



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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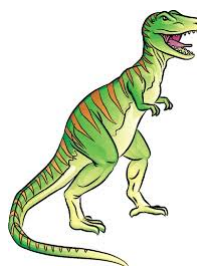


Examples...

- 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

I am working for:

I am working for:

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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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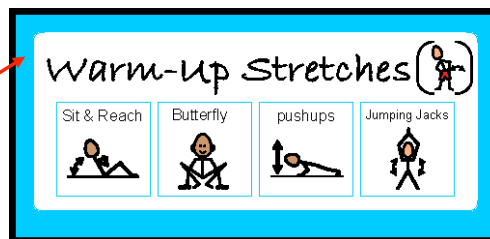
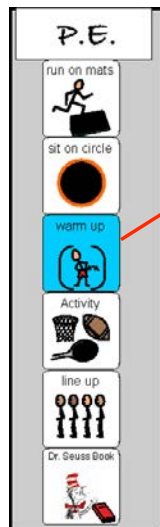
Art: First---Next



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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
P.E. class	Computer	P.E. class	Computer	P.E. class
Music class	Music class	Music class	Arts & crafts	Arts & crafts




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.

Level: Elementary 

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Calendar Example




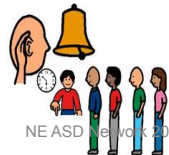
Library Schedule				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			If I brought my book back, I can check out a new one!	If I brought my book back, I can check out a new one!
look at books	look at books	look at books	return book	return book
			check out book	check out book

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.





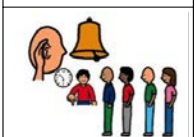
Level: Elementary 

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


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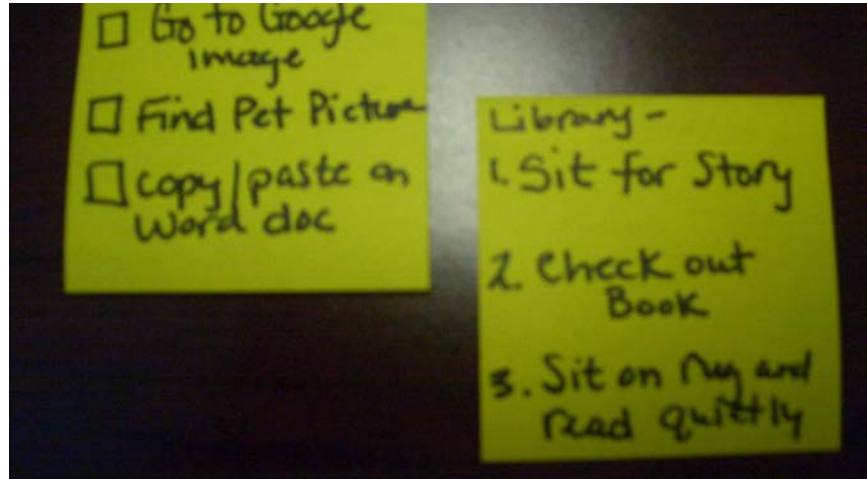
	Mini-Schedule for P.E. Class
	
	
	
	

- 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

communicationstationspechtx.blogspot.com

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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!