

TRI-STATE WEBINAR SERIES

Bright and Verbal Students with Autism: Strategies for the General Education Classroom

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Tri-State 2020-2021 Webinar Series

Tri-State Autism Spectrum Disorder Webinar Series



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Bright and Verbal Students with Autism

Strategies for the General
Education Classroom

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See the Autism...

What do I need to support my bright and verbal students with Autism?



Ability to See the Autism: Looking Below the Surface

Tip of the Iceberg =
What we see—the child and observed behaviors

Base of the Iceberg =
Underlying deficits/characteristics



From: Parent Survival Manual: A Guide to Crisis Resolution in Autism and Related Developmental Disorders (1995) by Eric Schopler

Understanding the Characteristics of Bright and Verbal Students with Autism



Characteristics...

Communication

- Not the quantity of their language but the quality
- Lack of understanding of conversational rules
- Inability to change topics
- Have difficulty comprehending abstract concepts, figurative language and sarcasm

Social

- Difficulty understanding relationships/friendships
- Difficulty reading body language
- Predicting events and reactions of others to their behavior
- Understanding that things are not black and white
- Conversation style often includes cumbersome monologues related to interest

Restricted Interests/Patterns of Behavior

- Narrow Interests- may not be not permanent
- Often appear "uncontrollable"
- Role of the interest: interest, fun, security, comfort, relaxation, stress reduction

Maturity

- Children with HFA are generally considered to have the social maturity of someone 1/3 to 2/3 of their age.

Rote Memory

- Good rote memory, especially around areas of interest
- They can have difficulty when their "facts" are different from others'.

Willingness or different brain?

What looks like "won't"

- Opposition
- Lack of will (He can if he wants to do it)
- Lack of effort
- Inability or refusal to put good ideas on paper
- Sloppy, erratic work
- Refusal to control outbursts

May actually be "can't"

- Cognitive inflexibility
- Difficulty in shifting
- Poor initiation or impaired planning
- Poor fine motor, disorganization
- Poor self-monitoring,
- Overload

Ref.1

Being Very Literal

Write the following words in **alphabetical order**
(the order they come in the alphabet)

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

~~gale~~ pumpkin log river fox pond

1. aepp
2. ikmppu
3. gb
4. eriv
5. fox
6. chep

Take the Time to Learn More About Autism!

[Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders](#)

[Autism and the Very Young Child](#)

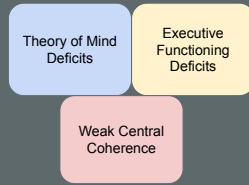
[Autism Spectrum Disorder and Females](#)

[Autism Spectrum Disorders for Administrators](#)

Many Faces of Autism Course (90 minute course)

[Many Faces of Autism](#)

A Unique Mind



Theory of Mind

What is ToM?

It is the ability to recognize and understand thoughts, beliefs, desires, and intentions of other people in order to make sense of their behavior and predict what they are going to do next.

Attwood, 2007

- May appear rude or disrespectful
- May cause negative behavioral interactions
- No malicious intent, but rather a statement of fact
- Lack understanding that others may not have the same passions, interests, and desires

Self Awareness

“Self-awareness is the ability to “step outside” oneself to observe and evaluate one’s own behavior.”

(Bellini, 2006 pg. 23-24)

Self Awareness + Theory of Mind

Understanding your own actions and behaviors and how they are viewed by others

Making adjustments to own behavior based upon inferring others’ perspectives, reading non-verbal cues

Executive Functioning

EF Skills – Thinking and Behavior Regulation Skills

- Planning
- Organization
- Time Management
- Working Memory
- Metacognition
- Response Inhibition
- Self-regulation of Affect
- Task Initiation
- Flexibility
- Goal-directed Persistence

Things to remember...

- EF skills are consistent with inconsistencies
- EF skills work together – no skill works in isolation
- EF is not about “Do I have the skill” but...
“Do I have the ability to access the skill at that moment?”
- EF skills are impaired by stress, anxiety, depression, self-deprivation
- EF deficiencies often interfere with one’s ability to demonstrate intelligence

Add EF Webinar Links

[Unstuck and On Target – Helping Students with Planning, Organization and Flexible Thinking- Part 1](#)

[Executive Functioning Skills STOP Strategy](#)

[Executive Functioning: "Job Talk" Developing Independent Executive Functioning Skills](#)

Weak Central Coherence

WCC is the ability to see or attend to the details, but have difficulty perceiving or understanding the overall picture.

May learn isolated facts but have difficulty with an overall analysis.

Have difficulty determining what is relevant

Have difficulty summarizing big picture or giving just the important parts

Strategies
for the
General
Education
Classroom!

