

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Part 3: Social and Behavioural Supports

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Teaching Students With Communication Needs (ASD)

CHARACTERISTICS OF ASD AS SEEN IN THE CLASSROOM



Area of Impairment

The student:

Social skills

- demonstrates difficulties interacting with peers and adults
- has difficulty reading and understanding social cues or situations
- withdraws from or provides unusual responses in social situations
- engages in play that is lacking in the imaginative qualities of social play

Behaviour

- displays obsessions or preoccupations with specific themes or objects
- likes order and may line up toys repeatedly
- engages in unusual behaviours, such as rocking, spinning, or hand flapping
- gets extremely upset with changes in routine or schedules
- has an unusual response to loud noises or other sensory stimuli

Source: *Effective Educational Practices for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, A Resource Guide*. (2007). Ontario: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

TTYP (turn to your partner) and discuss how these characteristics may interfere with learning and how difficulties in social and language skills may lead to behavioural difficulties.

Functional Behaviour Analysis

Behaviour is communication. Doing a functional behaviour analysis is a way to try to determine the reason, or function, of a behaviour, especially when the individual with ASD is unable to fully explain the behaviour.

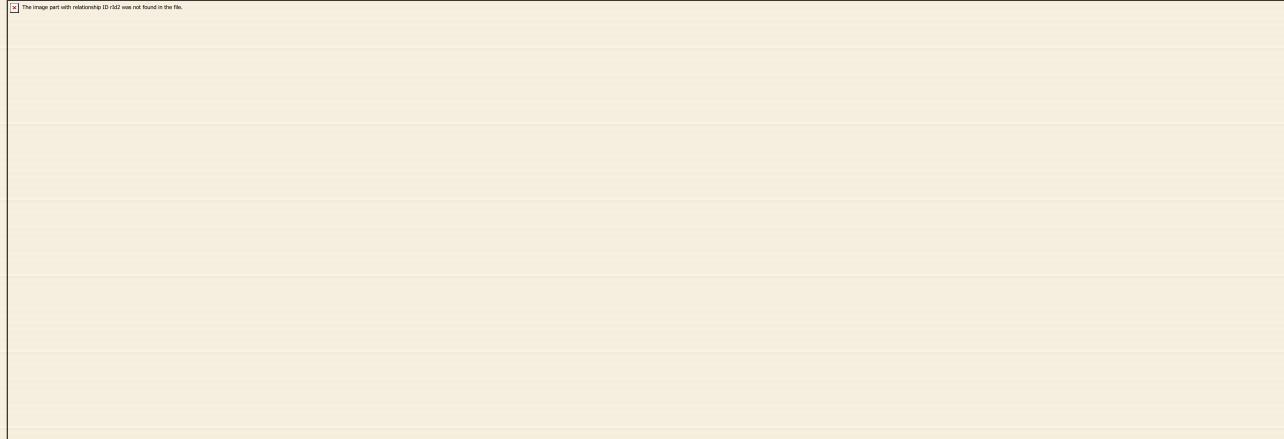
A behaviour analysis is done by collecting data in the form of ABC:

A - antecedent of behaviour (what happens just before the behaviour that you are observing)

B - behaviour occurs

C - consequence of that behaviour (what happens directly after the behaviour)

A functional behaviour analysis is often done by the resource teacher or an educational assistant – someone who can observe and collect data while the regular routine is going on.



www.symtrend.com

The data is then used to help everyone better understand why a behaviour occurs and what function the behaviour serves. Following an analysis, replacement behaviour can be discussed and a plan put in place to teach the replacement behaviour to the child.

