



Including Students with ASD in Specialist Classrooms

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Definition of Autism



- Autism is a complex, developmental disability that is evident within the first 3 years of life.
- It is a behaviorally defined syndrome that is recognized by difficulties in communication, social interaction and perceptual organization.

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Key Deficit Areas for Students with High Functioning Autism

- Impairments in social- communication
- Restricted interests and unusual patterns of behavior
- Regulation
- Emotional vulnerability

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P.E, Music, Computer, Art and Media Classes

HOW DOES AUTISM EFFECT LEARNING AND BEHAVIOR IN THE SPECIALS CLASSES??

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PE and Music Class

- Poor/awkward motor skills (deficits in motor planning)
- Noise level, lights, and movement (sensory: fight or flight)
- Large group situations (attending and focus)
- Following multi-step verbal directions
- Difficulty understanding sarcasm, very literal
- Changing/wearing different clothes/managing locker room
- Personal space issues
- Interacting with peers (working with others/collaboration)
- Unstructured activities (fear of not being able to predict)
- Transitioning between activities (pacing of class)
- Problem solving issues with peers, materials
- Anxiety (social pressures/bullying)
- Uninterested-not his/her special interest
- Difficulty with social reciprocity (turn-taking)
- Difficulty being flexible with “rules” (especially with peers)



(Some of the things we will talk about today work for other kids as well (ADHD, Developmental Delay, Behavior Disorder etc)

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Computer Class and Library Time

- Fine motor skills
- Noise level, lights, and movement(sensory: fight or flight)
- Hyper-focusing on special interest area—not understanding how other kids have different interests
- Large group situations (attention and focus)
- Following multi-step verbal directions
- Personal space issues
- Interacting with peers
- Problem solving
- Unstructured activities (fear not being able to predict)
- Transitioning – high interest to a not highly preferred activity
- Anxiety (social pressures/bullying)
- Difficulty with social reciprocity (turn-taking)
- Difficulty being flexible with “rules” (especially with peers)



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Art Class

- Fine motor skills/motor planning
- Noise level, lights, and movement
- Textures and smells (sensory: fight or flight)
- Large group situations (attending and focus)
- Following multi-step verbal directions
- Big picture thinking/creativity/abstract thinking (Executive Functioning)
- Perfectionism
- Personal space issues
- Interacting with peers/working with others/collaboration
- Problem solving
- Unstructured activities
- Transitioning between activities (pacing of class)
- Anxiety (social pressures/bullying)
- Difficulty being flexible with “rules” (especially with peers)

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Specials Classes

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH ASD

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Become a relevant person in the life of a child with ASD

REINFORCEMENT/MOTIVATION

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Reinforcement/Motivation

Build a relationship with the student!

Building Rapport Differently!!

- Asking teachers or parents about the child's special interests
- Engage with student by talking about special interest
- Consider interacting with the student outside of your specials class
- Show interest in their life and activities

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Reinforcement/Motivation- -

- 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.
- ❖ Find out What your student loves!! This is the ticket to motivating your student to learn new information and complete work!

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Use Special Interests...

INCREASE MOTIVATION TO LEARN

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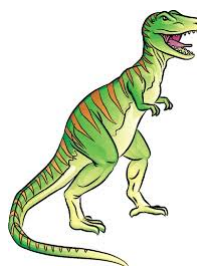


Examples...

- Practice writing music notes, vocabulary etc on the backs of plastic pigs
- Teach a student to calm themselves by looking at a picture of their special interest while taking 3 deep breathes
- Incorporate favorite song or instrument in class
- Using a special pencil, marker or color
- Draw or paint a favorite character or special interest
- Allow child to use favorite color ball in PE class
- Running to pictures of special interest (spider man on one wall, batman on other wall)

Paula Kluth, 2008

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Another Way to Reinforce in Class...

What am I working for?

REINFORCEMENT VISUALS

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If *Then*

hands to self
feet down
say, "OK"
sit and work

pom-poms
pretzels
pig
juice

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Token Systems...
I am working for _____

I am working for: [stars]

I am working for: [green token]

I am working for: [blue token]

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Peyton's Points Page
I will follow directions!

I am working for _____ Each Vehicle Circled =1minute



In the morning I earned _____ minutes In the afternoon I earned _____ minutes


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Provide Structure in Environment and Work Assignments

STRUCTURE...