CHECKLIST OF NEEDED SUPPORTS



Reinforcement



Reinforcement

- 90% of the Effectiveness of a Program is REINFORCEMENT!!
- Reinforcement is *what makes the behavior more likely to occur in the future*
- Should immediately follow the behavior you want to strengthen

Reminders...

You Don't Get the Behavior You Want.....

You get the behavior that you reinforce!

Lee Stickle, 2012

Your reaction determines whether a behavior will happen again or not. To change student behavior- we have to change our behavior

[Reinforcement Virtual Strategy](#)

Planning Time to Pair

Building a Relationship by Pairing with the Student's and their Reinforcers

Tips for Pairing with Bright and Verbal Students...

- Find out what the student's special interest is...ask them!
- Learn about the special interest
- Set up time to talk with the student about their special interest (2 by 10)
- Have reinforcing items in your classroom (spiderman book, car part catalog, pictures of video games, model car etc)
- Have lunch or set up a break time to engage with the student and their special interest
- Be excited about the things they love
- Evaluate yourself often; does the child run to you or away from you? Stop in to see you or try to avoid you?

Individualized Reinforcement Visuals...

Examples of Reinforcement Cards



High School Student Plan

- Bring materials** (Icon: pencil and paper)
- Follow class agenda** (Icon: person at a desk)
- Complete work** (Icon: hand writing)
- AM** (Icon: hand holding a pass)
- Pick up pass in office** (Icon: person at a desk)
- This isn't working... I need to go.** (Icon: person with a sad face)
- Show pass to teacher** (Icon: person holding a pass)
- office 154** (Icon: office building)
- Coupon for Snacks in Cafeteria or Health Office or time for MINDCRAFT** (Icon: person at a desk)

GOAL: assignment or task completion

- Teachers can assign specific tasks or assignments a "minute" value. When you complete the task, your teacher will track the appropriate boxes.
- Fill in my name in the minutes to do a choice activity during study hall.

NAME									
1 minute									
1/2 minute									

- 2 minutes = handing in an overnight assignment on time
- 1 minute = completing an assignment in class
- 1/2 minute = starting an assignment or task independently
- 1/2 minute = raising my hand and asking for help when I am stuck

Teachers may add additional minute objectives:

Structure and Visuals in the Classroom!



Teaching Change

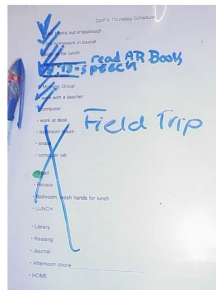
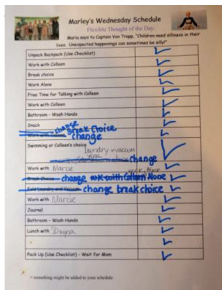
- -Asperger's (HFA) is like a vise on your brain and each unexpected event is like another turn on the vise...it just keeps building until you feel like you're going to explode. Sometimes when you explode, it comes out the wrong way."

o Peter Berg, a middle school student with Asperger Syndrome

Tips for Teaching Change

- Visually show them the change (not just verbally telling them)
- Show them how the change will impact the rest of their day (with their schedule)
- Provide reinforcement after the student manages the change





Providing Structure \Visuals to End Activities

- Teach the student a transition cue such as a timer
- Use it to end all activities



GIVING SOME CONTROL: ONE MORE MINUTE....

• Front of Card



• Back of Card

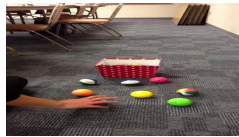


SHOW THEM WHEN THEY ARE DONE...
COUNTDOWN TO FINISHED



5 4 3 2 1 All Done

Structure and Visual for Clean Up Time



Routines for Rules

When given a direction you need to...

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

When you come to class:

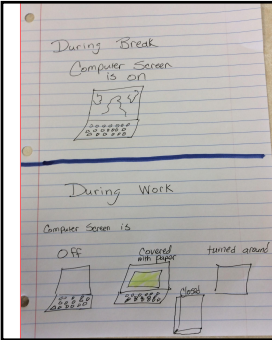
- o Sit Down
- o Get out your pencil
- o Open your binder to the class that you are in
- o Read any instructions on the board

Meth Class

- o Sit down
- o Get out your pencil
- o Open your binder
- o Get out your math notebook
- o Do the problem of the week or the ADD problems that are highlighted in your spiral.

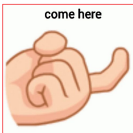
CA/Reading

- o Sit down
- o Get out your pencil
- o Open your binder to reading or CA
- o Get out your compass
- o Open your reading or CA file
- o Look at the board
- o Do the OTB Bellwork



Sometimes you need to make a visual on the spot. This was used for a student who used a computer for earned breaks but had difficulty leaving it alone during work time.

