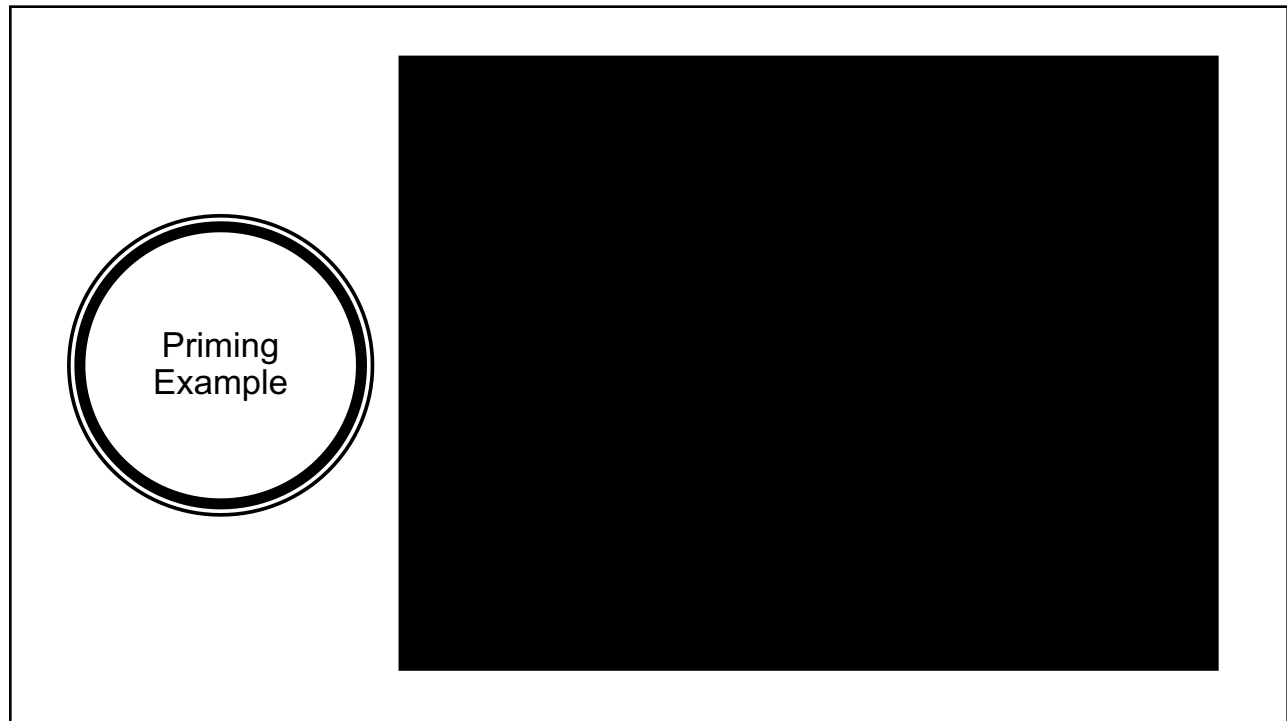
Daily  
schedule

Substitutes

Behavioral  
expectations

Social  
situations

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**MOTIVATION**  
SOMETIMES THERE JUST ISN'T ANY.

Effective  
Teaching  
Strategies for  
Students with  
Autism need  
to address  
MOTIVATION

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## Motivation and ASD

Although individuals with Asperger Syndrome and autism appear to have low motivation, the truth is that they often have a different type of motivation (Baker, 2000; Dunlap, 1995).

Until staff and parents find out what the motivator is, it is difficult to prompt the individual to complete work and related tasks.

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## Reinforcement

90% of the Effectiveness of a Program is REINFORCEMENT!

No Reinforcer – No Lesson!

Differential Reinforcement

More high-quality reinforcement helps us

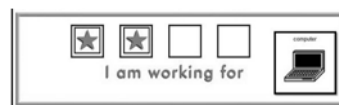
Bring the Joy!

