# CREATING AN INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENSURE STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES ARE INCLUDED IN GENERAL EDUCATION

STAR® Autism Support

# CREATING AN INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENSURE STUDENTS WITH
## Significant Cognitive Disabilities are Included in General Education

STAR® Autism Support

## Students with Significant Learning and Behavioral Challenges
### Including Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Have a **range of abilities, strengths, and weaknesses**
- May communicate, interact, behave, and learn in ways that are different from most other children
- Different levels of support are needed for different students to meaningfully participate in inclusive environments

All children are unique

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## Learning Characteristics
### Students with ASD

- Typically respond well in highly-structured environments and when expectations/activities are made clear and predictable
- Often have challenges with even very basic organizational concepts (e.g., what to do first, next, and last when completing assignments, attending to relevant concepts in an assignment, how to store and organize materials)
- Usually learn more effectively when tasks are broken down into small parts and with repeated practice
- Perspective taking (putting one's self in someone else's shoes) is challenging for many students. This creates difficulties in navigating a wide range of social situations
- Social expectations are often unclear or difficult to apply for students on the spectrum

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## Survey Results:
### Teachers identified specific skills that increase successful participation within the general education environment

**Lunch, Recess, Specials**
- Transition by walking in line
- Social interaction
- Eating, raising their hands, appropriate play
- How to hold a lunch tray, ask for food, say thank you
- Able to follow the lunchroom routine independently
- Using pictures/schedule to increase independence

**Classroom**
- Answering questions and describing pictures/illustrations in stories
- Request help
- Following directions
- Social interactions with peers
- Sitting for extended periods, working in small groups
- How to start and complete a task quietly
- Academic skills
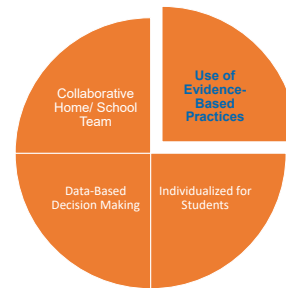- Communication skills

**All Settings**
- Following directions
- Self-management
- Requesting a break, advocating for themselves
- How to ask for item they need when upset or mad
- Decrease in stimming behaviors, running and non-compliance

**Data taken from the Arizona Statewide Autism Project Inclusion Survey 2017-18**

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## Components for Meaningful Participation

- Collaborative Home/ School Team
- Use of Evidence-Based Practices
- Data-Based Decision Making
- Individualized for Students

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## Evidence-Based Practices
### Strategies that can be easily incorporated into general education environments

- Reinforcement Strategies
- Positive Behavior Supports
- Self-Management
- Task Analysis/Routine Instruction
- Student Schedules
- Visual and Environmental Supports
- Social Narratives
- Social Skill Instruction
- Peer Modeling

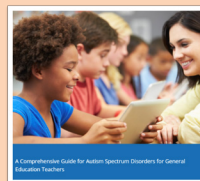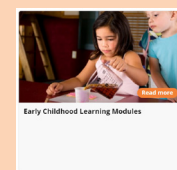Messy Desk | Clean Desk

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## EBP: Online Professional Development

**Courses for General Educators**

A Comprehensive Guide for Autism Spectrum Disorders for General Education Teachers

**Courses for Early Childhood Educators**

Read more

Early Childhood Learning Modules

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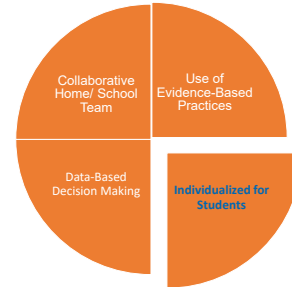
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## EBP: Professional Development Workshops

**Supporting Children with Autism and Other Developmental Delays in Childcare and Preschool Settings**

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## Components for Meaningful Participation

- Collaborative Home/ School Team
- Use of Evidence-Based Practices
- Data-Based Decision Making
- Individualized for Students

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## Teachers Need Tools

- ☆ Comprehensive Curricula for students with ASD
- ☆ Visual Supports
- ☆ Progress Monitoring
- ☆ IEP Goals
- ☆ Training for General Educators
- ☆ Self-Assessment on Quality Program Indicators

- ☆ Fidelity of Implementation Checklists
- ☆ Lesson Plans
- ☆ Technology
- ☆ Guides to the Common Core
- ☆ Transition Planning Across Grade Levels
- ☆ Post-secondary

