

# TRI-STATE WEBINAR SERIES

## Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Tri-State 2018-2019 Webinar Series

## Tri-State Autism Spectrum Disorder Webinar Series



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## Polling Questions

- Questions will be asked throughout the webinar
- When the poll opens on your screen respond by clicking on or filling in your answer

What is your role?  
What is your role?  
 Administrator  
 Parent/Family Member  
 Related Service Professional  
 Teacher  
 Other

What state are you from?  
What state are you from?  
 Colorado  
 Kansas  
 Nebraska  
 Other  
 No Vote



## Presenter Information



**Rhonda Danner, M.A.Ed.**

Rhonda works as an autism specialist for the Colorado Department of Education. Rhonda has a background teaching students with severe needs including Autism. Prior to working for CDE she was an Autism Interventionist for a school district in Colorado.



**Alissa Mullett, M.A. CCC-SLP**

Alissa works as an autism specialist for the Colorado Department of Education. Alissa has a background in the school setting as a Speech Language Pathologist working with students with ASD and other significant support needs.



## Learner Objectives

- Understand the triad of characteristics present in Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Understand how these characteristics may affect students in the school setting
- Understand basic strategies used to develop communication, social, and behavioral skill sets in students with Autism Spectrum Disorder



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## Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder with deficits in social communication and social interactions across multiple contexts and restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities.
- Symptoms are present in the early developmental period.

~Diagnostic and Statistical Manual - Fifth Edition



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## Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- An intellectual disability or developmental delay may co-occur with ASD.
- Three levels of severity based on amount of support required for (a) social (b)communication and (b) restricted, repetitive behaviors.

~Diagnostic and Statistical Manual - Fifth Edition

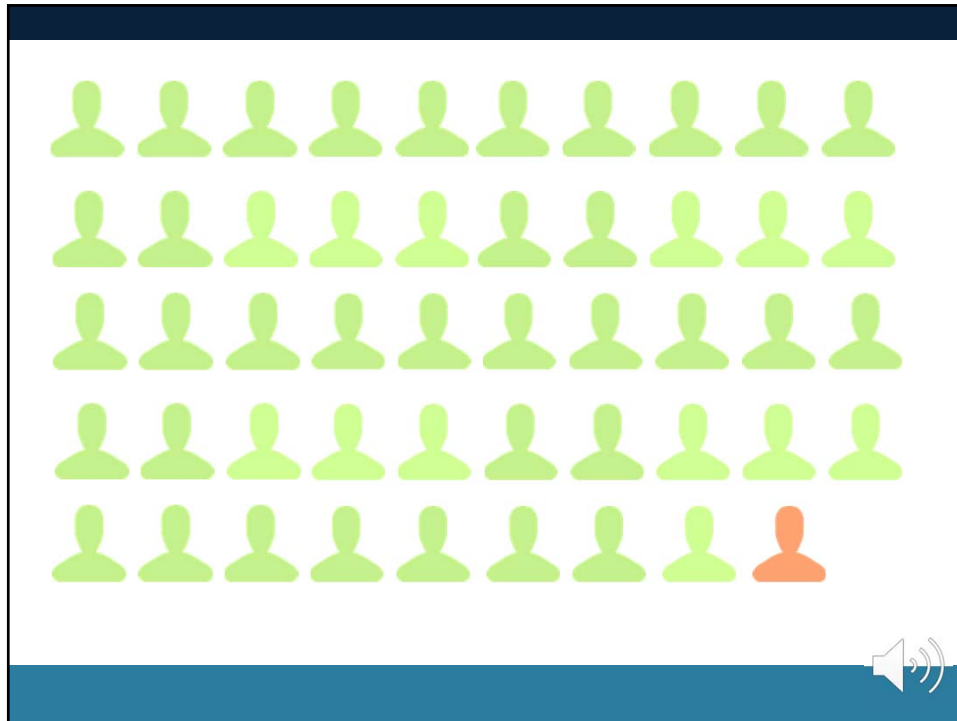


## Statistics

- ASD is reported to occur in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups.
- ASD is about 4 times more common in boys than girls