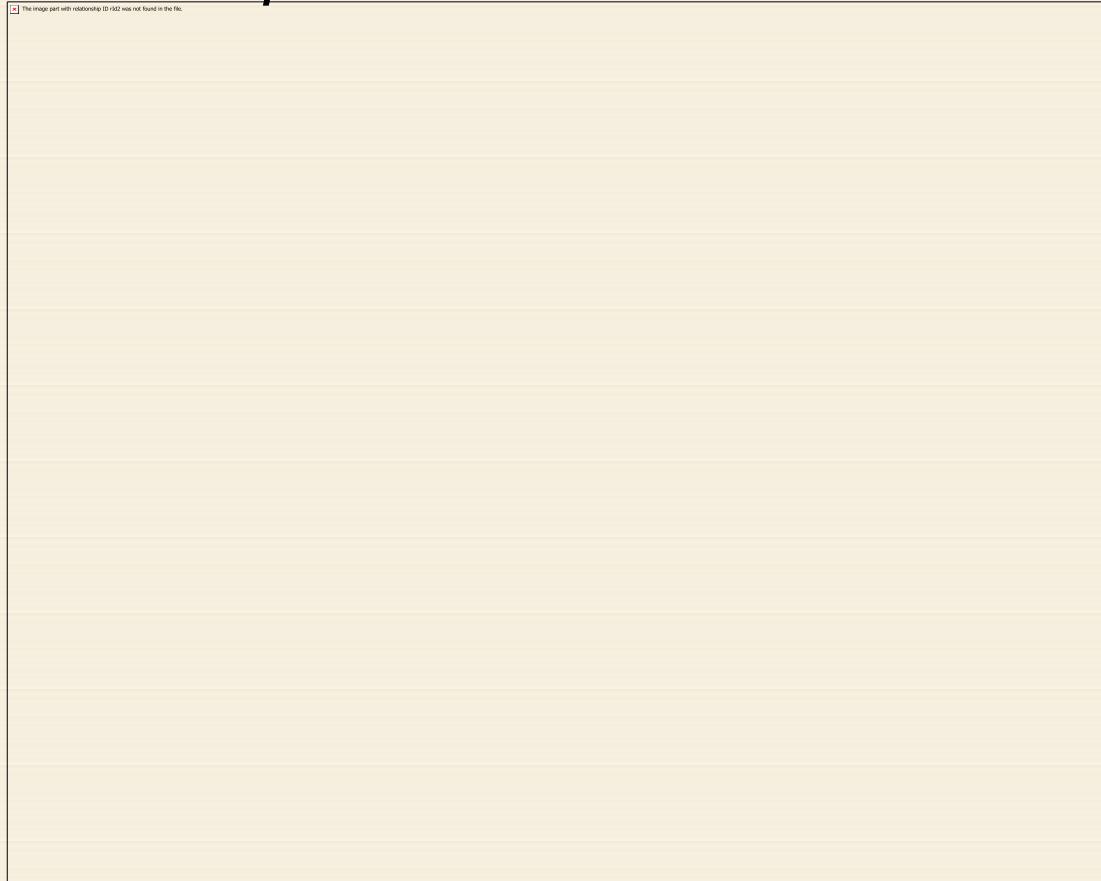


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Behaviour Intervention

The following is an example of a behavioural plan that was developed as a result of a FBA.



START Project. www.gvsu.edu/autismcenter

TTYP (turn to your partner) and note how a Functional Behaviour Analysis would help give insight to the problem.

Sensory Overload

Students with ASD can be under sensitive to stimuli (hypo) or over sensitive to stimuli (hyper). The response to things they hear, see, smell, feel and taste can be disruptive to the task they are asked to perform. Sensory sensitivities may be an antecedent to behaviour.



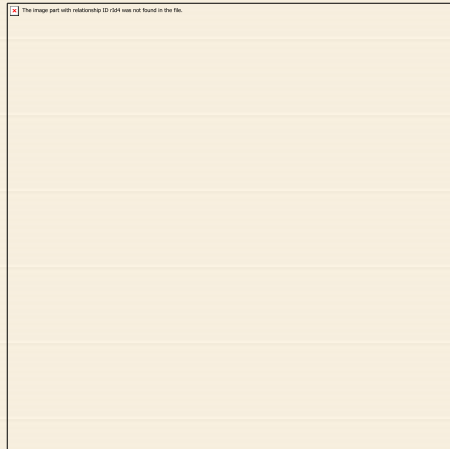
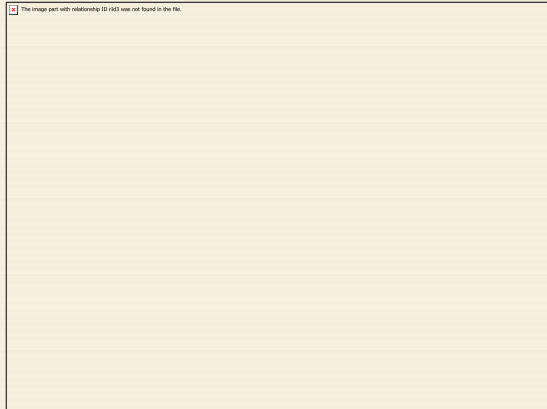
Providing sensory stimulation may be enjoyable to the child, relieving tension and relaxing a child with ASD; bringing an improvement to behaviour.

