

Universal Supports for Students with Autism in the General Education Setting

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Participants will:

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1. Gain an understanding of learning characteristics of students with autism

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2. Identify universal supports that would be effective for your students with autism and others

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3. Develop a plan to use the supports discussed to improve social, emotional behavior and/or academic skills of students with autism.

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What exactly is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

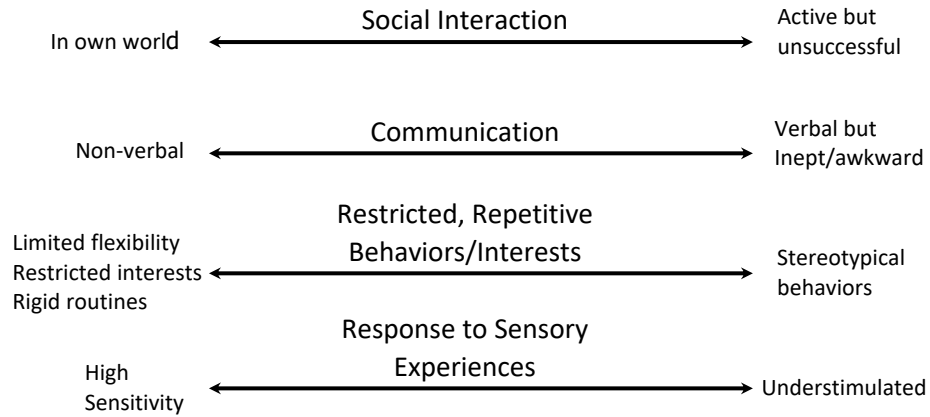
Autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD), refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, **autism affects an estimated 1 in 44 children in the United States today.**

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The Autism Spectrum



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Triad of Characteristics

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Communication

Typical development of language

May be very literal

Expressive and receptive language levels may not match

Trouble reading non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions, body language, or body space

Difficulty understanding that other people may have a different perspective

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Social Characteristics

Difficulty understanding social "rules" and relationships.

Difficulty with spontaneously sharing experiences.

Lack of social reciprocity

Unconventional/Inappropriate methods of interaction.

Inconsistent use of nonverbal behavior

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Restricted Patterns of Behavior, Interests, and Activities

Need for
sameness

Routines
and rituals

Narrow
areas of
interest

Anxiety

Repetitive
motor
behaviors



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Sensory Differences



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

**Temple Grandin on the topic of sensory issues...http://youtube.com/watch?v=zzf80k5b_EM EM*

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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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Comorbidity Estimates

ASD

- Separation anxiety disorder – 10%
- Generalized anxiety disorder – 20%
- Specific phobia – 30%
- Social anxiety disorder – 40%

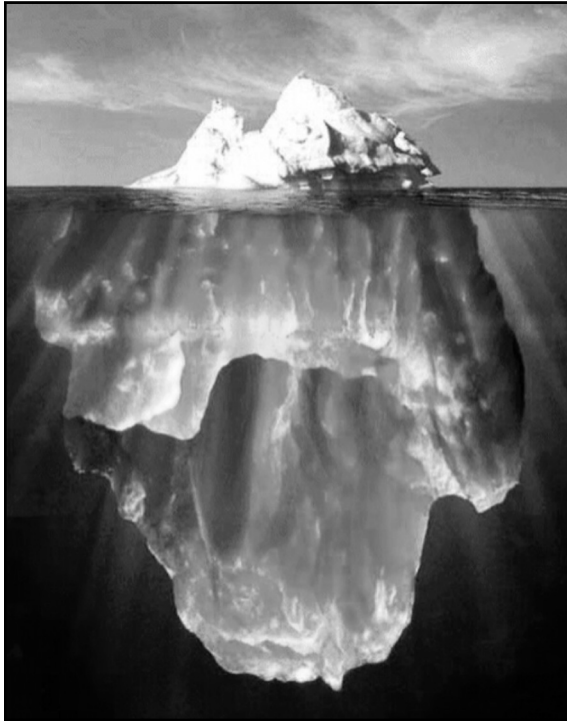
Non ASD

- Separation anxiety disorder – 5%
- Generalized anxiety disorder – 5%
- Specific phobia – 12%
- Social anxiety disorder – 12%



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“There is often nothing about how people with ASD look that sets them apart from other people, but people with ASD may communicate, interact, behave, and learn in ways that are different from most other people.”

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

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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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The Good News!

