STAR®
Autism Support

THE STAR PROGRAM:

Building a Sustainable Autism Program

ROOM 323

Thursday March 13th, 2025
10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

PRESENTED BY

STAR Autism Support

The STAR Program: Building a Sustainable Autism Program

Resource List:

Curriculum Videos:

- **STAR Overview Video**
- **https://qrco.de/starvideo**

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- **Links Overview Video**
- **https://qrco.de/linksvideo**

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- **STAR Media Center**
- **https://qrco.de/starmc**

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- **SOLER Overview**
- **https://qrco.de/solervideo**

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Contact Us:

- **https://qrco.de/bfQUQh**

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STAR Program Research Validation

The Autism Outcome Study: Enrolled over 122 chil dren in public pre-school and school-age programs over a five year period. These programs included rural, suburban and urban schools. The project staff provided training in the STAR Program and a separate team of researchers conducted assessments of the students to monitor their progress. The students made significant progress in all areas of instruction. In particular, students made significant progress in the areas of expressive language, receptive language, social interaction skills, academics and independence on functional routines. (Arick, Young, Falco, Loos, Krug, Gense, & Johnson, 2003; Arick, Young, Falco, Loos, Krug, Gense and Johnson, 2004). Ninety-one percent of the students made progress in the expressive language area. The project has continued to evaluate student progress and has found consistent results as those obtained in the initial Autism Outcome Study (Arick, Willis, Nakada, 2011).

The Autism Instructional Methods Study (AIMS): The AIMS project was a comprehensive study of effective educational practices in a large urban school district. The STAR Program, and training in the curriculum, composed the core elements for a three-year study involving thirty-four K-3 classrooms for students with autism. This study was a randomized control trial funded by the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). The study was conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Autism Research and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Students in the STAR Program showed significantly greater gains than the experimental group when program fidelity was obtained (Mandell, 2010, 2011).

Measuring Outcome in Early Intervention Program for Toddlers with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Results of this study found that stu dents who were provided early intervention using the STAR Program made significant progress over a two year period of time. The study also found that the STAR Student Learning Profile correlated highly with other standardized measures and provided addi tional useful information about student skills learned (Bacon, Dufek, Schreibman, Stahmer, Pierce and Courchesne, 2014).

The STAR Program is research-validated by multiple independent randomized control trials (including IES and NIH Grants).

Links Curriculum Research Validation

A major field test was conducted in the state of Oregon during 1999-2000 to determine the reliability and validity of the measurement system that is utilized in the Links Curriculum. Thirty school districts, 133 instructors, and 478 students with moderate to severe disabilities participated in the study (Arick, Nave, & Hoffman, 2000). Extensive reliability and validity studies were conducted. Test-retest and inter-observer reliability were found to be high. Assessment validity correlated with the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales. It was found to measure independence levels in students with significant disabilities including students with autism. Further information can be found in the implementation guide.

A study was implemented by a group of instructors residing in several areas of the U.S. A pre-post single subject design was utilized. At the conclusion of the study, an analysis of the pre-post results was conducted. Data from the study indicated that 90% of the students improved across all routines selected. This indicates that 90% of the students made progress on their selected routines. Further information on this study can be found in the implementation guide.

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Evidence-based Practices as Suggested by the National Professional Development Center and National Standard Project

	STAR	LINKS
Comprehensive Behavioral Treatment	X	X
Discrete Trial Training	X	X
Antecedent Package (ABA, positive behavior supports, token systems, FBA)	X	X
Behavioral Package (ABA, positive behavior supports, token systems, FBA)	X	X
Pivotal Response Training	X	N/A
Schedules	X	X
Self-management (promoting independence)	X	X
Task Analysis	X	X
Joint Attention Training	X	X
Modeling and Imitation	X	X
Naturalistic Teaching Strategies	X	X
Functional Communication	X	X
Social Skills Training	X	X
Visual and Environmental Supports	X	X
Reinforcement	X	X
Independent Work Systems	X	X
Prompting Strategies	X	X
Computer Aided Instruction	N/A	

References

National Autism Center (2015). National Standards Project findings and conclusions: Addressing the need for evidence-based practice guidelines for Autism Spectrum Disorders. Randolph, MA: National Autism Center.

Wong, C., Odom, S.l., Hume, K., Cox, A.W., Fettig A., Kucharczyk, S., Schultz, T.R. (2013) Evidence-based practices for children, youth and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, Autism Evidence-Based Practice Review Group.

