

AUTISM: FREE YOUR MIND

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Free Your Mind

- Free your mind of perceptions, of what you think you know, what you think you see, of negative thoughts
- See the facts, see the possibilities
- Patience is not only a virtue, it's a necessity
- Changes are good, if we understand the purpose and the importance.
- If you do what you've always done, you will get what you've always got
- The easiest thing to change is ... Yourself

A beginning thought...

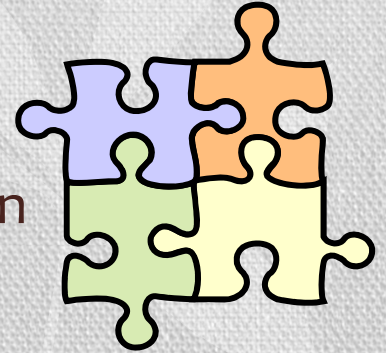
- People with autism do not live by the rules of the world they were born into.



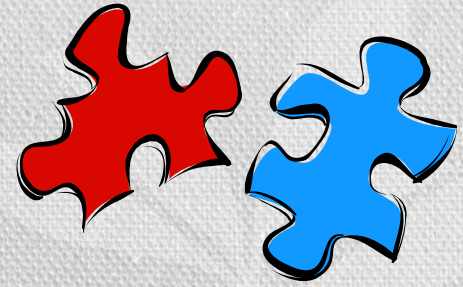
What Autism Is...

According to new diagnostic criteria (DSM 5)

- Deficits in Social Communication and Social Interaction
 - Social emotional reciprocity
 - Nonverbal communication behaviors
 - Developing, maintaining, and understanding social relationships
- Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, activities
 - Repetitive motor mannerisms or speech
 - Insistence on routines
 - Fixated, restrictive interests
 - Hyper or hypo activity to sensory input




More Thoughts



- No two children with autism are alike because...
- Autism is a SPECTRUM disorder that is also on a continuum
- Just like you and me, but more extreme
- Visual supports are important
- Communication is the key
- Trust





“Autists are the ultimate square pegs, and the problem with pounding a square peg into a round hole is not that the hammering is hard work. It's that you're destroying the peg.”
— Paul Collins

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

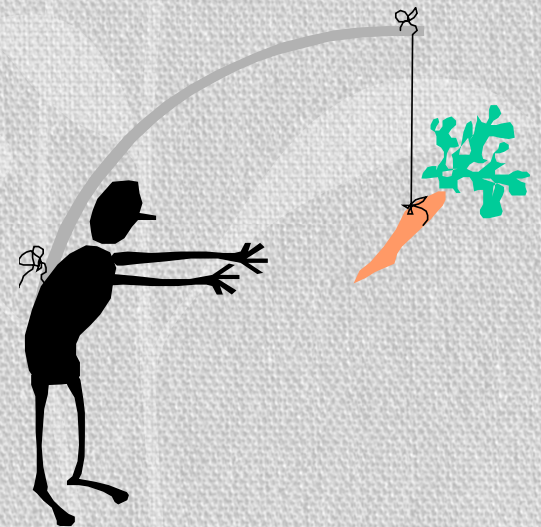
Information Gathering

- Breathe
- Read the IEP (GASP!!)- Follow what has been created
- Pay special attention to accommodations and modifications-you are responsible for these
- Find OT/Speech/Psych /DT reports (EC) and read
- Start taking notes about recommendations, etc.
- Collect Data
 - Observe student
 - Work with Student



Identifying Reinforcers

- If you do not do this well, nothing will ever be accomplished.
- Let them go around the classroom/house/bag of toys and note what they choose when others aren't around
- Reinforcers will change, and quickly
- Not always tangible, but something you do
- Need “bag of tricks”
- Talk to parents, they know





SENSORY BREAK

The Internet," [Judy] Singer said, "is a prosthetic device for people who can't socialize without it." For anyone challenged by language and social rules, a communication system that does not operate in real time is a godsend."

— Andrew Solomon

Establish Communication

Communication is the key!

Having useful language by age 5 is one of the most powerful predictors of a good outcome.



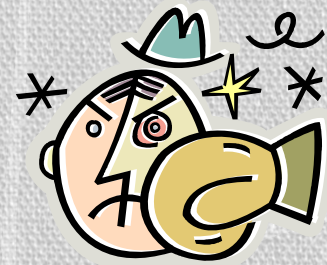
How does the Child Communicate?

