



PHILADELPHIA  
SECONDARY AUTISM PROJECT

## Increasing Your Student's Success in General Education Settings



## Workshop Objectives

- Identify the benefits of inclusion.
- Discuss the learning characteristics of students with ASD and how they impact learning in general education settings.
- Discuss the challenges for students with ASD in general education settings.
- Describe strategies to help students with ASD learn and be successful in general education settings.

## Why is inclusion important for students with ASD?

- Increases social interaction opportunities.
- Provides peer role models for appropriate behaviors.
- Provides opportunities to build friendships.
- Builds student confidence!
- Increases independence across typical daily routines.
- Generalizes skills taught in more restrictive instructional settings.

## Group Discussion:

1. Think of your students: What are the most common challenges to successful inclusion?
2. How have you tried to address these challenges?

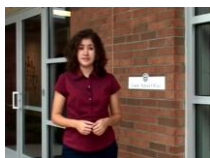
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## Let's hear from the experts!

What are the challenges for students with ASD?



## Strengths To Remember:

- Students with ASD can be excellent visual learners!
- Most prefer order and following a routine, which leads to following and sometimes enforcing rules.
- They often have excellent rote memory skills.
- Word recognition and visual processing are strong!
- Students often have an area of expertise or an area of interest, like science, math or technology.



Understanding how to best teach students with ASD depends on understanding both the observable behaviors we see and what lies beneath.

### The Branches

Students with ASD may engage in some of the following behaviors (Remember ASD is a "spectrum" and not all students have the same characteristics)

- Easily distracted
- Poor eye contact to communicate with others
- Fidgety
- Unusual reactions to sight and sounds
- Easily "stressed out"
- Over and under reactions to typical events
- Difficulty understanding abstract language
- Perseverates on one topic
- Disorganized

### The Roots

**Impaired Theory of Mind**

Theory of Mind is the ability to take another person's perspective and understanding that other people have different thoughts, feelings, and plans.

**Impaired Executive Functioning**

Executive functioning includes the ability to organize, attend to tasks, regulate emotions, control impulses.

### Learning Characteristics

This is what we KNOW

- ❖ Students with ASD usually respond well in highly-structure environments and when expectations/activities are made clear and predictable.
- ❖ Students with ASD often have challenges with even very basic organization and conceptual 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).
- ❖ Students with ASD usually learn more effectively when tasks are broken down into small parts.

### Other learning characteristics of students with ASD to take into consideration when educating students with autism in general education settings.

- ❖ 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, that typically developing students might easily grasp, are often unclear or difficult to apply for students on the spectrum.

### Group Activity

- Identify one characteristic of ASD
- With this characteristic in mind, identify strategies and accommodations that could be used in a classroom setting
- Share out

### Adding Evidence-based Practices to Your Toolkit

- Reinforcement Strategies
- Positive Behavior Supports
- Student Schedules
- Self-management
- Visual and Environmental Supports
- Social Narratives
- Social Skill Instruction
- Peer Modeling



### Let's Put Science into Practice!

#### Using Environmental and Visual Supports and Reinforcement Strategies

- Create a school planner to help your student organize assignments, home work and due dates.
- Collaborate with parents, peers and mentors to provide the needed support to create and use the binder.

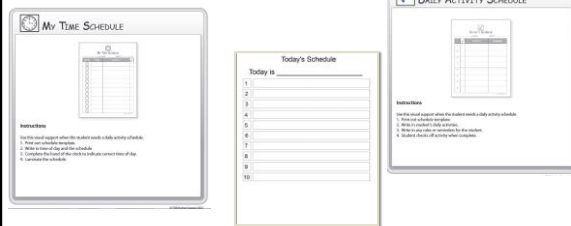


### More Environmental and Visual Supports

Help and encourage students to use **structured work systems** when assignments and projects require multiple components such as online research, lengthy writing assignments and multi week activities.



### Visual Supports-Schedules



### Supports for Work Completion

#### Mini-Schedules

Embed reinforcement into task



### Visual Supports-Calendar

INTERMEDIATE ALGEBRA (Revised)							CONNOR	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		
January 2016								
3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
31								



## Peer Modeling

- Gives students the opportunity to learn skills by watching their peers.
- Peer Models work well if motivated and interested peers are chosen to be peer models.
- Can be a useful strategy for promoting positive communication, social and academic skills for many students.
- Has been effective for preschoolers to high school-age students with ASD.
- Sometimes, peers who excel in behaviors that we would like to see increase in students with autism, are selected to become **Peer Models**

## Video Modeling

- **Video Modeling** is a form of observational learning in which desired behaviors are learned by watching a video demonstration of the behavior and then imitating it.
- **Video Self Modeling** involves the learner watching him or herself performing the behavior in the video.
- It has a wide range of benefits. Plus, it's easy and fun!

Video modeling has been successfully used to teach many skills, including social skills, communication, and athletic performance; it has shown promise as an intervention for children with autism spectrum disorders. [2]

"Video modeling is particularly effective in ABA programs for teaching behaviors to children with autism" (Nikopoulos & Keenan, 2006).

## Why do some teachers not welcome students with ASD in their classrooms?

- Lack of experience and training.
- Misinformation regarding the needs of students with ASD.
- Negative experience with a student with disabilities or ASD.
- Lack of guidance or support with students with ASD and other disabilities in their classrooms.

## Tips for Working with General Education Teachers

- Let general education teachers know you are there to support!
- Provide the student's IEP at a glance.
- Provide a **brief** list of individual accommodations and strategies that work for your students.
- Schedule weekly times to overlap with your students in the general education setting.
  - **Model how to work with your student!**
- Ask for a copy of the weekly classroom schedule.
- Ask for weekly academic topics, themed units, and assignments in advance.

## Additional Resources: Web-based Professional Development Modules



A Comprehensive Guide for Autism Spectrum Disorders for General Education Teachers

Find more ideas and strategies at:  
[www.starautismsupport.org](http://www.starautismsupport.org)  
**Digital Learning Modules**

## References and Resources

- [1] American Psychiatric Association. Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders. 5th ed. Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association; 2013.
- [2] Bellini S, Akullian J (2007). "A meta-analysis of video modeling and video self-modeling interventions for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders". *Except Child* 73 (3): 264-87. [Law Summary - Indiana University \(2007-03-29\)](#).
- [3] "Building the Legacy: IDEA 2004 - Sec. 300.8 Child with a Disability." *Department of Education*. Department of Education, n.d. Web. 7 July 2015.
- [4] *Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)*. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 8 June 2015. Web. 7 July 2015.
- [5] *Intricate Minds Understanding Classmates with Asperger Syndrome*. Coulter Video, 2005. DVD.
- [6] *Intricate Minds III Understanding Elementary School Classmates Who Think Differently*, Coulter Video, 2006. DVD.
- [7] "Evidence-Based Practice and Autism in Schools." *National Autism Center*, 2001. Web. 7 July 2015.