VISUAL REMINDERS



Red Square - -
No Talk Time

Green Square - -
Talk Time

Arguing/Negotiating....

Non-Negotiable

STOP
↓
Listen
↓
Follow Direction

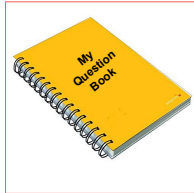


"Second to Last Word"

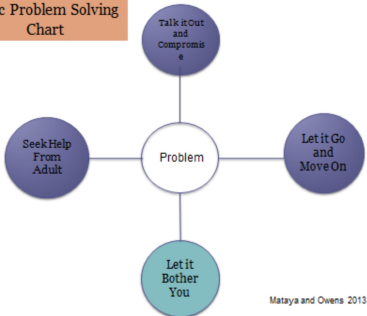


Too Many Questions

Three Questions Per Class...



Basic Problem Solving Chart



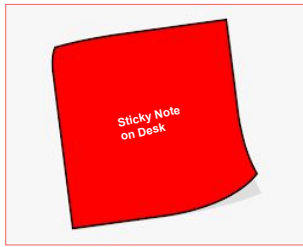
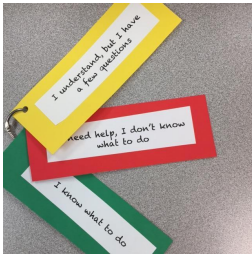
Mataya and Owens 2013

Priming –

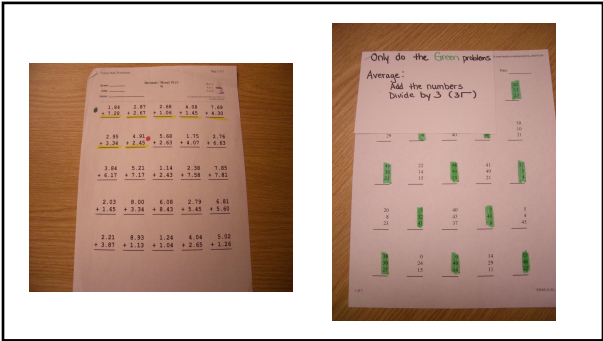
Pre-Teaching skills, activities, group work etc to the student so it is familiar before he/she is expected to perform skill!

- Pre-Reading books that will be read to the large group in the classroom or library
- Pre-teaching vocabulary or writing topics before class time
- Pre-teach motor skills needed for activity in PE class
- Pre-teach expected social skills for playground
- Pre-teach social questions to ask peers at recess or passing period
- Pre-teach directions for activity or lab work
- Pre-teach songs for new unit coming up

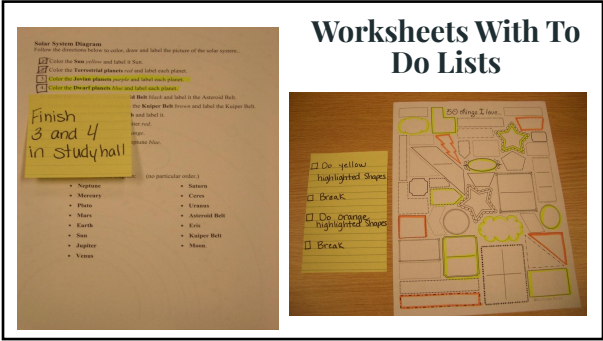
Checking In Visual... Need Help



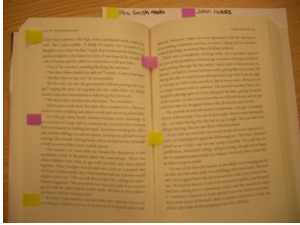
Curriculum Work







I Read...You Read



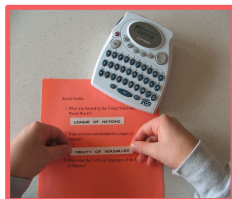
Structuring a Writing Activity & Using Visuals



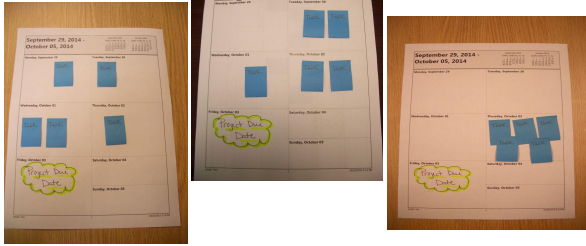
I Write -- You Write

Consider different options for Writing

- Typing- Computer or iPad
- Recording information into a phone or iPad
- Dictating information to a peer or adult
- Think outside the box-
 - Labels with answers they peel and stick
 - Label maker



Long Term Projects...



Final Tip...

Fairness

"Fairness is not giving everyone the same thing. Fairness is giving the individual what they need to succeed."

Lavoie

Richard D.

THANK YOU!

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