- If a communication system is in place, CONTINUE!
- ALL behavior is communication
- Verbal v. Nonverbal
- Picture communication
- Gestures/sign
- How much do they understand? – see speech report
 - Need to know that your five year old has understanding of a one year old
 - Many times they can say more than they understand, which can be confusing



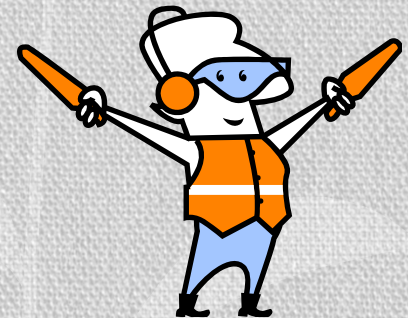
Coping with More Aggressive Communication

- Remember, aggression is almost always communication of frustration- figure out why they are frustrated first
- Say “NO” calmly and divert attention
- If you see it coming... (Move-fast)
 - offer sensory break
 - Offer positive ways to decrease tension
- Social stories about how aggression hurts
- There are medications available



Change YOUR Communication

- Less talking, simple/clear directions
- Avoid negatives, but can say “No”
- Concrete language
- Use meaningful gestures with language-Demonstrate!
- State directions
- Avoid using too many pronouns
- Avoid Questions
- Get Closer, Not Louder
- Wait before repeating, could be 10 seconds, 30 seconds



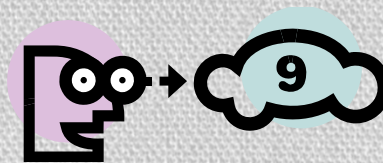
What Not to ~~Wear~~ SAY!

- No running!
- We're going to work at the tables now, okay?
- Do you want to sit down?
- Now, we don't want to hit our friends at school.
- Well, that obviously went over your head.
- Sit down... I said sit down.



Visual Supports = Less Talk

- Pictures, pictures, pictures!!!
- Picture schedules
- Calendars
- Use objects/signs
- First/Then Board
- Transition Cues
- All visuals should be meaningful to child
- Definitely a way to keep students involved!



How to Use Visual Supports

- Any visuals you use, you have to **teach**
- You Cannot expect to just put out some pictures and think the child will know what to do with them
- Show them the picture, show them what it corresponds with, and what you expect them to do (i.e. exchange the picture to get a reward, look at the picture and go to the right area, follow the schedule)



THE PROBLEM

- Visual supports seem to assist students with autism; however, many students do not seem to have the opportunity to use them.
- Find the time and the opportunity to create, implement and utilize them.
- There will be a noticeable difference!



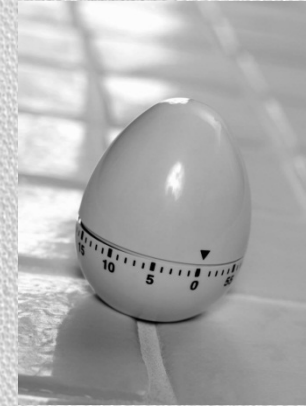
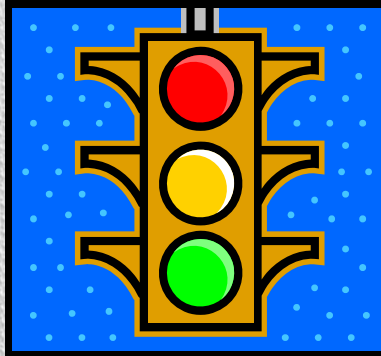
Non-Picture Visual Supports

- Timers (ok, this can be a picture)
- Cubby, or area by door at home (this can have pictures, too)
- Objects
- Work System/Task Boxes

Timers

Can use sand timers, egg timers, digital timers, or picture timers, apps.

This is one of the most important “work” skills you can give children.



Cubby/Door Space

This is the first space to work on independence (and separation/transition)

At school, can have communication book, mini schedule for backpack/coat, finish box for take home work.

At home, should have spot for coat, bag, shoes, outerwear; can include pictures of common places you might go, or the car/stroller, etc.