There are a wide variety of Evidence Based Support that have been determined to be highly effective for students with autism

These supports are often inexpensive and easy to implement

Many EBP in autism have also been proven to be highly effective with all students.

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Universal Supports

For Students with Autism and Beyond

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**Evidence-Based Practices for
Children, Youth, and Young
Adults with Autism**

Jessica R. Steinbrenner, Kara Hume, Samuel L. Odom,
Kristi L. Morin, Sallie W. Nowell, Brianne Tomaszewski,
Susan Szandrey, Nancy S. McIntyre,
Şerife Yücesoy-Özkan, & Melissa N. Savage

THE NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON
AUTISM EVIDENCE & PRACTICE
NCAP • BRIDGING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence
and Practice Review Team

UNC | FRANK PORTER GRAM
CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Evidence-based Practices

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Visuals Matter

- Research has shown individuals with autism spectrum disorder demonstrate strength in visual learning.
 - Visual Supports utilize this strength
- Organize a sequence of events and help learners understand those events and navigate 'their world' independently
- Reduce anxiety
- Supports Expressive and Receptive Communication

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Visuals Matter

- Communicates Expectations
- When we present information using visuals, the information is available as long as the learner needs it.
- Increases access to the curriculum
- Organizes the learner's environment
- May include pictures, written words, gestures, or objects

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Verbal vs. Visual



Verbal = I had to hear it in the moment, and I could quickly forget

Visual = I can reference back if I forget or need longer to think

Use visuals when

- You find are repeating the same information on a regular basis
- You want to promote independence for the student

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When we present information verbally, the words are available for a brief moment.

When we present information visually it can be there for as long as the individual needs it.



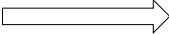
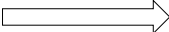

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What is Executive Functioning?

- EF skills involve...”high-level cognitive functions...that help us to decide what activities or task we will pay attention to and which ones we will choose to do...they allow us to organize behavior over time and override immediate demands in favor of longer-term goals...allow us to plan and organize activities, sustain attention, and persist to complete a task...allow us to manage our emotions and monitor our thoughts in order to work more efficiently and effectively.”
Dawson & Guare, 2010

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What Looks Like a “Won’t”	May Actually Be	An Executive Functioning Skill Deficit
Lack of Effort, Sloppy / Erratic Work, Messy Desk, Locker, Backpack		Poor Planning, Organization, and Initiation Skills
Opposition / Non-compliance, Outbursts, Doesn’t Turn in Work, Easily distracted		Low Behavioral Inhibition, Poor Time-Management, Lack of Emotional Regulation Skills
Stubbornness, Struggles with Transitions		Cognitive Inflexibility, Lack of Shifting Abilities

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Build a Relationship



Show interest in
their life and
activities



Spend time doing
activities the child
likes



Find reinforcement
that the student
likes

No significant learning can
occur without a significant
relationship.

- James Comer

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The Top 5 Classroom-Wide Practices

Proactive strategies to prevent the occurrence of problem behaviors
and create a classroom environment that is conducive to learning

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The Top 5 Classroom-Wide Practices 1. 5:1 Ratio of Positive Attention 2. Use Predictable Schedules 3. Establish Routines within Routines 4. Directly Teach Behavioral Expectations 5. Directly Teach Peer-Related Social Skills		
Prevent	Teach	Reinforce
1. Keep it positive 2. Provide choices 3. Intersperse preferred with non-preferred (Embed preferences) 4. Use visual supports to enhance predictability 5. Alter physical arrangement of class 6. Remove triggers	1. Teach communication skills 2. Embed multiple opportunities to practice 3. Peer-related social skills 4. Self-monitoring 5. Teach waiting 6. Independence with visual schedule	1. Desirable behaviors 2. Incompatible behaviors 3. Do preference checks often 4. Individualize reinforcement 5. Remove reinforcement of problem behavior 6. Crisis intervention plan

Dunlap, G., Wilson, K., Strain, P., & Lee, J. K., "Prevent, Teach, Reinforce", 2013.