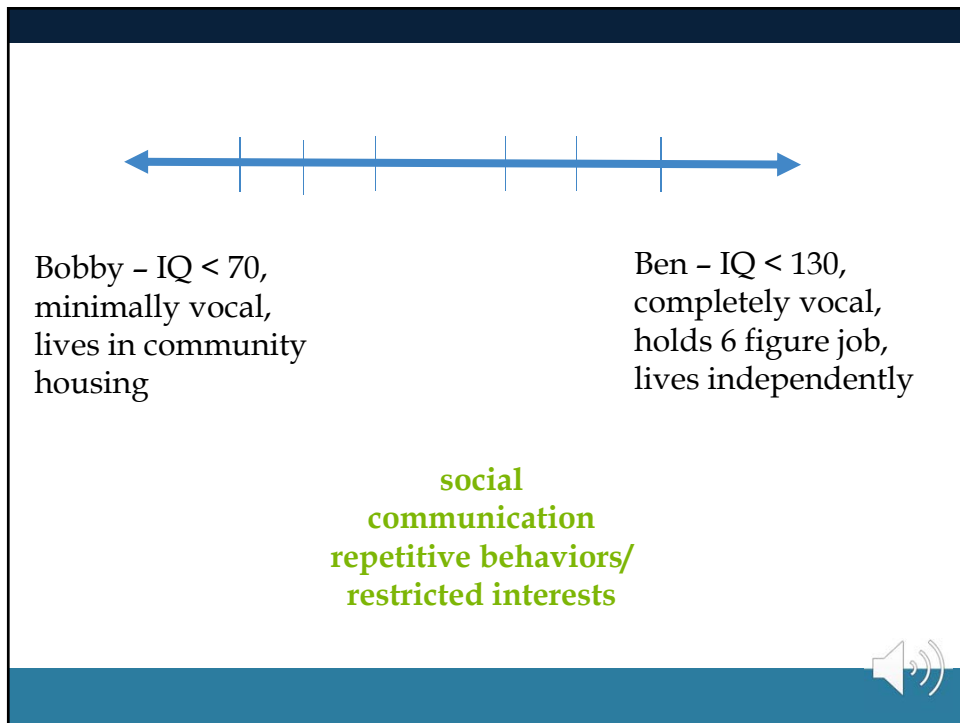
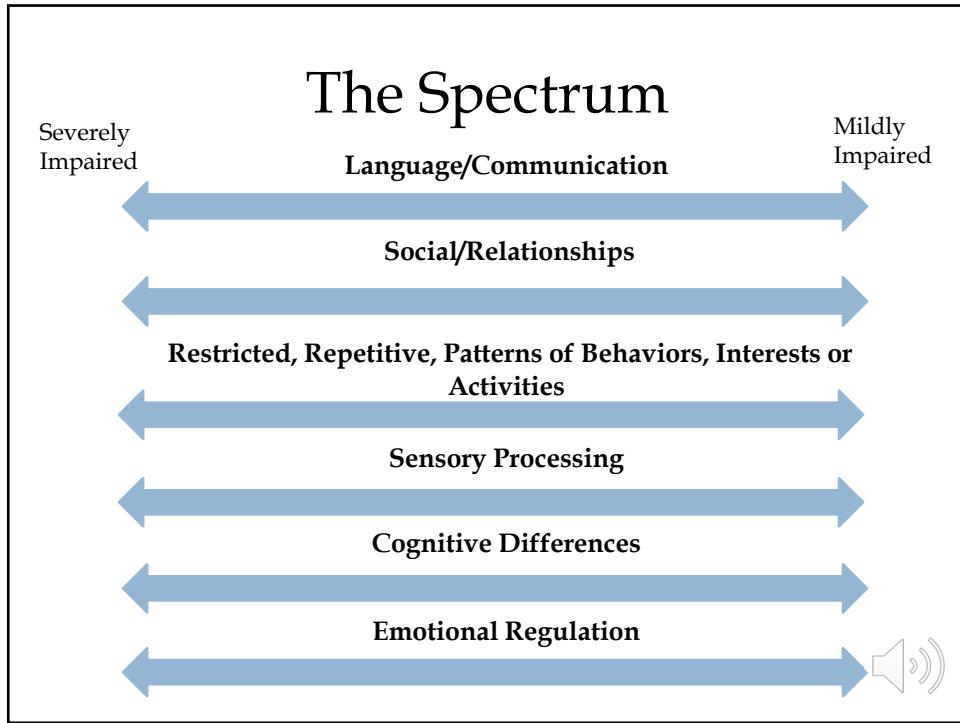
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/data.html>





## Nature of Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) are neurodevelopmental disorders resulting from genetic factors, which can cause abnormality in brain development, likely occurring prenatally.
- The exact etiology is unknown, but they are highly heritable, with younger siblings of a child with ASD at an 18.7% increased risk of developing ASD.
- Is a spectrum of disorders, so deficits can look very different depending on the individual.