Work System-Helps with work completion

Visually defines

- *what work needs to be done
- *how much work to do
- *what to do with work when finished





USING PICTURES FOR VISUAL SUPPORTS

Art can permeate the very
deepest part of us, where no
words exist.”

— Eileen Miller

Every visual should have a purpose



Choice Board

Start with two pictures to choose from, and add from there.



STUDENTS CAN CHOOSE WHAT THEY WANT BY SIMPLY PULLING OFF ICON

Picture above the
board coincides
with the schedule,
cueing student that
it is free choice time

Choices are there
for them to select.



Daily Picture Schedule

Going from top to bottom, child removes each activity after it is done and places in “finished” box below.

Can start with just two or three activities.



SCHEDULES
CAN BE
VERTICAL OR
HORIZONTAL

It is important
to observe
which one the
student
responds to
the best.



Mini Schedule

These can be used throughout the day and are helpful when including students in the classroom activities.

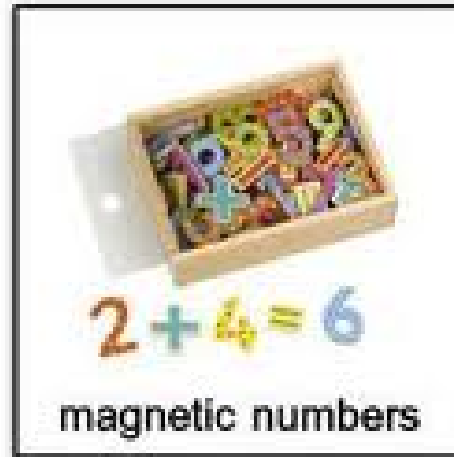


First – Then Board

Use if longer schedules are too overwhelming, or to help children get through a more difficult task.

Will also facilitate involvement in classroom tasks

First



Then

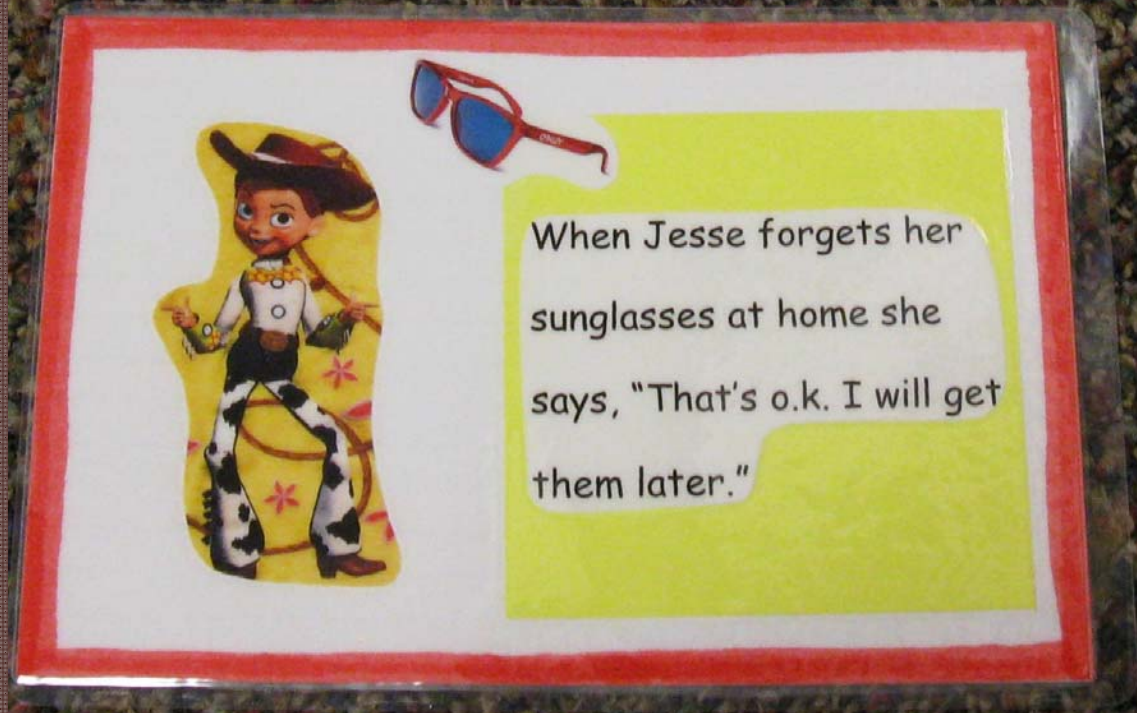


Power Card

Find a picture of child's interest (Thomas, Pokemon, Spongebob).

