

Goals of Our Session

- ★Understand how behavior is communication
- Review curriculum considerations for students with autism and supports needed that help all students succeed
- Discuss four easy-to-implement steps to target expressive language goals with students in 1:1 settings, small group settings, and daily routines
- Identify caregiver supports for collaboration and training



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Communication Differences in Students with Autism

Students with ASD may experience...

- Delayed language development.
- Difficulty with speech (echolalia, voice tone).
- ★Difficulty with comprehension (understanding what others are saying).
- Sometimes the student does not learn to talk (non-speaking or non-verbal).
 - if a student doesn't use verbal speech, they should be taught other ways to communicate (AAC).





Let's Hear From the Experts

Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN)

- ☆Talking can be hard due to...
 - Motor differences makes it challenging to find the words, start/stop talking, or control volume
 - ☆ Hearing differences (auditory processing)
 - ♠ Anxiety including when others are not being patient



Scan here to learn more about autism from ASAN!

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Let's Hear From the Experts

Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN)

- "Just because we can't talk, doesn't mean we can't communicate. Autistic people communicate in all sorts of ways!"
- *"No matter how we communicate, we should be listened to. Talking isn't better than other kinds of communication."



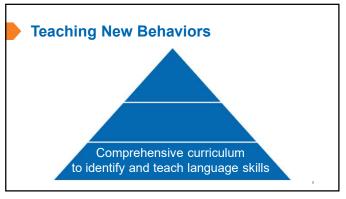
Behavior is Communication

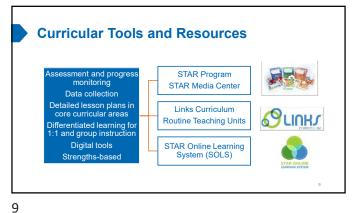
- Students don't always understand verbal directions, especially long directions that are unclear or abstract:
 - * "I don't understand what you are asking me to do."
- ★ It can be hard for students to pay attention to important details and shift their focus of attention when asked:
 - * "I don't want to leave this activity and go to the next activity."
- * Communicating wants and needs are hard, especially during stress:
 * "I don't know how to tell you what I need."
- ★Response to sensory stimuli can impact reactions:
 - * "Sensitivity to sounds, textures, and light can affect the way I react to people and events."

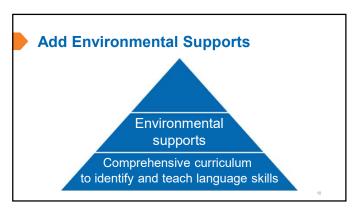
What other ways do you see students communicating with you during the day?

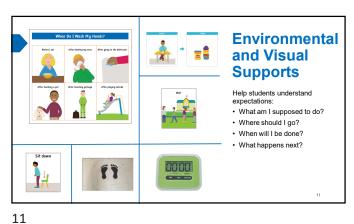


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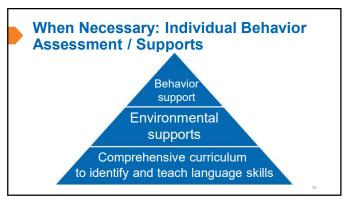








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Individualized Behavior Support

dentifying what motivates/reinforcers the student

Preference assessment
Reinforcement Inventory

Consistent daily schedule with transition supports
Transition cues/warnings
Visual schedule on the student's developmental level

Diservation and individualized strategies from district personnel
ABC (Antecedent – Behavior – Consequence) charts to look for patterns

Data collection on the frequency, rate, and duration of behaviors

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Language is a Powerful Tool!

Receptive Language

- *Attending skills response to name, shifting attention toward a
- communication partner
- *Children learn a large base of receptive labels before learning to communicate expressively
- Children use imitation to learn play skills and routines, in addition to
- learn to follow directions and comprehend complex language

Language is a Powerful Tool!

Expressive Language

- ★Labeling things in the environment (objects, animals, people, etc.)
- Asking and answering questions to gain information
- * Communicating wants, needs, and thoughts to others which includes spoken language, pictures, augmentative or alternative communication or a combination
- ★ Self-initiations and spontaneous language

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Key Skills for Communication

- Receptive language skills
 - The individual needs to know the name of the item, i.e., receptive label
- Expressive language skills
- The student has to have the ability to imitate speech sounds and/or words when modeled
- The person has to be motivated to use these skills
- Have these attempts been reinforced in the past? Are they effective? Is the request meaningful to the



Choosing Interventions

- Comprehensive behavioral treatment for young children (Discrete Trial Training)
- Behavioral interventions (ABA methods)
- Pivotal Response Training (PRT)
- Schedules (student schedules)
- Language training (e.g. modeling verbalizations for the student to imitate)
- Self-management (promoting independence)
- Modeling (imitation of target behavior)
- Naturalistic teaching strategies (child-directed to teach functional skills)
- * Scripting
- Peer training package
- Parent training
- ☆ Cognitive behavioral intervention
- ☆ Story-based intervention package
- Social skills package

https://www.nationalautismcenter.org/national-standards-project/

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Foundational Skills: Language Skills