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5:1 Ratio of Positive Attention

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5 to 1 Ratio - Positive Attention



“Frequently students’ shortfalls and disruptive behaviors overshadow their strengths and abilities.” (Kuypers, pg.1)

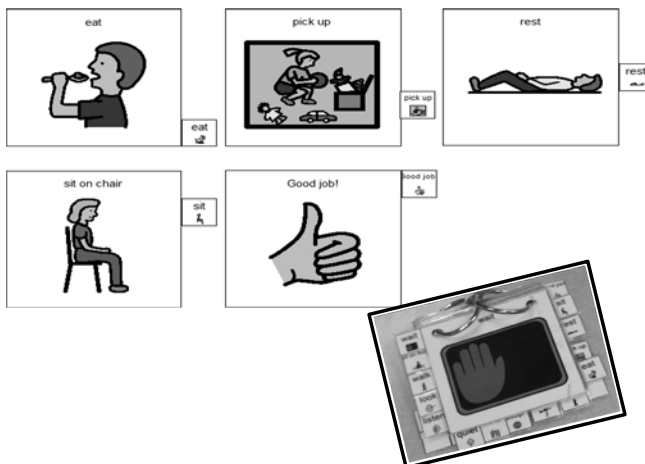


All students will benefit from receiving feedback about what they are doing correctly.

source: The Zones of Regulation

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Remember 5:1 Applies to Any Format of Feedback for the Learner



Some teams use visuals attached to a lanyard to help show expectations to learners with autism in the moment.

Use a 5:1 ratio when these are used for behavior to prevent the visuals from becoming aversive to the learner.

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Reinforce Approximations Towards Desired Behavior

Sometimes learners are still building skills to meet the expectations.

Reinforcing behavior that is closer and closer to the expectation is also important to remember.

We can build momentum towards meeting the expectation by acknowledging the progression



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Using Predictable Schedules

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Use Predictable Schedules

Establishes routines

Promotes independence

Provides structure and predictability for transitions

Teaches Flexibility



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Making the Most of Posted Schedules

How do students know how far along in the schedule you are?

How can you help students know about changes to the schedule?

Are there some things that need to be broken down more? Ex. what special today

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Some Students May Have Individualized Visual Schedules as Well

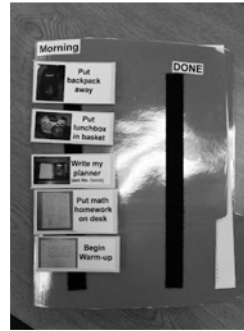
Written Words



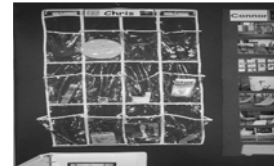
Icon



Photos



Object



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Establish Routines Within Routines

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Routines Within Routines Help Learners

- Complete daily routines by themselves
- Demonstrate decreased levels of frustration, anxiety, and aggression related to task completion
- Adjust more readily to changes in their environments (Savner & Myles, 2000).

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Routines within Routines

Mini-schedules break down activities within the daily schedule.

Mini Schedules can break the activities down in 2 primary ways:

1. Breaking down the activity into individual steps, also called a task analysis.
1. Depict shorter activities within a larger activity

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Daily Schedule vs Routine or Mini Schedules

Daily Schedule

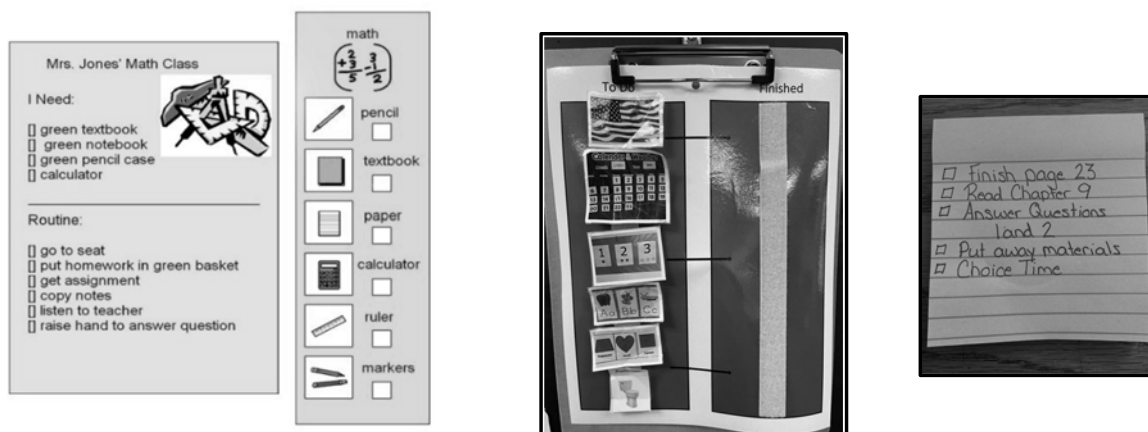
- Agenda
- The Big Picture!!
- Often mirrors the classroom schedule
- Major events throughout the day

Mini Schedule:

- Schedule within a schedule
- Steps in an activity/task analysis
- Activities within a class or lesson
- Job lists

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Routines, Mini-Schedules, Visual Supports



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Directly Teach and Practice Behavioral Expectations

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Knowing the expectation

Restroom		
EXPECTATIONS	Be Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give people privacy.
	Take Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flush. Throw things away. Clean up after yourself.
	Be Accepting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait your turn.
	Be Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash hands. Return to class quickly.