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Curriculum Overview

The SOLER (Social Learning and Emotional Regulation) curriculum is a comprehensive social skills curriculum for students with autism and other social learning challenges. The curriculum can be used with elementary students and taught in small groups or one-on-one settings. Through evidence-based lessons and a scope and sequence that provides scaffolded learning opportunities, teachers can provide students targeted instruction in social skills. SOLER has three leveled units, moving from basic foundational social skills toward more complex social skills. Curricular areas within each unit include:

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3
Communication Friendship Self-Awareness Self-Management Perspective-Taking	Communication Friendship Self-Awareness Self-Management Perspective-Taking Connections	Communication Friendship Self-Awareness Self-Management Perspective-Taking Connections

Instructional Procedures

Instructional procedures are systematic teaching steps that lead to skill acquisition, skill performance, and generalization of skills in natural settings. Behavioral strategies form the foundation of the curriculum and include:

- Obtaining baseline information to determine student's current level for each skill target and where to begin instruction
- Providing step-by-step instruction building on previously learned skills
- Breaking skills down into small, teachable steps
- Using antecedent strategies to provide students with clear information about expected behaviors
- Clearly defining expected student responses for instructors
- Using consequent strategies to provide frequent reinforcement and correction if needed
- Measuring progress both during the social skills group and during generalization of skills in natural settings
- Using evidence-based practices including social narratives, role-play, peer-based instruction, video modeling, and self-monitoring

Curriculum Components

Resources

- Scope and Sequence: Unit 1, 2, and 3 lessons
- Standards Alignment Guide: alignment of curriculum with common social emotional learning (SEL) standards and sample IEP goals
- Data collection guide and forms
- Instructional reference guides
- Caregiver information letter

SOLER lesson REELs

- SOLER includes seventy-three unique lessons. Lessons are presented through a one-of-a-kind interactive tool called a REEL (Remote Education for Exceptional Learners).

Generalization REELs

- All lessons have a corresponding Generalization REEL that provides activities for students to generalize skills from small groups to other settings. Teachers can provide a link for caregivers or general education teachers to access the Generalization REEL.

Supplemental resources

- Printable resources are included for all lessons. Printable forms include student worksheets, reflection worksheets, visual supports, and additional materials to support the instructional content for each lesson.

Curriculum Organization

Baseline information and ongoing progress monitoring

- The SOLER Curriculum Assessment booklet is an individualized record for each student to record baseline data, monitor progress, and document the student's completion of each lesson.

Instructional sessions: 30-minute group instructional sessions divided into three phases

- **Phase 1** is the skill acquisition phase and teaches students both the vocabulary and expected behavior needed to perform the target skill correctly. Strategies include modeling, video modeling, discussion, reinforcement, and visual supports.
- **Phase 2** provides practice and rehearsal of the target skill within the social skills group. Strategies include video modeling, role play, social narratives, visual supports, reinforcement, and peer-based interventions.
- **Phase 3** is the generalization component in which students are expected to perform target skills in natural settings. Strategies include visual supports, self-monitoring, and reinforcement.

Data collection forms

- Data is collected and recorded after each session and is used to determine when the group has mastered the target skills, becoming ready to move on to the next phase. Additional instructional content is suggested for any students who need more instructional support.

Getting Started

Steps		Instructions	Location of materials
1	**Collect baseline data to establish current skill level before instruction begins.**	Complete the SOLER Curriculum Assessment for each student. Use the interview and frequency forms to gather supporting data. Select a unit to begin instruction based on the student's skill level.	Resources – Data Collection • SOLER Curriculum Assessment • Teacher/Caregiver Interviews • Frequency Data Form
2	**Group the students and schedule the sessions.**	Place students in groups based on unit selection. Schedule a minimum of 30-minute sessions two to five times per week.	STAR E-Scheduler
3	**Share information with caregivers/teachers.**	Communicate with caregivers and general education teachers about the SOLER curriculum.	Resources – Additional Resources • SOLER Informational Flyer • Overview for Caregivers
4	**Review the lesson content prior to instruction.**	Review the lesson plan, lesson REEL, and any additional information needed for the lesson.	Lesson REELs Lesson Plans
5	**Print materials needed for the lesson.**	Print worksheets and visuals for specific lessons. Print additional materials needed for the session, such as the SOLER Blastoff Goal Chart and individual token boards.	REEL Supplements
6	**Teach the lesson and collect data.**	Follow the REEL lesson format. At the end of the session, record student performance following the data collection instructions provided.	Resources – Data Collection • SOLER Session Data Form • Lesson REELs
7	**Assess generalization.**	Follow the Phase 3 instructions for generalization strategies and information.	Generalization REELs Resources – Data Collection • Teacher Generalization Form • Caregiver Generalization Form