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## Choosing the right reinforcers

- That the student always seems to want
- That are socially acceptable
- That can be delivered on multiple occasions
- For which access is easy to control
- That are consumable at first, if possible
- That are quick and easy to deliver

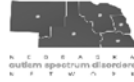
\*\*\*Consider your involvement in the reinforcement interval... how do you make it better?



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## Things to Consider when it "Just Isn't Going Right"



**Things to Consider when it "Just Isn't Going Right"**  
This is not an exhaustive list of all considerations, but rather a tool for teams to use when beginning to problem solve.

- ☐ Does the student have a way to communicate wants and needs in all environments?
- ☐ Does the student have a way to quickly request a break and is that request being honored?
- ☐ Are preferred activities and breaks built into the schedule?
- ☐ Are you indicating changes on the student's schedule and discussing changes before they occur?
- ☐ Do you have a plan in place to teach the student independent use of their schedule?
- ☐ Is an overall classroom schedule posted to guide staff and help them work more efficiently?
- ☐ Are classroom routines predictable? If not, how can you make them more predictable?
- ☐ Is a reinforcement system being taught, visually represented, and used consistently?
- ☐ Do we know what motivates the student or has this motivation changed? *If you are unsure, complete a motivation/preference assessment.*
- ☐ Is all work modified at the student's level?
- ☐ Who is responsible for modifying the student's work and pre-teaching activities when needed?
- ☐ Are staff members trained in how to use accommodations and modifications as listed in their IEP?
- ☐ Are students being taught how to use visual supports and other accommodations?
- ☐ Are the supports needed for instruction immediately available to the student when needed?
- ☐ Are folders or visual work systems used to show what work and how much work needs to be done?
- ☐ Are new topics, games, and routines pre-taught?
- ☐ Are rules positively stated (what TO do, rather than what NOT to do) and posted where all students can easily see them?
- ☐ Are rules reviewed and modeled for students on a regular basis?
- ☐ Are there designated quiet places accessible to the student? *These should include spots where the student can go when they need a quiet place to work or a place to "chill out" before escalating into more severe problem behaviors.*
- ☐ Has a functional behavior assessment (FBA) been completed to better understand reoccurring behaviors? *If so, has a behavior intervention plan (BIP) been created to address the behavior(s)?*
- ☐ Are power struggles undermining your ultimate goals? *If you find yourself in a standoff, reconsider your approach. What do you ultimately want to accomplish during this activity?*
- ☐ Are social narratives being written and reviewed regularly? Are they sent home so the parent(s) can also read them with the student?
- ☐ Are social skills being directly taught and practiced? *Are they also being taught in "real life"?*

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## What to do about Emerging Problem Behaviors?

**Teach Skills!!  
To Student and Staff**

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## Teach Critical Skills

### How to Teach Critical Language and Learning Skills through Direct Instruction (Verbal Behavior Training)

This training teaches teams what to teach and how to teach individuals with autism who need basic language and learning skills. Additionally, this process:

- Uses “effective teaching methods” that make learning more fun for the student as well as enabling the student to learn more efficiently
- Effective teaching reduces or naturally eliminates most problem behaviors in most students in both general education and special education environments
- Teaches the skills necessary to be successful in the general education class & real-life settings



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## Balance Program

### Program Overview:

- A proactive approach for young children who demonstrate emerging problem behavior
- Teaches critical communication and coping skills before severe problem behavior has had a chance to become routine
- Gain a balance between child led and adult led activities
- Flexible and responsive to the student's individualized needs