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Structure

- Students with Autism need work and tasks designed with simple structure
- Students with ASD need to know the answers to the following questions when given work
 - What do I have to do
 - How much do I have to do (amount, length)
 - How will I know when I am finished
 - What do I get or do next

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Ideas for Structuring

- Consistent warm up routine or start to class
- Present instruction in same way each day
 - Individual visuals for students with ASD
- Peer buddy for activity
- Utilize small groups when possible
- Incorporating visual schedules
- Use reinforcement through-out the class
- Modify and structure activities

❖ Communicate this info to your substitutes

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IDEAS FOR STRUCTURE AND VISUALS!

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Physical Structure: Visual Cues like tape, boundaries with furniture, and labels really help students with ASD



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Structure for PE



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**Simplify
the
Activity**



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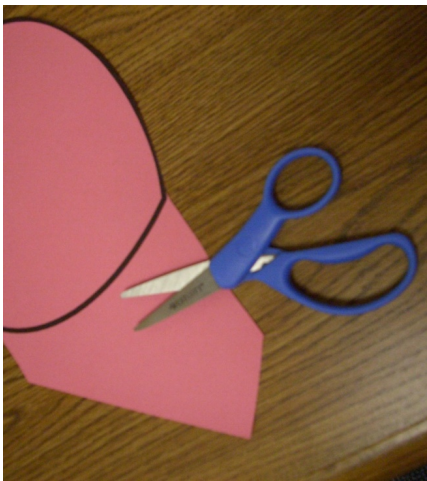
**Break
Spot**



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Structure for Art



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Structure for Creative Activities



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Structure for Musical Instruments



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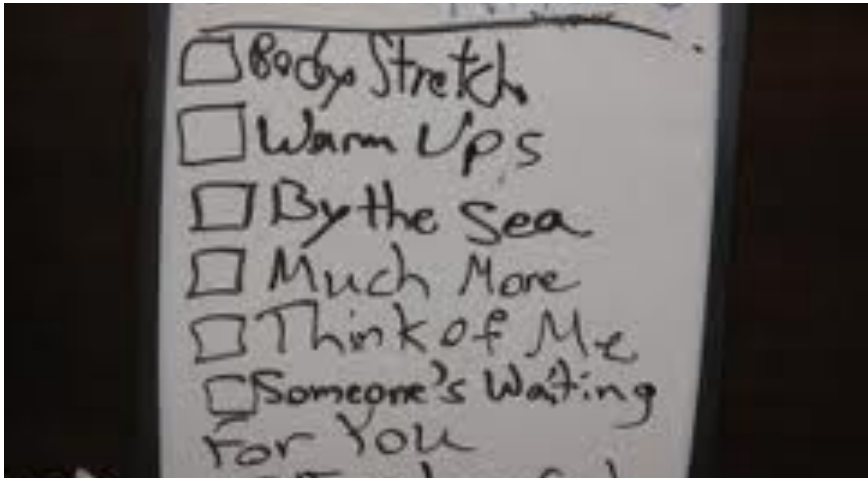
STOP THE VERBAL!

GO VISUAL!!

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Music Mini-Schedules



- Body's Stretch
- Warm Ups
- By the Sea
- Much More
- Think of Me
- Someone's Waiting for You

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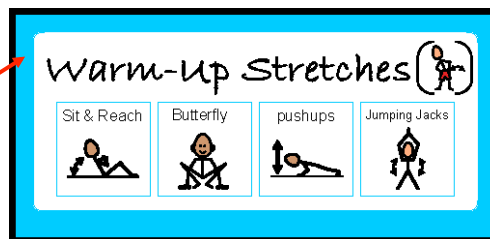
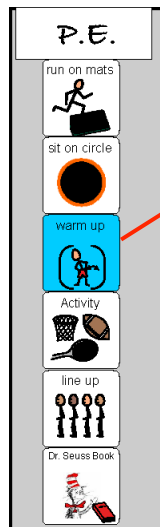
Art: First---Next



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P.E. Mini-Schedule Example



When the Student has P.E. Scheduled, he/she can know exactly what is expected in P.E. Class for that day. Warm-up stretches may change daily so there is another mini-schedule to show what stretches the student is expected to participate in.

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Calendar Example

Specials				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Calendar
Of Specials

When the student has specials on his/her calendar, he/she can refer to this Specials Calendar to see what special he/she specifically has for the day.