## Poll Question 1

Autism Spectrum Disorder.....

- A- Is a neurodevelopmental disorder
- B- Can look very different among individuals
- C- Includes differences in social, communication and behavior.
- D- All of the above



## Poll Question 1

**D- All of the above**



## Triad of Characteristics



## Triad of Characteristics

### Social

Significant difficulties or differences or both in interacting with or understanding people and events.

### Communication

Significant difficulties or differences which extend beyond speech and language to other aspects of social communication, both receptively and expressively.

### Repetitive Activities and Restricted Interests

Seeks consistency in environmental events to the point of exhibiting significant rigidity in routines and displays marked distress over changes in the routine, and/or has a significantly persistent preoccupation with or attachment to objects or topics.





## Social

The child displays significant difficulties or differences or both in interacting with or understanding people and events. Examples of qualifying characteristics include, but are not limited to:

Difficulty commenting on the feelings of others

Limited understanding about other people's feelings and perspectives

Little to no back and forth conversation

Lack of joint attention

<http://resources.autismnavigator.com/asdglossary/#/section/9/initiateInteraction>



## Social Behavior in Autism Spectrum Disorders

### Social Competence

The ability to accommodate or adapt to ongoing social situations according to a set of social norms, rules and routines.



## Social

- May want to have friends but don't know how to make them.
- Some will prefer to play alone.
- May not make good eye contact or have fleeting eye contact.
- May not respond to others, especially when engrossed in their area of interest.
- Girls may appear more social but have core deficits much like boys.



## Social

- Some students have difficulty with personal space.
- He/she may lack tact or appear rude.
- Working in groups is challenging due to the unspoken rules around group participation - organizing, discussions and decision making.
- Older students/teenagers may express a feeling of isolation, inventing a make-believe world in which, presumably, to escape a social world they do not understand and where despite trying, are not fully accepted. (Attwood, 2007).



## Social: Interventions

- Social Stories
- Contingency Map
- Video Modeling
- Cartooning
- Power Cards
- Peer Mediated Instruction and Intervention