\*\*\* Can be implemented in the home or school setting

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## Steps of Balance

### Child-led time:

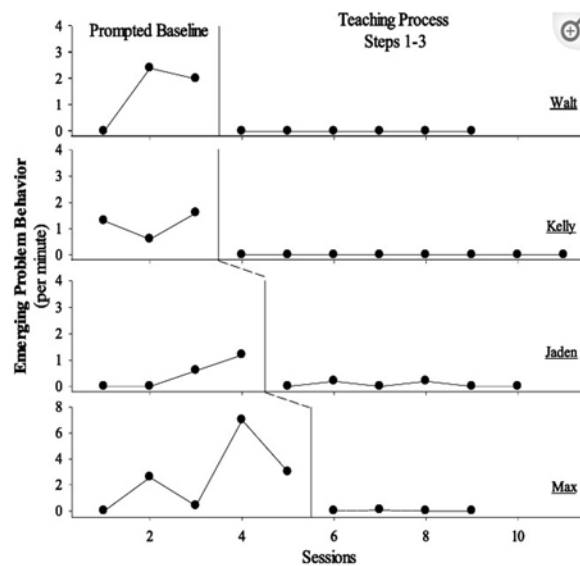
- Strengthens the trust in the Adult/Child relationship
- Allows the child some control of their experiences via functional communication
- Teaches children that problem behavior is unnecessary

### Finding the Balance:

- Creates balance between child-led and adult-led interactions
- Allows for some shared control of the daily activities and interactions
- Prepares the child for inevitable daily disappointments. Provide the child with hope...that good things follow expected behavior
- Develops and refines the life skills repertoires of play, communication, toleration, cooperation, and persistence

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Figure 6



Emerging problem behavior multiple baseline across participants

Behav Anal Pract. 2021 Jun; 14(2): 324-341.  
Published online 2021 Feb 8. doi: [10.1007/s40617-020-00490-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-020-00490-3)

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## One Team's Journey



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### **Practical Functional Assessment and Skills Based Treatment Training (PFA/SBT)**

The practical functional assessment and skill-based treatment process, which prioritizes safety and social acceptability, has proven to be a highly effective and generally applicable approach to treating severe problem behavior.

- Based on Today's Applied Behavior Analysis –  
“Freedom from Problem Behavior is possible with today's ABA”

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## Teaching through Joy- Happy, Relaxed, and Engaged



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## What is PFA and SBT

Practical functional assessment and skill-based treatment is an intervention for individuals who routinely engage in severe problem behavior that focuses on teaching students **communication**, **tolerance**, and **cooperation** while prioritizing **safety**, **dignity**, **rapport**, and **peaceful progress** for the individual.

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## Guiding Principles of Today's ABA

The correct response to problem behavior is the one that is the:

- Safest
- Most televisable
- Is likely to lead better rapport
- Leads to Progress in Skills Based Teaching

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## **PFA/SBT meets the criteria of EBP by the American Psychological Association**

Aim of a PFA

- Not to identify the function of a problem behavior
- Aims are to
  - Bring the joy
  - Reliably turn on a response (behavior)
  - Quickly turn off the response (behavior)

Everyone needs to see that we can turn off behavior. This empowers everyone to feel safe!

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## Student Example

**Functional Communication  
Response (FCR)-**  
Prompted  
*Finger point to chest*

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## School Staff Testimonials

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## For More Information on PFA/SBT



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A tool for  
teams in  
Crisis...

The Universal  
Protocol

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## Are you feeling a little like this...

- Encountering severe problem behavior on a regular basis
  - daily or multiple times per week
- Walking on “eggshells” to avoid major meltdowns
- Reacting to severe problem behavior instead of teaching
- Feel like the situation is “on fire”
- Nothing you have tried has worked
- Staff members are getting hurt or showing signs of emotional distress



CartoonStock.com

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## The Universal Protocol

The goals of the protocol are to:

- increase joy among clients and students (i.e., increase the extent to which clients are happy, relaxed, and engaged)
- to prevent escalation to severe problem behavior by removing events/interactions that commonly evoke problem behavior and by reinforcing warning signs
- to teach clients that staff are not adversarial but rather are there for them
- to increase staff job satisfaction

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**FTF Behavioral**  
SOLUTIONS

SAMPLE Universal Protocol Policies and Procedures


The Universal Protocol—*General* is designed for clients for whom no individualized information has been obtained and to be used with clients in combination with educational and habilitative activities. The Universal Protocol is the foundation from which services are provided and is therefore the first step towards individualized and meaningful education and care. Safety, televisibility (dignity), and rapport are the priorities of the Universal Protocol, and they are implemented with the assumption that all clients have experienced multiple adverse events and/or repeated stressful situations. The goals of the protocol are to (a) increase joy among clients and students (i.e., increase the extent to which clients are happy, relaxed, and engaged), (b) to prevent escalation to severe problem behavior by removing events/interactions that commonly evoke problem behavior and by reinforcing warning signs, (c) to teach clients that staff are not adversarial but rather are there for them, and (d) to increase staff job satisfaction.