★Expressive Language

Functional Communication

- When children develop language, most first words and or word combinations are centered around communicating wants and needs.
- ★ Teaching students to respond using an appropriate or alternative way of communicating can decrease or replace behaviors perceived as challenging.
- ★What are some options?
 - Spoken language (e.g., sounds, imitation, spontaneous words, phrases, etc.)
 Gestures and nonverbal communication
- Sestures and nonverbal communication
 Pictures
 Communication boards
 Speech-generated devices
 Written language
 A combination or any or all of the above

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Cultural and Linguistic Considerations

- Consider individual and family priorities and preferences when choosing language and communication goals

 - "Set-up meetings with caregivers and/or students and ask questions

 Examples: what are your short-term goals? long-term goals? challenges in the home? favorite routines? challenging routines? etc.

 Choose materials (e.g., toys, foods, activities, books, etc.) and expressive language targets that are culturally and linguistically inclusive
 - Consider language environments (i.e., is another language spoken at home?)

See ASHA's Portal page on Cultural Competence, Bilingual Service Del Collaborating with Interpreters, Transliterators, and Translator



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The Power of **Understanding** Language

- Increases success and provides more opportunities for teachers to reinforce desired behaviors
- ☆ Decreases prompt dependency
- Increases independence and participation in routines



Practical Tips to Support Understanding

- 🖈 Use clear, concise language
- ★ Identify a time to practice
- Provide specific feedback and reinforcement
- Use visual supports and effective prompting during routines



Tip 1: Use Clear, Concise Language

- ★Tell the student "what to do" versus "what not to do" "Walk with me" versus "stop running"
- Simplify your language
 - ⊎ Use consistent language like "stop," "wait," and "walk with me"
 ★ Keep in short-use only a few words at a time
- Use only the important words
- ★Be direct (avoid indirect questions or statements) Do not phrase your request as a question, such as "Should we go wash our hands?"
- ★Say it once, then help the student understand in another way
- Use visual cues, gestures, or prompts

Scan this QR code to see an example of a common language poster!



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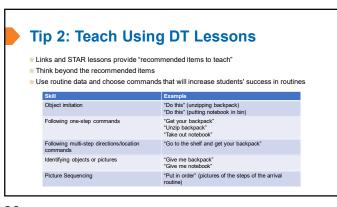
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Say This, Not That

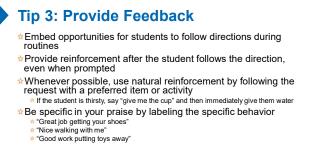
Instead of this	Say this
"It is lunch time. Do you want to come sit at the table and choose something to eat?"	"Lunch time! Come sit down."
"You need to get your backpack right now because it is time to go home."	"Get backpack."
"Are you ready to give me a turn with the toy?"	"My turn with toy."
"No hitting!"	"Hands down."
"Don't throw your toys."	"Put toys in bin." (or show/tell appropriate play)
"Stop running!"	"Walk with me."

Video Example: Understanding Language









Tip 4: Use Visual Supports in Routines

When giving a verbal direction, pair your words with visual supports to show the student what to do!

Say, "Put on picture or picture or picture or picket."

Show a photo strip needed

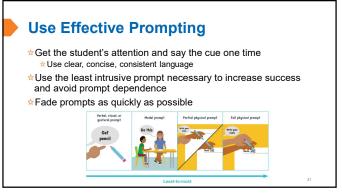
Say, "Wash Show a photo strip hands, if needed work!"

Assist with washing hands, if needed

Say, "You washed your hands. Nice work!"

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The Power of Expression

- ☆ Increases positive interactions with peers
- Decreases and often replaces behaviors perceived as challenging

Four Steps to Teaching Communication

- 1. Choose 1-2 target goals
- Identify time and space to teach and practice goals in a 1:1 or small group setting
- 3. Set-up expressive opportunities in daily routines
- 4. Respond to the student's attempts to communicate



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STAR: Preschool and Elementary



- ☆Create a PRT area in your classroom
- Gather motivating materials and place in a bin or within sight but out of reach

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Teaching Sequence Student choice Minimally block access to create an opportunity for communication Provide a cue (verbal or nonverbal) Student responds or attempts Give access to toy/activity Prepare for next cue

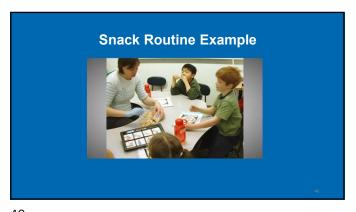
Schedule 1:1 Time to Teach Communication





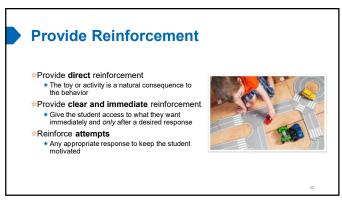


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