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## STAR Program
**Preschool-Elementary**

Curriculum-based Assessment

Lesson Plans

Data Collection Tools

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## The Links Curriculum
**Secondary**

VISUAL SUPPORTS

ASSESSMENT

PROGRESS MONITORING

INSTRUCTION

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## Visual Structure Can Help Students…

- ☆ Focus on relevant information
- ☆ Understand what is expected
  - ☆ Where do I go?
  - ☆ What do I do when I get there?
  - ☆ When is it over?
  - ☆ What do I do next?
- ☆ Decrease anxiety
- ☆ Reduce challenging behavior
- ☆ Increase independence

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# CREATING AN INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENSURE STUDENTS WITH
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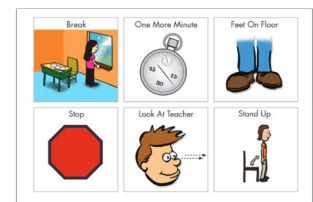
## Student Schedules



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## Transition Routine
**Teaching Independence with Written Visual Supports**



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## Supports for Work Completion



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## Supports for Organization



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## Behavior Supports



I'm working for...

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## Academic Supports



To-Do List

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# CREATING AN INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENSURE STUDENTS WITH
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## Slide 20 — Differentiated/Theme-Based Instruction

| CURRICULUM AREA | PRINTABLE FORMS | LEARNING FOCUS |
|---|---|---|
| **READING** **Level 1**: File Folder Tasks (FF) **Level 2 & 3**: File Folder Tasks (FF), Activities and Worksheets (WS), and Books. *Note:* Worksheets can be laminated and reused by providing students with a fine-tip dry erase marker and eraser. | **Level 1** FF 1.1 Shooting Stars Color Matching FF 1.2 Space Station Matching FF 1.3 Space Matching FF 1.4 Space Sorting 1 | Readiness: Matching Colors Theme Vocabulary: Matching Theme Vocabulary: Matching Theme Comprehension: Sorting |
| | **Level 2** FF 2.1 Planet Alphabet A-H FF 2.2 Planet Alphabet I-Q FF 2.3 Planet Alphabet R-Z WS 2.4 Space Vocabulary 1 WS 2.5 Space Sentences 1 Book 2.6 What's out There? FF 2.7 Space Sorting 2 | Phonics: Letter Identification 1 Phonics: Letter Identification 2 Phonics: Letter Identification 3 Theme Vocabulary: Words Theme Vocabulary: Sentences Theme Comprehension: Book Theme Comprehension: Sorting |
| | **Level 3** WS 3.1 Beginning Sounds 1 (c, m, n, sp, sh) WS 3.2 Beginning Sounds 2 (a, o, t, fl, gr, pl) FF 3.3 Up in the Sky Rhymes WS 3.4 Space Vocabulary 2 WS 3.5 Space Sentences 2 WS 3.6 Space Sight Words Book 3.7 Our Solar System Book 3.8 NASA | Phonics: Beginning Sounds 1 Phonics: Beginning Sounds 2 Phonemics: Rhyming Theme Vocabulary Words Theme Vocabulary Sentences Sight Words Theme Comprehension Book 1 Theme Comprehension Book 2 |

**What's out There**

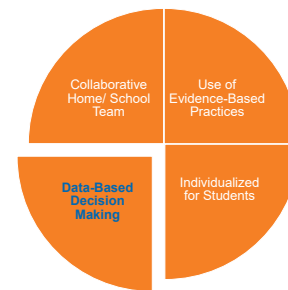---- Current Theme Unit ----
**What's out There?**

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## Slide 21 — Independent Work



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## Slide 22 — Using Visual Supports for Peer Buddies



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## Slide 23 — Components for Meaningful Participation

- Collaborative Home/ School Team
- Use of Evidence-Based Practices
- Data-Based Decision Making
- Individualized for Students

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## Slide 24 — Student Assessment and Progress Monitoring
### Identifies Areas for Skill Acquisition

Overall Student Progress by Content Area

(Bar chart with content areas: Receptive Language, Expressive Language, Functional Routines, Spontaneous Language, Pre-Academic Skills, Play and Social Skills. Legend: Baseline Data, Final Probe)

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## Slide 25 — Monitor Outcomes