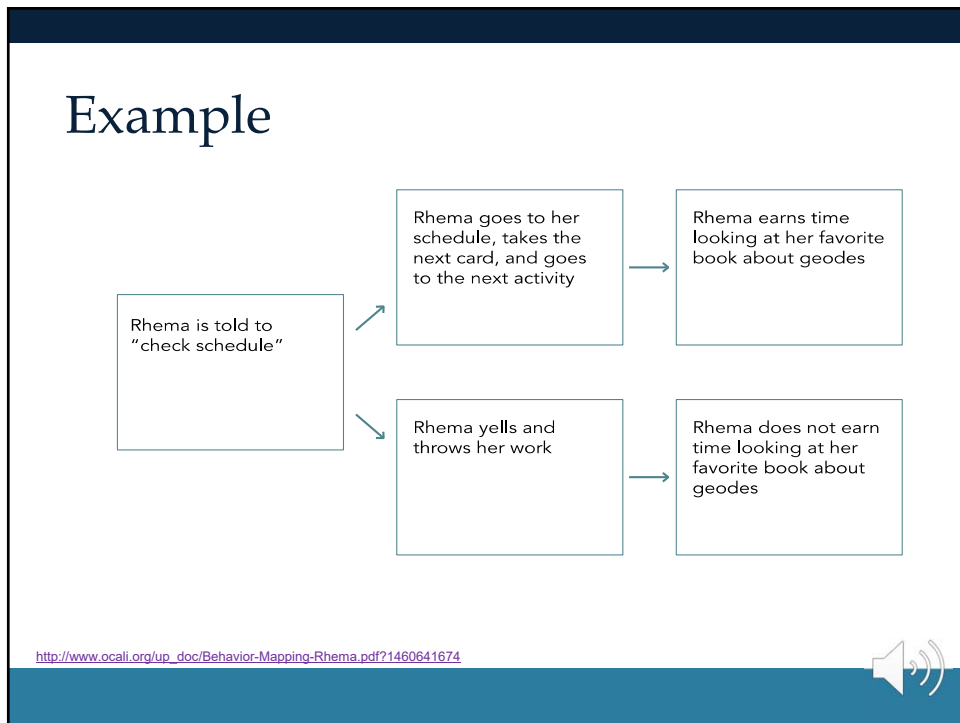
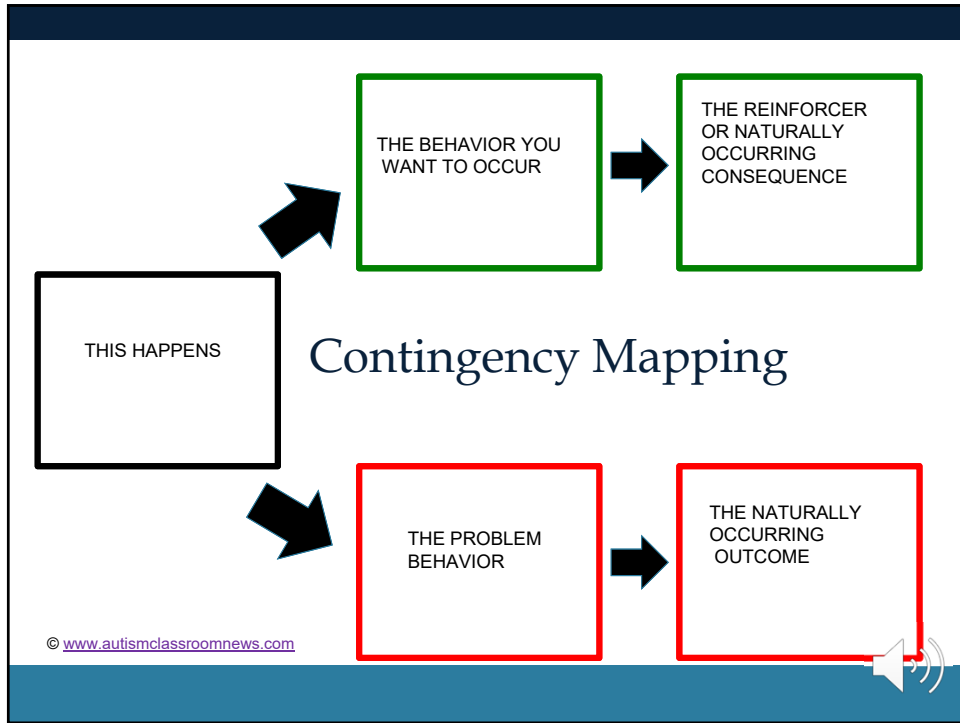


## Social Stories

Carol Grey, [www.thegreycenter.org](http://www.thegreycenter.org)

- A Social Story describes a situation, skill, or concept in terms of relevant social cues, perspectives, and common responses in a specifically defined style and format
- The goal of a Social Story is to share accurate social information in a patient and reassuring manner that is easily understood by its audience.
- Although the goal of a Social Story should never be to change the individual's behavior, that individual's improved understanding of events and expectations may lead to more effective responses





# Video Modeling

- Video modeling involves demonstrating desired behaviors through active video representation of the behaviors.
- Involves an individual watching a video demonstration and then imitating the behavior of the model.
- It is imperative that the
  - model receive **reinforcement** for the desired behavior.



LaCava, P. (2013). Video modeling: An online training module. (Kansas City: University of Kansas, Special Education Department). In Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI), Autism Internet Modules, www.autisminternetmodules.org. Columbus, OH: OCALI.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBPYVj3S5-k>



# Cartooning

Social Skills Cartoon: Request from a Friend

<p>Greet your friend</p>	<p>Make your Request</p>
<p>Wait for an answer</p>	<p>Be Polite: if your friend says no, find out what you can do to change the answer.</p>


[http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/mod\\_view.php?nav\\_id=1147](http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/mod_view.php?nav_id=1147)



## Power Cards

### Spiderman Needs Help


Even a superhero like Spiderman needs help sometimes. Not even a superhero can do everything alone. At first, Spiderman was scared to ask for help. He didn't want people to think he was weak. He also didn't want people interrupting him when he didn't need help. Then Spiderman had a great idea. He could raise his hand to let people know when he needed help. This would keep them from interrupting, but also get him help when he needed it. When we need help, we can raise our hand just like Spiderman.