**The Universal Client Protocol—*General***

1. Show continuous positive regard and empathy
  - a. Appear positive, confident, and caring at all times
  - b. Make it clear that you are available to the client (do not appear distracted)
  - c. Provide non-judgmental listening (restate assertions and declarations)
  - d. Make all attempts to satisfy requests
2. Enrich the environment
  - a. Ensure multiple, preferred, and/or generally liked activities are available and arranged to allow for choice
  - b. Rotate and vary activities, even if it's unclear if the client will prefer the new ones
  - c. Facilitate a *shared* experience versus a supervised experience
3. Follow the client's lead to the extent possible
  - a. Allow clients to wander and explore within non-dangerous boundaries
  - b. Answer all questions asked by the client, even if they are repetitive
  - c. Honor all reasonable requests (verbal or non-verbal), even they are repetitive, and do so genuinely
4. Invite the client to participate in scheduled educational and habilitative activities
  - a. Please use the daily schedule, but consider it a guide; it's most important to following the client's lead and preference
5. Limit non-essential demands
  - a. Limit questions unless following client's conversational lead or if questions are preferred by the client
  - b. Do not attempt to limit or redirect motor, object, or vocal stereotypy
6. Provide choices especially prior to the provision of an essential demand, even the client doesn't regularly make them
  - a. Where to spend time
  - b. What activities (be proactive in providing choices among things that are accessible)

## Training

**The Universal Protocol: Increasing Safety, Dignity, and Joy for all Participants Across the Day**



02:00

**Star Rating:**  
**4.6\***  
average rating  
extremely satisfied

The Universal Protocol: Increasing Safety, Dignity, and Joy Across the Day (3 CEUs)

Presented by Dr. Hanley and Dr. Ruppel

\$90

Start

[Access Document Here](#)

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## For More Information

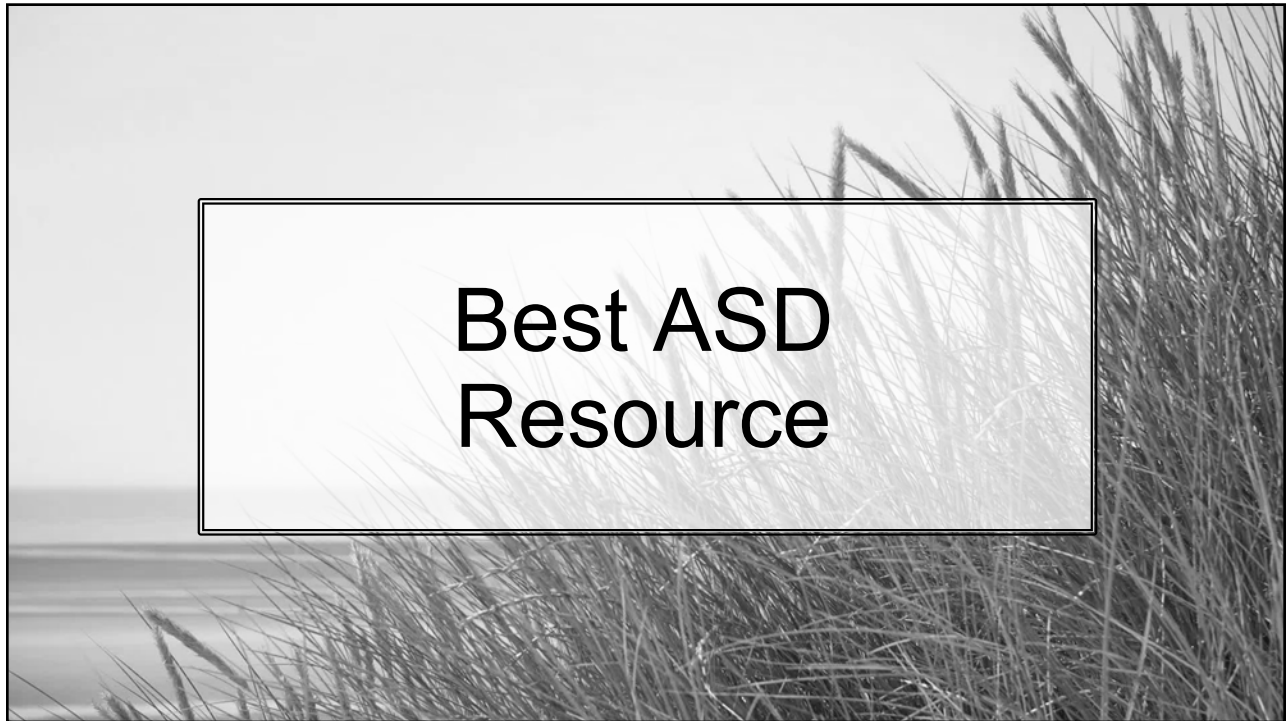
- Verbal Behavior (Teaching Critical Language and Learning Skills)
- Balance
- PFA/SBT
- Universal Protocols