- Students with autism may need you to be very explicit in instruction.
- Can not assume the information was previously taught or given age the student should know.
- Is there any “hidden curriculum” that needs to be taught. *Ex. privacy at a urinal is different than privacy in a stall*

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Some Important Expectations in Classrooms

How to ask for help

How to get attention appropriately (come to teacher, raise hand, ask a peer)

Walking in class or hallway

Sharing in class discussions

What else do you want students to do?

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Focus on the Expected Behavior



Model what you want to see



Having models of the unexpected may not be a benefit especially if the model is the way out version of unexpected

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Proactive vs Reactive

- Teach at the beginning of year and after breaks
- Revisit on a regular basis
- Review prior to the opportunity to do the skill (ex. just before walking in the hallway)
- Catch them doing it right

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Directly Teach Peer Related Social Skills

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Consequences of Social Deficits for Teens

Social neglect and isolation

- Withdrawn, seen as shy, go unnoticed, don't engage socially, anxious depressed

Peer rejection

- Teased and bullied, bad reputation, ADHD, impulse control disorders, unsuccessful attempts to engage

Peer conflict

- Arguments may result in termination of friendship

Lack of close reciprocal friendships

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Consequences of Peer Rejection

Peer rejection is one of strongest predictors of:

- Mental health problems
 - Depression, anxiety
- Poor academic performance
- Early withdrawal from school
- Substance abuse
- Suicidal ideation
- Suicide attempts

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Why Teach Social and Friendship Skills

- Having one or two close friends:
 - Predicts later adjustment in life
 - Can buffer the impact of stressful life events
 - Correlates positively with
 - self-esteem, independence
 - Correlates negatively with
 - Depression, anxiety



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A variety of Resources are Available to Teach Peer/Social Skills

- Social Skills Visuals/Pictures
- Social Stories
- Comic Strip Conversations
- The Social Times
- Social Skills Games
- Group Activities
- Peer Mediated Strategies
- Video Modeling
- Power Cards
- Hidden Curriculum
- Social Scripts
- Social Surveys
- Relaxation/Calming
- Priming Social Behavior
- Self monitoring
- Friendship Files
- Levels of Friends

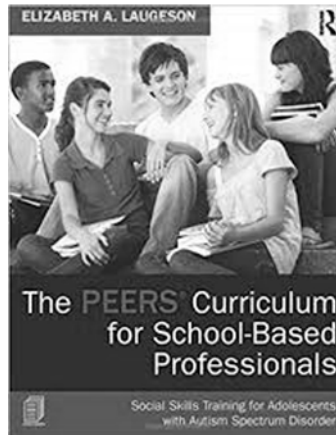
Video Modeling:

- Model Me Kids
- School Rules CD
- Manners for the Real world

Social Scenarios/Problem Solving:

- Big Bang Theory
- Commercials- What is he thinking/
- Movie segments
- Friends
- Saved by the Bell
- How I Met your Mother
- Parenthood
- Lie to Me
- Various Movie Clips

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PEERS: Social Skills Training for School Based Professionals.

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Social Opportunities are Important But May Require Your Intentional Planning

Please have the learner engage in group work. We learn so much in group work that helps with social skills.

- Sharing ideas
- Compromise or consensus
- Considering the perspectives of others

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Summary: Take-Home Points

These strategies are great for ALL students!!

These strategies takes consistency, repetitive practice and feedback

Rapport and relationship are key!

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ASD Webinars

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


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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 identifying 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

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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

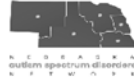
Follow up Support following trainings

Mentorship and Guidance for District Coaches and Regional Team Members

Regional Libraries and Regional Workshops provide information and technical assistance

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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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ASD Network Virtual Strategies

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How to utilize the Webinars and Virtual Strategies

General Education
and Special
Education teachers
new to autism

Para educators
and other school
staff new to autism

Team training on a
specific evidence-
based practice

MTSS Continuum
of Supports

Share specific
topics with family
and community
members

Work with
Regional
Coordinator to
develop a training
plan

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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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