[http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/mod\\_view.php?nav\\_id=1150](http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/mod_view.php?nav_id=1150)

### Power Card - Using Interest


#### Proud and Relaxed



Iguana's, Lizards and other  
Reptiles Practice Adapting  
Reptiles Adapt

Side 1

Some things are hard for reptiles. Some things are hard for me.



Adapting helps.

When I adapt, this happens:

Head up!

Chest out!

Focus!


More energy!

Side 2

Example of using an individual's interest (lizards) to "adapt" to different situations

Instructions: print, cut out both cards - laminate, trim, glue backsides together, laminate again, trim, and use!

[www.victoriesnautism.com](http://www.victoriesnautism.com)



## Peer Mediated Instruction and Intervention (PMII)

- Teach peers ways in which they can talk and interact with children and youth with ASD
- Increase the frequency with which children and youth with ASD interact with typically developing peers
- Extend peers' social initiations with students with ASD across activities in the classroom
- Minimize teachers'/adults' support (e.g., prompts and reinforcement)
- Promote interactions between typically developing peers and students with ASD that are positive and natural in quality

Neitzel, J., Boyd, B., Odom, S. L., & Edmondson Pretzel, R. (2008). Peer-mediated instruction and intervention for children and youth with autism spectrum disorders: Online training module (Chapel Hill: UNC-Chapel Hill, National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders, FPG Child Development Institute). In Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI), *Autism Internet Modules*, [www.autisminternetmodules.org](http://www.autisminternetmodules.org). Columbus, OH: OCALI.



## Communication

The child displays significant difficulties or differences which extend beyond speech and language to other aspects of social communication, both receptively and expressively. Examples of qualifying characteristics include, but are not limited to:

Difficulty reporting events

Delay or lack of verbal language

Integration of gestures is challenging

Difficulty initiating, maintaining, & ending, conversations

Stereotyped/ idiosyncratic use of words/ phrases

<http://resources.autismnavigator.com/asdglossary/#/section/43/gettingStarted>



## Communication Challenges

- May not pick up on the rules of conversation.
- The subtleties of language may be missed – sarcasm, jokes, idioms, inferences .
- Casual conversations are difficult.
- May have differences in tone, rate and prosody of speech.
- May appear to understand more than they do.
- Uses an advanced vocabulary but may not always know the meaning.



## Communication Challenges

- Facial expression or tone of voice are not always read accurately.
- May have difficulty expressing thoughts or feelings.
- Some students with ASD find it difficult to listen to or show enjoyment in another persons interests.
- Many process VISUAL information more accurately than auditory.



It takes time to process.





## Communication: Interventions

- If giving a directive, state it as a directive not a question.
- Demonstrate or model instructions-support with visuals.
- If multiple instructions are given, write them down for the student .
- Use visuals to increase understanding and memory.



## Communication: Intervention

- Attempt to get the child's attention before beginning to speak.
  - ① Call his name
  - ② Place yourself near the child, in their line of sight and use physical direction if necessary.
- Avoid excessive talking!!!  
Use fewer words so they can process what you are saying without being overwhelmed and shutting down, tuning out or acting out.



## Repetitive Activities and Restricted Interests

The child seeks consistency in environmental events to the point of exhibiting significant rigidity in routines and displays marked distress over changes in the routine, and/or has a significantly persistent preoccupation with or attachment to objects or topics.

<http://resources.autismnavigator.com/asdglossary/#/section/43/gettingStarted>



## Restricted, Repetitive, Patterns of Behaviors, Interests or Activities

- Insistence on routine results in difficulty with:
  - Transitions
  - Flexible thinking
  - Problem solving or thinking of more than one way to handle a situation.
  - Playing with peers due to the complex demands of social cognitive flexibility in pretend play situations.
- Repetitive body movements
- Few interests, may over focus on odd topics of interest – heating system in office buildings
- Preoccupation with parts of objects



## Mental Flexibility

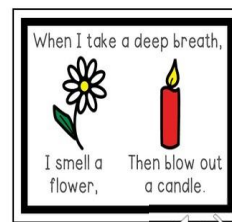
*Ability to easily shift from one idea, train of thought, activity or way of looking at things to another.*

- Perseverate
- Difficulties taking feedback
- Resistant
- Can appear stubborn or argumentative
- May appear to lack empathy



## Interventions: Mental Flexibility

- Teach thought stopping, relaxation or coping strategies (e.g., deep breaths, calming self-talk, leaving the situation until calm, etc.).
- Help them understand why strategies used in one setting or for one task may not work for another.
- Role-play situations ahead of time to help generate more than one outcome and more than one potential solution.