The character on the card is telling the child the rule, consequence, or just that something is ok.

Who can argue with a "hero"? Teacher no longer has all of the responsibility.



Video Modeling

- High tech “picture”
- New research has suggested that showing a child with ASD a video of another child using pictures for communication more quickly facilitates child with ASD learning to exchange pictures
- Generalize this to other skills (i.e. sitting with group, playing with toys, using picture schedule)
- Will work best if child is watching video of themselves, but this can be more difficult to film.
- ***Caution*** Probably need permission, and only to be used for instruction or it will become part of record

Remember-
We Don't Want
Visuals to
Overwhelm

They need to
be purposeful
and useful to
the student.




What's wrong
with these
visuals?

What could
be done
differently?





SENSORY BREAK



Autism: Where the "randomness of life" collides and clashes with an individual's need for the sameness~"
— Eileen Miller

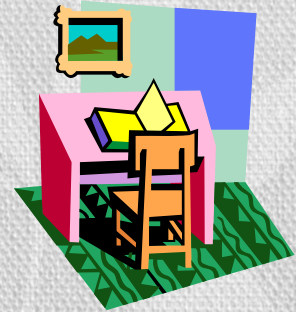
OTHER IDEAS TO CONSIDER

Room Arrangement/Getting Ready

- Seat away from distractions
- Back of circle if high alert
- Front of circle if distractible
- May be on outer edge-this is okay
- Change any flickering bulbs
- Seat where they can be closely monitored
- Visual boundaries – tape on floor, stop signs
- Tennis balls on chairs
- Arrange paper on wall symmetrically
- Limit clutter- what is hanging, pinned, setting out should have a purpose



Child's Work Area



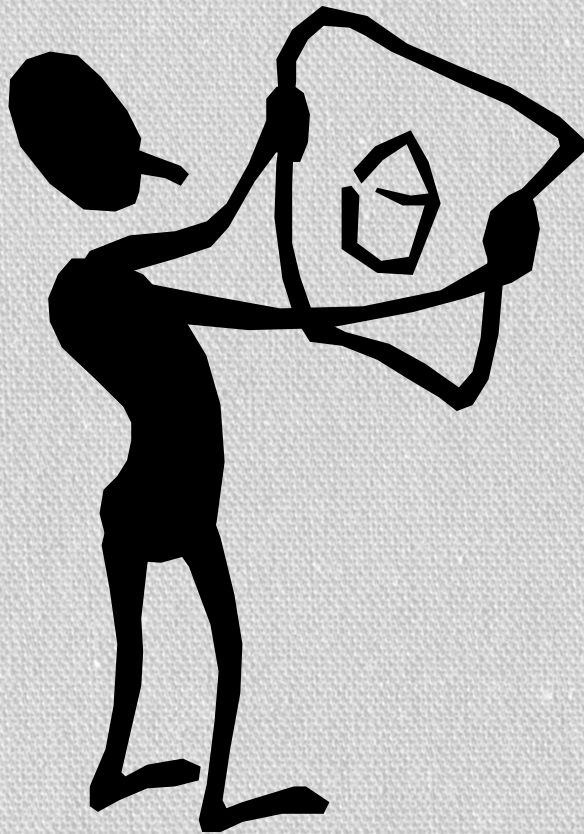
- Have break area and play area available.
- Consider using empty seats/areas around the child
- Use booster seats, chairs with arms, sized to the child
- Have a box or folder for finished work next to child
- Use a chair or visually specified area (like a carpet square) for children during group times
- Consider using a transition area somewhere away from the child's seat with his/her schedule
 - Easier to keep child moving to non-preferred activity if they are already up

Setting the Routine- ESSENTIAL

- Most children with ASD work best in a routine, so use this to your advantage
- Transitions can be very difficult, but knowing what is next can help with the child's anxiety
- Always prepare them for any changes in the routine using words, pictures, stories
- Implement daily
- BE SURE TO FOLLOW THROUGH



Preparing for changes in the routine



- Plan ahead-anticipate and prepare
- Show the student the change is occurring
- Use visual supports when introducing changes
- Never keep a change from the student-> leads to distrust
- Students with ASD needs us to tell them what is happening; it is not automatic to foresee what will happen
- Think-how often do we like to be surprised?