For more information, please contact your Regional ASD Coordinator and/or Behavior Specialist to discuss the best option for your team/student.

[ASD Network Coordinator/Behavior Specialist Information](#)

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OUR TEAM

## OUR TEAM (ASD Regional Coordinators)

	<p><b>Abby Pfister</b></p> <p><i>Northeast</i></p>		<p><b>Jen Quaranta</b></p> <p><i>Southeast</i></p>		<p><b>Megan Lantis</b></p> <p><i>Western</i></p>
	<p><b>Teri McGill</b></p> <p><i>Metro</i></p>		<p><b>Jamie Lewis</b></p> <p><i>Central</i></p>		<p><b>Annette Wragge</b></p> <p><i>State Coordinator</i></p>
	 <p><b>Marci Haight</b></p> <p><i>Education Specialist, NDE</i></p>		 <p><b>Megan Misegadis</b></p> <p><i>Project Coordinator</i></p>		

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## OUR TEAM (ASD Behavior Specialists)



Sarah  
Haahr

*Behavior Specialist*



Ali Sweitzer

*Behavior  
Specialist*



Stephanie  
Johnson

*Behavior Specialist*



Kara Coble

*Behavior Specialist*



Meggin  
Funk

*Behavior  
Specialist*



Ashley Bauer

*ASD Network Behavior  
Consultant*

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## REGIONAL ASD TRAINING/SUPPORT

Regional Consultative services upon request to school teams regarding:

- Assessment/Identification Process
- IFSP and IEP development
- **Program Planning/Selecting interventions**
- **Ongoing consultation regarding effective intervention strategies**
- Training
- **Behavior Consultation to Schools (referred by ASD Coordinator)**

Regional ASD Trainings

Follow up Support following trainings

Mentorship and Guidance for District Coaches and Regional Team Members

Regional Libraries and Regional Workshops provide information and technical assistance

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## ASD Webinars

[www.unl.edu/asdnetwork/webinars](http://www.unl.edu/asdnetwork/webinars)




The Tri-State Webinar Series is made available through continued partnership and collaboration between the Colorado Department of Education, Kansas TASN Autism and Tertiary Behavior Supports, and the Nebraska Autism Spectrum Disorders Network.

Through this collaboration we provide a wide variety of autism related presentations, presented by local and national experts in the field **and available when it is convenient for you! All webinars are provided at no charge and participants can receive a certificate of attendance for professional development CEUs following the training.**

Anyone with an interest in learning about the characteristics of autism spectrum disorders and evidence-based practices is invited to attend any of our webinars. This may include administrators, general education teachers, specialist teachers, family members, paraprofessionals, special education professionals, healthcare, and related service providers.