## Restricted Interests and Repetitive Behaviors

- Getting to know and understand the areas of interest will allow for creative planning in the classroom.
- Providing a socially appropriate time to perform repetitive behaviors is important-never take these away without a replacement.
- Use special interests to increase compliance by providing reinforcement.



## Academic Expectations

- Expectations need to be kept in line with abilities.
- Abilities cannot always be determined in traditional ways.
- Expectations that are not attainable will usually lead to disruptive behavior.
- Students with autism need to have their learning styles assessed.



## Learning Styles

Many students with autism:

- Are visual learners
- Respond best to simple clear instructions
- Require that lengthy projects be broken into small parts
- Information presented in a sequential format



## Visual Supports...

- Are used to support access to the curriculum and success in the general ed. environment.
- Increase independence, decrease frustration.
- Should be generalized across environments of home, school and community.
- Can be continued in post school environments.
- May be necessary throughout a lifetime.



## Visuals for Organization

- Establish a daily routine as much as possible. Particularly for young students, the ability to predict what is going to be happening will help them to organize their behavior better.
- Use picture schedules, planners, checklists, or electronic organizers to help them organize their day and prepare themselves for transitions.



43

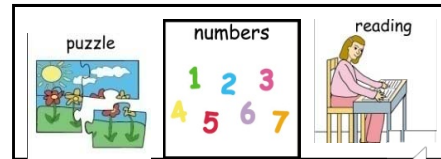
## Visual Schedules

- Daily schedules tell:
  - What will be happening today
  - The order the events will take place
  - If there is something different happening today
  - What is **not** happening today
- Schedules are designed left to right or top to bottom



A schedule gives the amount of information the student is able to use effectively...

- For some students, the schedule will have the current activity and what is coming next (First/Then).
- Some students will have a schedule for AM and a schedule for PM
- Another student may have one schedule for the day or month
- Mini schedule or activity schedule lists the individual tasks that will occur during an activity

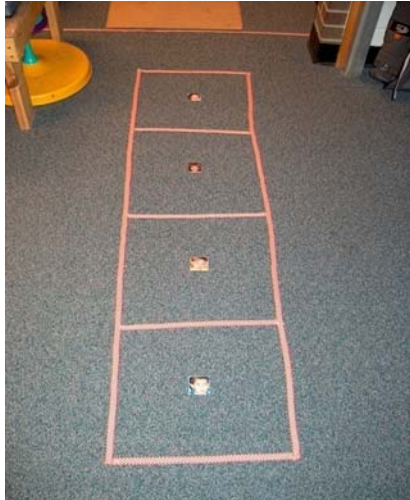


## Teaching Visual Supports

The student must be taught the meaning of the visual supports and how to use them

- Teach by prompting or modeling (Use peers as models)
- Consider modifications if the student is having difficulty with the visual support
- Fade prompts as soon as possible so that the student doesn't become dependent on the adult/peer teaching the support

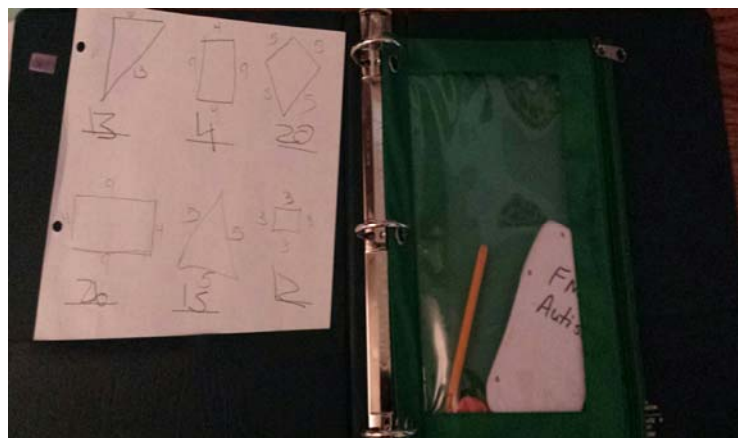




Place tape or Velcro on floor showing where to stand when lining up with class (can add pictures or student's names to show their order in line).