Snoezelen Room



Source: Welcome to Lutherwood Donate. (n.d.). Retrieved June 26, 2015, from <http://www.lutherwood.ca/announcements/building-sensory-therapy-snoezelen-room>

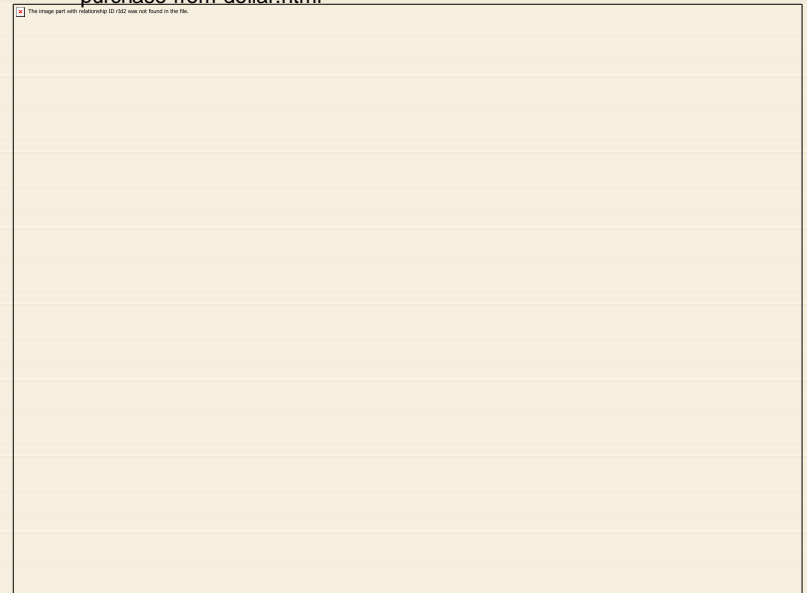
You can find and create ways to make your own sensory room, space or sensory items.



Source: Classroom Break Boxes: Sensory Tool Kit. (n.d.). Retrieved June 26, 2015, from <https://funandfunction.com/classroom-break-boxes-sensory-tool-kit.html>



Source: 100 Things You Can Purchase from the Dollar Tree and Use in Play ~ Growing A Jeweled Rose. (n.d.). Retrieved June 26, 2015, from <http://www.growingajeweledrose.com/2012/05/100-things-you-can-purchase-from-dollar.html>
























Source: DIY Sensory Room. (2013, November 18). Retrieved June 26, 2015, from <http://autismfrog.com/2013/11/19/diy-sensory-room>



Visuals

Since students with ASD do not always understand the whole picture (they see the trees, not the forest) the world can be a scary, unpredictable place. Visuals are essential for making sequence and order clear and demonstrating the transitions that will occur. This may reduce anxiety and bring comprehension to what happens next.

 I want		 I see		 thank you	
 drink	 biscuit	 apple	 cake	 crisps	 banana
 book	 sand	 bricks	 pens	 farm	 puzzle
 shoe	 jumper	 trousers	 coat	 sock	 hat

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

Illustration from: www.autismspeaks.com

There are many examples on the web of visuals being used to help children with ASD:



Source: AU Guys: Classroom Setup. (n.d.). Retrieved June 26, 2015, from <http://auguys.blogspot.ca/2012/09/classroom-setup.html>

Visuals can be used to help with: schedules, checklists, labeling, demonstrating sequence, communicating, learning new skills, and more.

<p>I need to be careful with the things I own. It is important to keep track of and not lose my things.</p> <p>Before I leave school for the day, I have to check for...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> -my hat<input type="checkbox"/> -my gloves<input type="checkbox"/> -my wallet<input type="checkbox"/> -my lunch bag<input type="checkbox"/> -my school bag<input type="checkbox"/> -the books I need<input type="checkbox"/> -my agenda<input type="checkbox"/> -anything else I brought with me	<p>What do I need to take home for homework today?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>2) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>3) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>4) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>5) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>6) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>7) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>8) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>
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Source: AU Guys: Classroom Setup. (n.d.). Retrieved June 26, 2015, from <http://auguys.blogspot.ca/2012/09/classroom-setup.html>

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Social Skills

The Fundamentals of Social Skill Instruction

To facilitate positive interactions at school, the following social skills are particularly important for students to learn:

- greetings
- initiating and closing interactions
- choosing activities
- sharing
- waiting
- turn taking
- playing games

Source: Effective Educational Practices for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, A Resource Guide. (2007). Ontario: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Social Stories™

Social Stories™ were created by Carol Gray. They help provide a tool for visually communicating a desired social action and help to visually communicate the feelings of others. They are to be used routinely until the desired behaviour is learned.