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**NEBRASKA AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS NETWORK**


[About ASD Network](#)
[Autism Spectrum Disorders](#)
[Education & Training](#)
[Tri-State Webinars](#)
[Nebraska ASD Network State Conference](#)

[Nebraska](#) > [Nebraska Autism Spectrum Disorders Network](#) > [Tri-State Webinars](#)

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### New To Autism?

Check out our introductory webinars to start learning today!

[Watch the Autism 101 Webinars](#)

[EMAIL US](#)

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### Webinars By Topic

Assessment Curriculum	Behavior	Classroom Structure / Instructional Strategies	Communication
Early Childhood	Executive Functioning	Family / Home Supports	First-Hand Perspectives
Mental Health	Social Supports	Special Topics	Transitions

Search

Topics: Family / Home Supports

**Where Do We Go from Here: Navigating Through the Autism Diagnosis and/or Educational Identification**

My child has received an autism diagnosis, or educational identification - now what do I do? Please join us as we discuss a variety of steps and resources you can use to help navigate your way to finding supports for your child.

Completion Time: 44 minutes

Topics: Special Topics

**Improving Interprofessional Collaborations Between School and Clinical/Health Contexts**

This webinar is targeted for all members of school-based teams that conduct special education evaluations for Autism. In this webinar, participants will learn about strategies and benefits for engaging in interprofessional collaborations with clinical and health providers.

Completion Time: 45 minutes

Topics: Behavior

Classroom Structure / Instructional Strategies

Executive Functioning

**Strategies for Increasing Problem Solving in Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder**

In this webinar Dr. Kisamore will share a problem-solving strategy that can be used to guide the instruction of a variety of social and vocational skills topics and be used by the student to independently complete vocational tasks and work through different types of problems.

Completion Time: 55 minutes

Topics: Assessment / Curriculum Early Childhood

**Early Identification of Autism Spectrum Disorder - Part 1**

In this webinar participants will learn the importance of identify autism symptoms in early childhood rather than adopting a "wait and see" approach. Early emerging symptoms of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in young boys and girls across the domains of social, communication and flexibility will be discussed as well as how to differentiate between ASD.

