Inclusive Supports for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Welcome!

By the end of the session, you will be able to:

- Identify and use elements of classroom structure that will assist most students, including those with and without autism
- Find ways to incorporate 5 key student supports into your classroom
- Identify supports available to help you brainstorm, solve problems, and plan
What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

**Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**

- Is a developmental disorder that impacts the way individuals interpret their environment, often resulting in challenges with social interactions and processing information.
• Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across contexts
• Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities
  – Stereotyped or repetitive motor movements,
  – Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, or ritualized patterns of verbal or nonverbal behavior
  – Highly restricted, fixated interests that are abnormal in intensity or focus
  – Hyper- or hypo-reactivity to sensory input or unusual interests
• Symptoms must be present in early childhood
• Symptoms cause clinically significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of current functioning
Transitions
  Require multiple changes
  Predictable and yet still unpredictable
Sights and sounds of hallways
  Noise and commotion can be overwhelming
  After navigating the hallways, students are often stressed and unsettled
Students with ASD often have difficulty
  picking out important information from the environment
  & understanding what they are supposed to do.
Think About This

• What are the aspects of your school that may make it a challenging environment for students with ASD?
• Write down 5 examples
How can you support students with ASD in your classroom and school?
Structure is Key

Make information accessible
Spell out where homework goes and where to get materials
Provide structure
  - Make task expectations clear

Create a predictable classroom
Hypersensitivities

https://hml.fpg.unc.edu/flash/43727595_hi.mp4
Consider potential auditory and visual challenges

Sitting too close to:

• windows
• hallway door
• specific students

Radio playing
Messages flickering on TV screen
Fluorescent lights
5 Key Support Strategies

- Priming
- Academic Modifications
- Visual Supports
- Reinforcement
- Home Base
Priming is exposure to academic course material or tasks **before** instruction.

It gives students the chance to become familiar with the material or skills, and increases the likelihood they will learn and use key concepts.

- Priming is most effective when it is built into the student’s daily routine.
What does priming look like?

https://hml.fpg.unc.edu/flash/82391123_hi.mp4
What does priming look like?
Academic Modifications

When the content or format of assignments are adapted to meet the student’s specific needs

Examples:
• Read directions out loud
• Extended time on assignments
• IEP at a glance/cheat sheet can be useful to communicate academic modifications
https://hml.fpg.unc.edu/flash/44741257_hi.mp4
At My School

• How do I know if my student needs academic modifications?
  – Who do I ask?
• Where are student Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)?
  - Where in an IEP do I find information on academic modifications?
Any tool presented visually

Visual supports might include:
- Pictures
- Written words
- Objects within the environment

- Visual boundaries
- Schedules
- Maps
- Labels
- Organization systems
- Timelines
- Scripts
Study Guides

Provide study guides that highlight the main points of the lesson

- Highlight key parts of the text

Highlighted text tells students when to stop reading and begin working on comprehension questions.
Visual supports can also be

• Self-management tools that help the student stay focused and understand their behavior
• Graphic organizers that help the student highlight important information
• Social scripts that help the student understand what to say or how to act in particular situations
I have remembered to include a clear and lively opening.

I have included a suitable problem.

I have created a balanced ending to my story.

I have used capital letters at the start of my sentences and for people’s names.

I remembered to put full stops at the end of my sentences.

I have included what the character would see, hear, smell, feel and taste.
Graphic Organizers

- **Main Idea**
- **Detail**

**Topic Concept Theme**

1. **During Class:**
   - Take notes here.

2. **After Class:**
   - Edit and summarize here.

3. **Later:**
   - Your ideas, thoughts, questions here.
Looking While Listening

When someone is talking to me, I try to listen. This is a very nice thing to do.

There are a lot of times that I have to be a good listener.

If I look at the ceiling and other things in the room, the other person may not know I am listening.

This is what you need to do next.
Visuals help everyone learn!
Integrating Supports

- Printed schedules
- Graphic organizers
- Social script
- Video modeling or self modeling linked to a self monitoring system
- [https://hml.fpg.unc.edu/flash/11449604_hi.mp4](https://hml.fpg.unc.edu/flash/11449604_hi.mp4)
Reinforcement

Rewards students for behaving in ways that are productive and support their continued growth

• Verbal praise
• Computer time
• Homework pass
• A teenager with ASD may need to be reinforced for things that others do not need to be reinforced.
Reinforcement

https://hml.fpg.unc.edu/flash/94997693_hi.mp4
Home Base

Designated place students with ASD can go to regain control in times of stress
More Strategies

• For other evidence-based strategies to support students with ASD visit The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder
  • [https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices](https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices)
Effective Use of Teacher Supports
Where Can You Turn?

• Three primary supports can enhance your efforts when working with students with ASD:
  – The Individualized Education Program (IEP)
  – Special education teachers
  – Paraprofessionals

• If you feel your student needs supports identify your school’s key contact for beginning process of acquiring additional supports
Goal Description

Given a topic, Luke will write a well formulated paragraph, with a topic sentence, two or more supporting sentences, and closure statement, with 80% accuracy.

Does the student require assistive technology devices and/or services? **No**
If yes, describe needs:

(Address after determination of related services.) Is this goal integrated with related service(s)? **No**

* If yes, list the related service area(s) of integration:

Benchmarks or Short Term Objectives (if applicable)
(Required for students participating in the state alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards)

1. Luke will write two topic sentences, with correct capitalization, and correct punctuation, with 85% accuracy.
2. Luke will write a response paragraph to teacher directed questioning assessment in his general education classes, with 85% accuracy.

Describe how progress toward the annual goal will be measured
Teacher made tests; Report card in Writing Intense Courses (English/Social Studies)
The IEP

- The IEP is the central document that serves as the student’s roadmap to education
- It lays out student’s present skills and skills that teachers should work with the student to improve, including academic and non-academic goals
- It structures the learning process for students with ASD and other special needs to ensure they are reaching their full potential
Special Education Teachers
Special Education Teachers

• The special education teacher is the guide to the student’s disability and IEP
• Special education teachers help monitor the IEP to make sure the student is making progress.
• If the student is not making progress, they can think of alternative ways to help the student make progress.
Paraprofessionals help keep students with ASD focused on the classroom teacher and provide reinforcement when they are paying attention.

Paraprofessionals can make sure the student:

- Is on task
- Has materials
- Has necessary supports

- Paraprofessionals are NOT responsible for developing curriculum content
• What role do special educators play in helping students with ASD in the general education classroom?
• What information do special educators provide general educators about their students with ASD?
• When are special educators available to meet with general educators to brainstorm ideas?
• What role do paraprofessionals play in general education classrooms?
• What other supports are available to me?
Resources

• Organization for Autism Research https://researchautism.org/
• National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder https://autismmpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices
• All video clips used in this presentation are from a DVD that was developed by the Organization for Autism Research (OAR) in collaboration with Fairfax County (Va.) Public Schools, with funding the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism, and OAR.
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