Student Number: _____     Date: _____

**Time spent in inclusive settings**
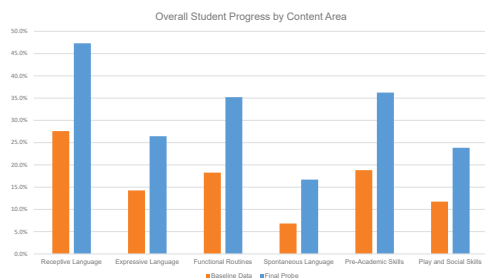
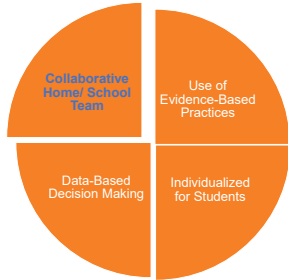| ☐ 0% | ☐ 1-20% | ☐ 21-41% | ☐ 41-60% | ☐ 61-80% | ☐ 81-100% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| Component of Inclusive Setting | Not yet 0/5 | Emerging 1/5 | Some 3/5 | Most 5/5 | N/A 0/0 | Score |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Routines** (e.g. snack, lunch, recess, arrival, departure) | Does not yet successfully participate in any routines in the general education setting, even when provided support from an adult | Participates in **some** general education routines with significant (full physical) to moderate assistance (multiple prompts- e.g. Verbal and visual). | Participates in 2-3 routines independently and/or all routines with minimal support (visual, verbal or gestural). | Participates in most routines independently or with minimal teacher assistance (e.g one verbal reminder sometimes) | X | |
| **Attention/ Following Directions** | Not yet able to sustain attention or follow directions in the general education environment | Will follow teacher directions some of the time when provided with significant (full physical) to moderate assistance (multiple prompts- e.g. Verbal and visual). | Follows teacher directions most of the time with minimal supports (visual, verbal or gestural) | Follows teacher directions independently most of the time | X | |
| **Social Communication** | Not yet communicating with peers even with prompting | Communicates with peers some of the time when given moderate support (multiple prompts- e.g. Verbal and visual). | Communicates requests to peers spontaneously, may need some adult support to engage in a turn-taking conversation with peers | Engages in conversation with peers following appropriate social conventions (taking turns, sharing ideas etc) most of the time | X | |

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## Components for Meaningful Participation

- Collaborative Home/ School Team
- Use of Evidence-Based Practices
- Data-Based Decision Making
- Individualized for Students

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## Team Implementation

- ☆ IEP goals
- ☆ Connection to the general education curriculum
- ☆ Alignment to standards
- ☆ Consistency of instruction across classroom, school, and grade levels
- ☆ Trained instructional staff
- ☆ Parent involvement and training supports student learning in diverse settings

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## Parent Involvement

**National Autism Center (2009):**
- ☆ The values and preferences of parents, care providers, and the individual with ASD should be considered.

**National Research Council (2004):**
- ☆ Characteristics of effective interventions include " inclusion of a family component, including parent training.

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## Effective Parent Communication and Supports
### Preschool-Elementary Parent Training

- S1 **Session 1:** First Stop: Identifying Strategies that Work
- S2 **Session 2:** Why Does My Kid Do That? Answering the Whys with Behavioral Principles
- S3 **Session 3:** Teaching and Reinforcing Receptive Language Skills
- S4 **Session 4:** Teaching Kids Appropriate Communication and Language Skills
- S5 **Session 5:** Same Stuff, Different Day: Teaching Skills Through Functional Routines
- S6 **Session 6:** Visualize It: Using Supports Effectively
- S7 **Session 7:** Challenging Behavior: Taming the Tantrum
- S8 **Session 8:** Map it Out: Writing Effective Behavior Support Plans
- S9 **Session 9:** The Fun Part: Fostering Play and Social Skills
- S10 **Session 10:** Overcoming Mealtime Challenges
- S11 **Session 11:** The Small Stuff: Mastering Fine Motor Skills
- S12 **Session 12:** Bathroom Break: Tools for Toilet Training

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## Effective Parent Communication and Supports
### Secondary Students: Parent Collaboration

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## Look to the Future

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☆ Stahmer, A. C., Suhrheinrich, J., Reed, S., Schreibman, L., & Bolduc, C. (2001). *Classroom pivotal response teaching for children with autism.* New York: Guilford Press.