Completion Time: 60 minutes

EMAIL

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<p>Topics: Behavior Classroom Structure / Instructional Strategies</p> <p><b>Why Is Escape or Avoidance Behavior Happening? How Do Motivating Operations Affect Behavior in the Classroom?</b></p> <p>This webinar will cover the following: What is a Motivating Operation? How does the Conditioned Motivating Operation-Reflexive effect the behavior of our students with autism? How can we effectively abolish the CMO-R and improve behavior?</p> <p>Completion Time: 40 minutes</p>	<p>Topics: Behavior Classroom Structure / Instructional Strategies</p> <p><b>Proactive Behavior Management Part 1: Relationship-Based Strategies</b></p> <p>With the national average of students spending over 1,000 hours each school year with their teachers, it is crucial that we understand the importance of positive interactions. The focus of this presentation includes ways to increase appropriate behavior and decrease problematic behavior.</p> <p>Completion Time: 17 minutes</p>	<p>Topics: Behavior Classroom Structure / Instructional Strategies</p> <p><b>Proactive Behavior Management Part 2: Procedural Strategies</b></p> <p>Participants will gain an understanding of 11 procedural proactive strategies. This webinar will help participants identify the degree to which each strategy is currently being utilized in your setting / with your student(s) and develop a plan for how to increase appropriate behavior and decrease problematic behavior through the consistent use of these strategies.</p> <p>Completion Time: 19 minutes</p>	<p>Topics: Behavior</p> <p><b>It's All About Independent Functioning! Practical Strategies that Foster Independence for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder</b></p> <p>A primary goal when teaching students with ASD is to increase independent functioning and decrease dependence on adults; however, this can be quite challenging in school-based settings where the educational climate often fosters adult support. This webinar will address providing guidance and instruction to educational professionals/adults to maximize independent functioning skills for students with ASD.</p> <p>Completion Time: 55 minutes</p>
<p>Topics: Behavior Classroom Structure / Instructional Strategies</p> <p><b>The Incredible 5-Point Scale</b></p> <p>Social cognition involves social awareness, emotional awareness, relationship building, self management and emotional regulation. Social cognition is a developmental issue and can impact a person's confidence and competence in almost all social situations. This presentation will highlight the use of a highly systemized scale to teach skills in these four areas.</p> <p>Completion Time: 60 minutes</p>	<p>Topics: Behavior Classroom Structure / Instructional Strategies</p> <p><b>Errorless Teaching</b></p> <p>This webinar will provide an overview of how to select student skills appropriate for errorless teaching. It will also describe and illustrate the 4 steps in the errorless teaching procedure.</p> <p>Completion Time: 20 minutes</p>	<p>Topics: Behavior Communication</p> <p><b>Pivotal Response Treatment Part 1</b></p> <p>During this webinar the learner will be introduced to a brief history of ABA and early autism treatment. The learner will be introduced to the background and development of pivotal response treatment and to the core PRT components of family involvement, treatment in the natural environment and treatment on pivotal areas.</p> <p>Completion Time: 19 minutes</p>	<p>Topics: Behavior Communication</p> <p><b>Pivotal Response Treatment Part 2</b></p> <p>During this webinar the learner will be introduced to the use of motivational procedures to teach academic skills. The learner will be provided a review of research studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of motivational procedures for teaching academics and will be introduced to strategies that include motivational components to teach academic skills for a variety of learners.</p> <p>Completion Time: 34 minutes</p>
<p>Topics: Behavior Family / Home Supports</p> <p><b>Overcoming Daily Drama</b></p> <p>Getting out the door difficult? Struggling to manage mealtime? Come learn about evidenced based strategies to support these difficult times. Interventions presented will focus on how to facilitate a behavior change. This session will cover strategies to structure for success and how reinforcement can support a long-lasting change in behavior.</p> <p>Completion Time: 44 minutes</p>	<p>Topics: Behavior Classroom Structure / Instructional Strategies Communication</p> <p><b>Verbal Behavior: Teaching using Verbal Behavior Strategies - Part 1</b></p> <p>Part 1 of this 2-part series will help participants understand and define verbal behavior. The presenters will review the behavioral teaching components of reinforcement, pairing, discrete trial teaching, use of prompts and prompt fading, and error correction procedures.</p> <p>Completion Time: 30 minutes</p>	<p>Topics: Behavior Classroom Structure / Instructional Strategies Communication</p> <p><b>Verbal Behavior: Using Verbal Behavior Strategies in Your Classroom - Part 2</b></p> <p>Part 2 of this 2-part series will provide information on how to use verbal behavior strategies to teach a variety of skills, in a variety of settings. Curriculum programs such as the ABLLS-R, VB-MAPP and AFLS will be examined as resources for identifying skills to teach.</p> <p>Completion Time: 33 minutes</p>	<p>Topics: Behavior Classroom Structure / Instructional Strategies</p> <p><b>Low Tech Engagement for High Tech Classrooms</b></p> <p>This webinar will provide an overview of some of the common barriers to engagement, while bringing awareness of how engagement and participation looks for children with autism. Participants will get a review of research-based strategies to increase engagement.</p> <p>Completion Time: 35 minutes</p>

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## Take Home Points

Intensive, individualized supports for students with autism and beyond can take time, training, and administrative and team buy in. However,

“Freedom from Problem Behavior is possible with today’s ABA”.

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## Resources

1. Things to Consider when it "Just Isn't Going Right" – Problem Solving Questions
2. Autism FAQ's for Administrators
3. Evidence Based Practices and Autism 2020 Report
4. ASD Network Website
  - a) Webinar Page
  - b) ASD Network Regional Coordinator/Behavior Specialist Information
5. Supporting Behavior Resources - NDE

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## Citations

Balance Program –

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PFA/SBT

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