## Secondary Visual Support





## Visual Supports for Instruction

Utilize visual cues to describe the task so the student can perform the task independently

- Materials define the task – stacking cups, puzzle, worksheet, workbasket
- A jig is used to instruct placement, order or sequence
- Picture of the activity
- Written instructions
- Model or sample of completed task



<http://best-practice.middletownautism.com/approaches-of-intervention/the-teach-autism-programme/structured-tasks/>

## Classroom Assignments

- Additional time to complete tasks
- Shortened tasks
- Number of problems reduced
- Highlighted text
- Study guides



## Classroom Assignments

- Identifying precisely which information the student is responsible for
- Model of what is expected on assignments
- Specific lists of criteria for grading assignments
- Variety of ways to demonstrate mastery



## Poll Question 2

Using Visuals for students with ASD  
Is a strategy that can increase independence and  
skill acquisition.

- True
- False



## Poll Question 2

**TRUE!**



## Reinforcement

- Reinforcement is rewarding students for behaving in ways that are productive and support their continued personal growth.
- Reinforcement increases the likelihood that a student will behave in the same way again.
- Reinforcement should be paired with specific feedback, so the student knows which behavior you are reinforcing.



*Understanding Autism: A Guide for Secondary School Teachers*

## Choosing a Reinforcer

- What is reinforcing is highly individualized.
- Assess for what is reinforcing.
- A weak reinforcer is like having no reinforcer at all.
- Must be available and closely follow the desired behavior in the beginning.
- Have a variety of reinforcer can choose.



## Need for Sameness

- Students with ASD can be very rigid in their thinking. As the educator, we must be very FLEXIBLE.
- Providing structure and routine in every environment will decrease anxiety and increase availability to learn new information.



## Structuring the Physical Environment

Organize the student's physical environment to be meaningful and predictable.

The design of the environment should help the student understand:

- What is to occur in each area;
- Where each area begins and ends and;
- How to get to a specific area by the most direct route.



## Physical Structure Can:

### Set boundaries

- Identify what is to occur in each area
- Show where each area begins and ends
- Indicate how to get to a specific area
- Organize the area for effective teaching

### Reduce distractions

- Auditory distraction
  - Noises in the hallway
  - Students talking
- Visual distractions
  - Art and bulletin boards on walls
  - Activity in room
- Internal distractions
  - Perseveration on objects
  - Obsessive-compulsive needs
  - Self Stim



## Visual Boundaries



## Visual/Physical Boundaries



## Room Design

- Layout of the room is clearly divided into specific learning areas
- Layout for preschool class may have areas for:
  - Circle time area, housekeeping, snack, tables for centers/crafts activities, etc., book or quiet corner, sensory area
- Elementary - Large group and independent work areas, computers, small group area, choice/free time area, quiet area
- Secondary - Instructional and independent work area, leisure area, workshop/vocational skills area, domestic skills area, self help & grooming area, quiet area



## What Are Evidence Based Practices?

Many interventions exist for autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Yet, scientific research has found only some of these interventions to be effective. The interventions that researchers have shown to be effective are called evidence-based practices (EBPs). One reason for using EBPs is because, by law, teaching practices must be based on evidence of effectiveness.

<https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices>



## People with ASD can...

- Learn and progress
- Enjoy relationships with friends and family
- Live independently or semi-independently
- Work and participate in their community





## Helpful Websites

- The list below is a sampling of the hundreds of interesting websites containing information on ASD.
- [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)
- [www.ocali.org](http://www.ocali.org)
- [www.teacch.com](http://www.teacch.com)
- [www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)
- [www.autism-resources.com](http://www.autism-resources.com)
- [firstsigns.org](http://firstsigns.org)
- [www.autismclassroomresources.com](http://www.autismclassroomresources.com)



## Thank you

Thank you for joining us today. We will stay live for a few minutes to answer any questions you may have.

Rhonda Danner & Alissa Mullett



## Contact Us

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Alissa Mullett [mullett\\_a@cde.state.co.us](mailto:mullett_a@cde.state.co.us)



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