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**Note: The Outcome Study article and full report is available on the OrPATS.org website**

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# Inclusion Support Recommendations

Use the *Inclusion Rubric* to determine the areas in which an individual student shows strengths in the general education environment and where supports are needed. Use the *Inclusion Support Recommendations* below to encourage a higher-quality inclusive experience with more active engagement in the general education environment for students with Autism and other Developmental Disabilities.

| Component of Inclusive Setting | Support Type | Specific Supports | My Solutions *What will you try?* |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Routines (e.g. snack, lunch, recess, arrival, departure)** | Environmental supports<br><br>Visual supports<br><br>Behavior supports | ☐ Seat the student in areas where they are likely to be successful; consider distracting objects and people<br><br>☐ Provide activity schedules so that students know what to expect during routines<br><br>☐ Use visuals to create boundaries and clarify expectations (e.g. a placemat with an outline of a plate and a cup for snack to support students knowing where their space begins and ends)<br><br>☐ Use verbal or gestural cues to help students participate in routines | |
| **Attention / Following directions** | Visual supports<br><br>Reinforcement | ☐ Provide visual supports to increase attention (consider using circle rules, small group rules, or other visuals that clearly define appropriate attention behaviors)<br><br>☐ Add additional visual supports to make it easier to understand expectations (e.g. use child-specific colors or shapes so that students know where to stand/sit)<br><br>☐ Provide positive reinforcement for appropriate attention; intermittent reinforcement is the most powerful | |

| Component of Inclusive Setting | Support Type | Specific Supports | My Solutions *What will you try?* |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Social communication** | Simplify language<br>Intentionally teach expressive and receptive language<br>Visual supports<br>Alternate forms of language | ☐ Use simple language when communicating expectations to students (e.g. "Do this") and allow for processing time<br>☐ Intentionally teach receptive and expressive language skills including commenting, greeting, and turn-taking in conversation<br>☐ Use visual supports to remind students of appropriate conversation conventions (e.g. taking turns when engaged in conversation)<br>☐ Consider teaching alternate forms of communication as appropriate | |
| **Play and peer interaction** | Environmental supports<br>Visual supports<br>Social supports | ☐ Seat the student near a peer buddy who is prepared to help them participate in activities<br>☐ Provide preferred toys/activities for the student with disabilities to share with peers<br>☐ Teach the student the names of peers<br>☐ Provide visuals to remind students how to initiate interactions and play together appropriately<br>☐ Teach peers how to engage with students with disabilities and what to expect during interactions to encourage friendships | |
| **Group instruction** | Visual supports<br>Environmental supports | ☐ Provide visual supports to increase attention (consider using circle rules, small group rules, or other visuals that clearly define appropriate attention behaviors)<br>☐ Add additional visual supports to make it easier to understand expectations (e.g. use child-specific colors or shapes so that students know where to stand/sit)<br>☐ Provide student positive reinforcement for appropriate attention; intermittent reinforcement is the most powerful<br>☐ Provide visual activity schedules so that students can anticipate the steps of the activity<br>☐ Be mindful of where you seat the student; consider placing them next to a peer buddy and away from distracting people or objects | |

| Component of Inclusive Setting | Support Type | Specific Supports | My Solutions *What will you try?* |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Academic activities** | Environmental supports<br><br>Learning material selection<br><br>Foundational skills | ☐ Consider when the student is most likely to be attentive and engaged and plan for the most high-quality academic engagement during those times<br>☐ Provide modified instructions or materials as appropriate to meet the student's learning needs<br>☐ Ensure foundational behavioral and academic skills are mastered before moving on to more complex learning material | |
| **Transitioning between activities** | Environmental<br><br>Visual supports | ☐ Provide a classroom schedule visible and usable by all students<br>☐ Use Individualized student schedules<br>☐ Provide a warning before transitions<br>☐ Use one or more signals for transitions (e.g. bell ring, check schedule icon, etc.) | |
| **Working independently** | Visual supports<br><br>Communication supports<br><br>Learning material selection | ☐ Provide visual supports to clarify expectations during independent work (e.g. task strips, checklists, etc.)<br>☐ Ensure the student has strategies for asking for help when needed; If not, teach these skills<br>☐ Ensure an appropriate selection of independent work material (these should consist primarily of work that the student has mastered, potentially with a few items of newly learned material, depending on the student's ability to tolerate frustration) | |
| **Other** | Use the ideas above to generate solutions to other issues that are barriers for the student to access the inclusive environment | | |