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Calendar Example


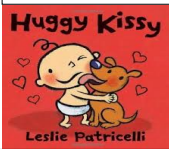


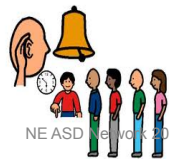
Library Schedule				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Calendar
Of Library





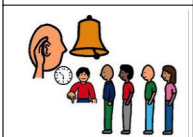

When the Student has Library scheduled, this calendar outlines when he/she can check out a book, under the condition that the previously borrowed book was returned.

Level: Elementary

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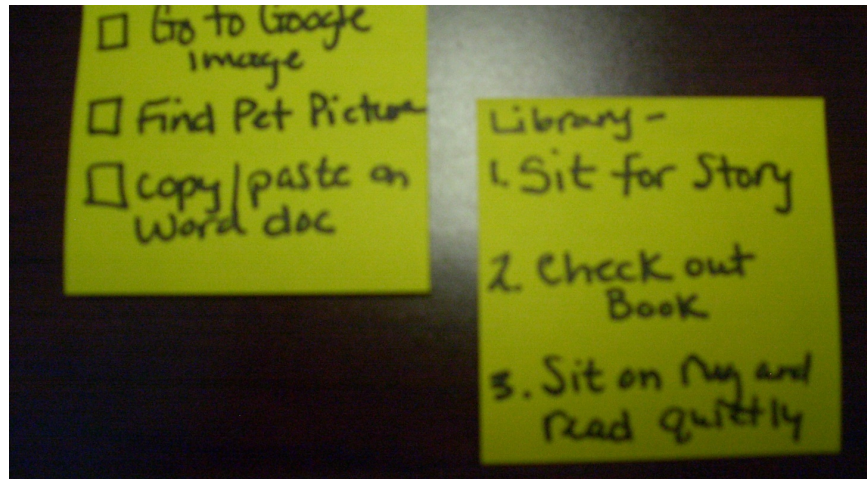
Sample Library Story-Time Mini-Schedule	Music	Pull pictures off as activity ends!
		
	Group Story	
		
	Read Alone	
		
Line Up		
	35	

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	Mini-Schedule for P.E. Class
	
	
	
	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take off each picture as that activity is finished.• Peers can help a student do this if a Paraeducator is not in class

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Structure Multi-Step Directions



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Make the Duration of the Task Visual...



Throw the ball 10 times

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Provide a Warning that a Transition is Coming

Use of an individual visual warning card

This will help children who have difficulties processing auditory information, difficulties attending to verbal or delayed receptive language skills

Count-down Card...



USING PEERS IN SPECIALIST CLASSES

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Using your Peers

- Pair the child with Autism with a strong peer model
- Have the peers demonstrate activity
- Use peers to demonstrate skills with video modeling prior to class
- Peers help with transitions (verbal prompting and holding hand when appropriate)
- Peers help prompt through multiple steps of activity

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OTHER STRATEGIES....

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Other Strategies

- Offer choices
- Don't ask a question when there is not a choice
 - You will get no for an answer ☺
- Short precise instruction of what to do
 - Walk vs. Don't run
- Limit slang and jargon
- Have multiple pieces of equipment available to reduce wait time
- Extra copy of book so child does not have to attend across large group
- Spend some time in the gym when there is not class (getting use to sensory in this environment)
- **Priming/Pre-teaching skills**, songs, book, routines etc so when the child is in class they will be familiar with the content (video modeling and social narratives can be used for pre-teaching)

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Questions??



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On-Line Resources and Websites

Nebraska ASD Network: Training and other Network resources

<http://www.unl.edu/asdnetwork/>

Autism Speaks: ASD Information and downloadable Autism/Asperger's Tool Kits

www.autismspeaks.org

Autism Internet Modules: Free on-line training modules of many evidence based interventions

<http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/index.php>

Organization for Autism Research www.researchautism.org – Educator's Guides to Autism and Asperger's Syndrome

Reference List

- Selected visual supports from Lee Stickle, 2008 Para Training Manual
- Selected visual supports from Susan Stokes, 2013-14
- Selected motivation/reinforcement ideas from Paula Kluth, Just Give Him the Whale, 2008
- Special Thanks to Jennifer Vest, Millard Public Schools staff for their contributions to this presentation!