SENSORY BREAK

“I know of nobody who is purely autistic, or purely neurotypical. Even God has some autistic moments, which is why the planets spin.”

— Jerry Newport

Knowing the Sensory Environment



- When your room you will work in is quiet, sit quietly in several places and just listen. Make note of all these potential distractions.
- Are there any smells (dry erase markers, food, etc)
- Are lights flickering?
- Where is natural light?
- What's happening around your classroom? Down the hall, outside?
- Where are other high energy kids?
- Different textures in the room
- Are there papers/objects flapping in the breeze or cluttered on walls, on ceiling?



Learning Child's Sensory Needs

- OTs are the professionals in this area, and can do formal assessment (with your help), they can also give recommendations to be implemented in the classroom
- Look on IEP for “Sensory Diet”
- Be aware of “hyper” or “hypo” sensitivities, can change from day to day due to brain chemicals
- “Mis”behavior often can guide you to sensory differences
- THESE ARE REAL-please don't ever dismiss them
- Consider these when planning for students

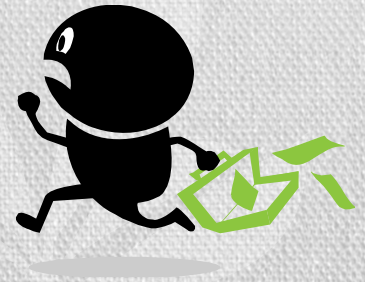


What Could Be Changed in this Room?

- Does this seem busy to you?



Sensory Solutions



- Over Stimulated
 - Have quiet space in room they can go to if they need to “escape”.
 - Offer calming strategies
- Fight or Flight? Runners...
 - Have picture or object in room that all students have to give to teacher when they are leaving-establish as part of the routine
 - Boundary Setting (routines, tape on floor, stop sign)
 - Running is not always the child playing a game...
 - It could be fun for the student, however, the majority of the time, it starts as true flight response


Sensory “Tool Box”

- Toy with lights/movement at midline
- Music
- Tactile toys
- Smelly toys
- Massage tools
- Snacks with different textures, tubing for chewing
- Rocking, spinning, jumping types of equipment
- Be sure to have one-parents can be good resources for suggestions for “tools” too!





SENSORY BREAK

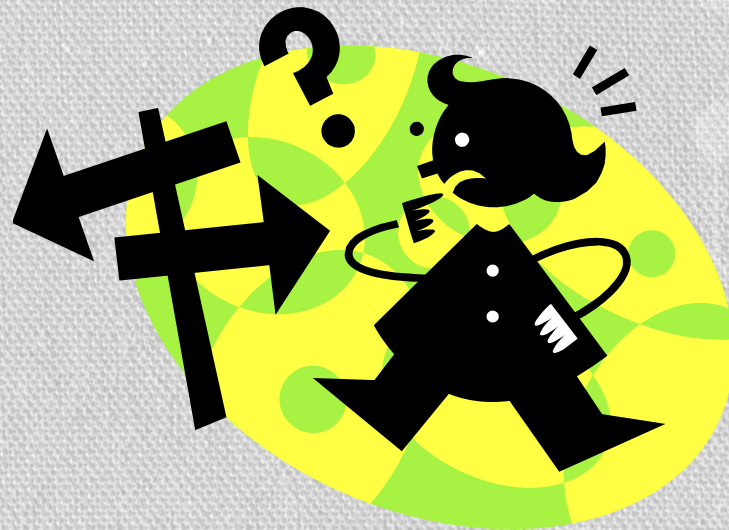


“If they cannot learn the way we
teach, we teach the way they
learn” O. Ivar Lovaas

TIME TO
TEACH... PLAY!!!!