# Inclusion Support Checklist

Consider the student's participation in various components of an inclusive setting to determine where they might need additional support to improve the quality of their inclusive experience. Use the *Inclusion Support Recommendations* to generate ideas that will help you meet individual needs within the general education environment.

| Component of Inclusive Setting | Expectations | Needs Support |
|---|---|---|
| **Routines (e.g. snack, lunch, recess, arrival, departure)** | Participates in most routines independently or with minimal teacher assistance (e.g. one verbal reminder sometimes) | |
| **Attention / Following directions** | Follows teachers' directions independently most of the time | |
| **Social communication** | Engages in conversation with peers following appropriate social conventions (taking turns, sharing ideas, etc.) most of the time | |
| **Play and peer interaction** | Initiates play interactions with peers; Plays cooperative games; Shares materials to make collaborative projects and/or takes turns during play | |
| **Group instruction** | Sits with peers and engages in the activity independently most of the time | |
| **Academic activities** | Participates in most or all academic or pre-academic activities independently (using environmental cues only) | |
| **Transitioning between activities** | Transitions between activities in the general education classroom independently (using environmental cues only) | |
| **Working independently** | Works on independent tasks with the same environmental supports provided to general education students | |

# FIVE SIMPLE WAYS TO INCORPORATE STANDARDS INTO YOUR INSTRUCTION

Have you ever sat through a staff meeting, listening to educators discuss curriculum mapping and standards-based instruction, while thinking to yourself, "How is this ever going to work for my students?" We certainly have.

Students with disabilities need high quality instruction; however, it can be a challenging task to make general education standards meaningful and relevant for students with significant disabilities. Fortunately, standards-based instruction doesn't have to be complicated. Try these simple steps to bridge the gap between standards-based instruction and your students' current needs.

## STEP 1: ASSESS WITH ACCURACY

Complete a **STAR Student Learning Profile** and/or the **Links Lesson Assessment** to take a snapshot of your student's current skills. To plan meaningful instruction, you need to know where your students are currently functioning and identify appropriate learning targets. Once you've measured your student's current skill set, you'll be able to write IEP goals, and identify standards-based lessons.

## STEP 2: DEVISE A PLAN

Write IEP goals that are aligned to standards-based instruction. Review this **flow chart** that outlines the relationship between goals and standards.

Goals should be aligned to standards, but do not have to be mirror images of the grade level standards. Identify prerequisites of the grade level standards and write IEP goals based on these prerequisites.

## STEP 3: BREAK IT DOWN

Break down the big ideas of each standard. What are the basic skills that the student needs to know in order to meet the standard? Once you have identified the big ideas, develop lesson plans. Did you know that STAR has done the work of aligning lessons to the Common Core curriculum for you?

Check out our **Common Core Curriculum Alignment** documents located in the State Standards section of our website.



**Relationship Between Standards and Instruction**

- Determine Student's Current Skill Set
- Review Grade Level Standards
- Create IEP Goals
- Develop Lesson Plans
- Monitor Progress and Adjust Instruction

## STEP 4: LINE UP LESSONS

First, identify specific targeted skills and grade level examples before determining lessons in the STAR and Links curriculum. This helps clarify the alignment between prerequisites and grade level standards. Create a document aligning all correlating STAR or Links lessons to specific grade level standards. Once fully developed, a lesson alignment tool like this can be a valuable resource to reference while discussing curriculum alignment with administration, parents, teachers, and aides.

## STEP 5: COVER YOUR BASES

Supplement STAR and Links lessons with materials from the **Media Center**. Did you know that STAR releases original, fun content each month geared specifically toward social studies and science topics? You can find these resources in the monthly Themes First! and Featured Routines units.

Incorporating activities from the Media Center and Featured Routines is a simple and fun way to ensure that all curriculum areas are addressed in your classroom.

With this roadmap to guide you through the process, you're ready to integrate the standards into your instruction—but don't forget to use the most valuable tool in your arsenal: collaboration. Gather a team together, divide up the grade level standards, and create a bank of standards, lessons to teach to standards, and example IEP goals. Use the lesson alignment worksheets and planning tools, and the next time you sit through a staff meeting, you'll be armed with the tools to make standards-based instruction work for your students.