Teach social skills, play skills, and behavior

- Need to teach these skills as if you are teaching other basic concepts
- Remember, students will not automatically know what to do



Teach Play Skills

- *Think of teaching play like teaching a sport*



- Notice what the child is doing
- Imitate what the child is doing
- Add next step to play routine
- Add language to play-label play actions

Where to Start “Playing”

- Non-symbolic Play – focus on teaching basic cause and effect, child does have some control over world
- Communication – starts with back and forth ball play
- Joint Attention – work on following a point to a preferred object, can start with touch pointing in visual field, gradually move object out of visual field, and then move to a distal point

Social Stories- “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.” Gray, 2010

- Use for specific problem behaviors
- Use only one at a time
- Written in first person
- Can use visual social story
- Should include
 - Descriptive Sentence
 - Perspective Sentence
 - Directive Sentence
 - Control Sentence

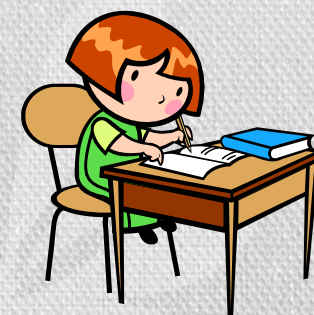


Types of sentences used in a social story

- **Affirmative Sentences:** these often express a commonly shared value or opinion within a given culture... e.g. “I will try to keep my seatbelt on (this is very important)”.
- **Cooperative Sentences:** identify "who" can assist the individual in a situation.
- **Control Sentences:** use analogies to explain situations-written by the focus individual with assistance as needed)
- **Descriptive Sentences:** these are truthful, opinion-and-assumption-free statements of fact... e.g. “most children go to the park to play”.
- **Perspective Sentences:** these are statements that refer to or describe an individual's internal state, their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, or physical condition... e.g. “my teacher likes math”.
- **Directive Sentences:** these describe desired responses to social situations.

- Ali and Fred
- <http://www>





Social Story

- **How to write social stories for kids with autism?**
- Determine which skill or situation the story will address. The story should be developed to address one need---one statement, action or social situation that showing the perspective of others, providing important information, and teaching an appropriate response.
- Choose one behavior or social situation for the focus of your story. Each social story should focus on one situation that your child has difficulty with.
- Plan the social story around the child's individual ability level, learning style and personal interests.
- Source- www.ehow.com

Looking While Listening Story

- When the teacher is talking to me, I try to listen. This is a nice thing to do.



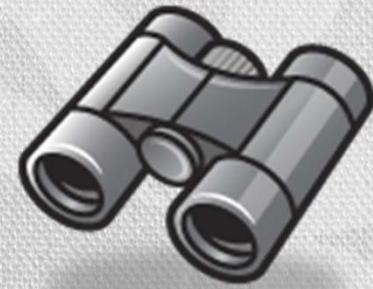
- Looking at the teacher who is talking is helpful. The teacher knows I'm listening.



- Sometimes, I try to look at a part of their face. I do this so they know I am listening. The teacher will like this a lot.



Where to find Social Stories



- Sandbox Learning
- Carol Gray websites- creator and best resource!
 - www.thegraycenter.org/social-stories/how-to-write-social-stories
- Autism Spectrum Directory- Comprehensive list of social stories and visual scripts for daily living and social skills. FREE!
blog.autismspectrumdirectory.com
- www.educateautism.com/social-stories.html
- Go to Google images Type in “Social stories autism”
- www.autism.org.uk/living-with-autism/strategies-and-approaches/social-stories-and-comic-strip-conversations.aspx
- autism.about.com/od/treatmentoptions/f/socialstorydef.html
- www.child-behavior-guide.com/free-social-stories.html
- GOOGLE, GOOGLE, GOOGLE!

<http://blog.autismspectrumdirectory.com/2011/02/01/list-of-social-stories-and-visual-scripts-for-daily-living-and-social-skills/>



SENSORY BREAK

“The worst thing you can do is nothing. (re: teaching children with autism)”

— Temple Grandin

Teaching Time: Involving Children with ASD

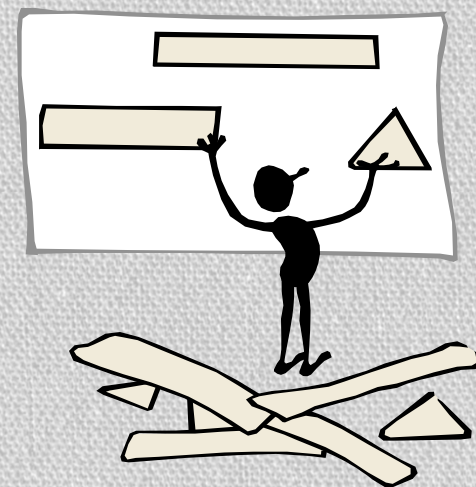
Begin with these in mind:

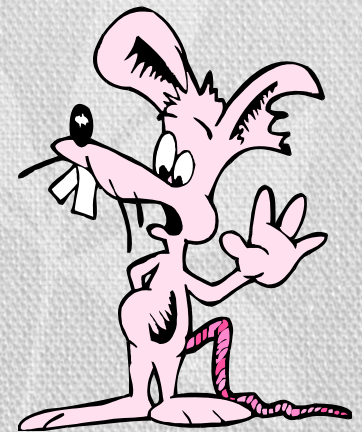
- Social communication skills
 - Functional Language skills
 - **Other things to think about:**
 - Group student with ASD with other students
 - Use visual supports to help with understanding
 - Help with changes
 - Give time to process, break, cool-down
 - Help with transitions
 - Explain abstract concepts
 - Video modeling
- (www.ehow.com)



Adapt, Modify, Change

- NOT different expectations, just different ways of doing things
- Watch them, they are already making their own “adaptations”, just guide them to more appropriate ones
- When children have IEPs, they do not have to do things exactly like every child in class
- Most IEPs specify some accommodations and modifications, make sure you do these, but can do more
- Be Creative!
- Think about what skills in each lesson are most important to this child.
- Ex. Rest of class is sitting criss cross applesauce on carpet and participating. Focus on just sitting in or near the group and not distracting others.



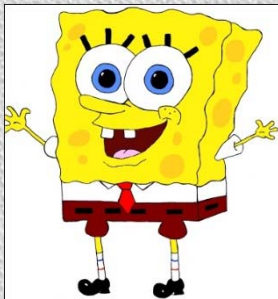


Get Ready to Work

- Use First/Then format with pictures
- Premack principal
 - Organizing daily schedule into non-preferred/preferred style
- Breaking work into small parts
- Give choice of two activities
- Reward performance with snack/drink/etc.
- Build in frequent breaks
- They may simply not be able to do the work today

Using child's interests to your advantage

- Use object to guide student to work area
 - Establish rules on how the interest will be used
- Use it as a motivator for First (work)/Then (object)
- Let them hold it if they can attend or stay seated with group
- If an interest in something (trains, etc.) build it into curriculum (reading/computers)



Join the Group

- Do activities the student enjoys at first
- Allow them to choose seating
 - floor, chair, beanbag, high chair, booster, carpet square
 - May want to put a picture of them on it if they have a preferred spot
- If they still do not want to be close to others, put the child's seat away from group, gradually move seat closer until they are in group-always give choice of "their seat" or group-never choice of where seat is
- Start with smaller groups of one to two others and then move to class size
- In order to join the group, different things may need to be done
- Peer support and training, one particular "buddy"



Things to Remember

- Students with autism have good and bad moments just like the rest of us
- Some days they will not be able to do what they did the day before because of stress levels/sensory needs
- **Sometimes, we need to decrease the academic focus to attend to other needs and that is ok- the student will benefit more and most likely attend to task a few minutes later.**
- Keep investigating
- It's ok to be frustrated, just keep trying!



Show me the way

“I know nobody
who is purely
autistic or purely
neurotypical. Even
God has some
autistic moments
which is why all of
the planets spin”. Jerry

Newport



Illinois Early Learning Standards

- 4A – Listen effectively in formal and informal situations
- 4B – Speak effectively using language appropriate to situations and audience.
- 5A- Locate, organize and use information from various sources to answer questions, solve problems, and communicate.
- 5B – Analyze and evaluate information acquired from various sources
- 5C – Apply acquired information, concepts, and ideas to communicate in a variety of formats
- 24A- Demonstrate procedures for communication in positive ways, resolving differences and preventing conflict.
- SEL 1.A to 3.C

Illinois Early Learning Standards, Revised (Draft)

- 1A to 1E – Demonstrate increased competence in oral communication (listening and speaking)
- 14A, C, D – Understand some concepts related to citizenship
- 30A to C - Identify and manage one's emotions and behavior.
- 31A to C - Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.
- 32A to C - Begin to consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions.

Q & A



Questions and Answers