You can create your own social narrative. Include these types of sentences.

Descriptive Sentences

Running I like to run. It is fun to go fast. It's okay to run when I am playing outside. I can run when I am on the playground.

Perspective Sentences

Sometimes I feel like running, but it is dangerous to run when I am inside. Running inside could hurt me or other people.

Directive Sentences

When people are inside, they walk. Walking inside is safe.

Affirmative Sentences

I will try to walk inside and only run when I am outside on the playground. My teachers and parents like it when I remember to walk inside.

Another example of a social narrative. This one is teaching how to engage other children on the playground:



I enjoy playing with other children



I can ask other children: "You want to play with me?"



If they say "Yes", I can go and play with them and have fun



If they say "No", it's OK



I can play with other children or play by myself

Peers

Children with autism have difficulty with reading and understanding social cues and difficulty with communication. Direct instruction is an effective way to teach better social skills.

Teach in the natural setting as much as possible. This allows for better generalization of a skill (a child with ASD may learn a skill in one environment but may not translate that same skill to another environment.)



www.icare4autism.org

Educate the peers.

Prepare the peers of a child with ASD to be empathetic and forgiving.

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Guidelines for Buddy Systems



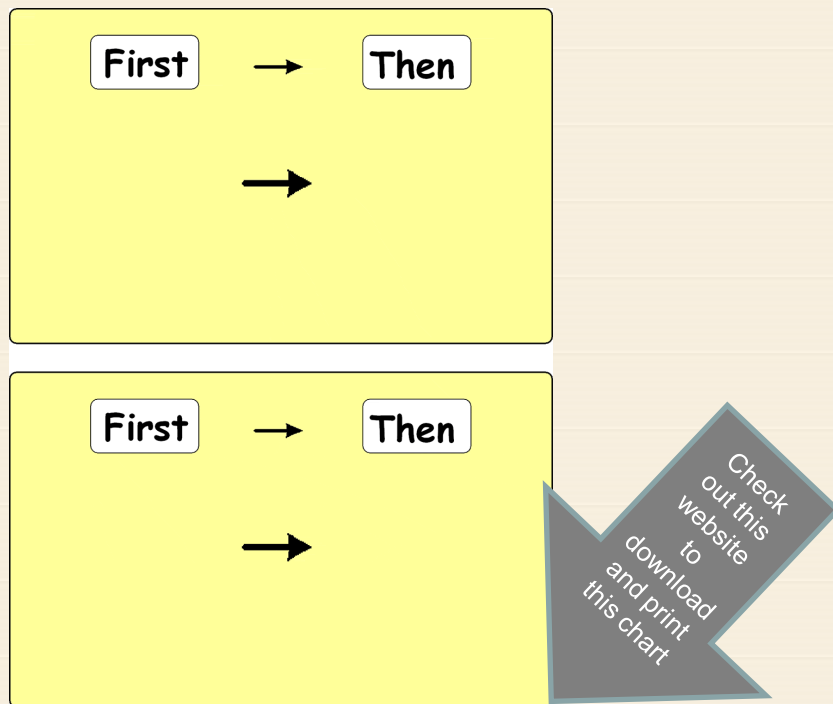
- Explain to the group the purpose of being a buddy: to help their classmate learn to have friends and develop social skills.
 - Participation must be voluntary. Occasionally a classmate initially may not wish to be a buddy.
 - Give some ownership of the process to the class. Allow the class to generate ideas for activities and ways to help their classmate.
 - Arrange for buddies to work in pairs so that they can talk about and plan their activities.
- Also, when there are two buddies, should an incident occur on the schoolyard, for instance, one student can stay with the classmate, while the other seeks assistance.
- As in the case of any individual, the student with ASD may, at times, wish to be alone. This must be acknowledged, as sometimes students feel overwhelmed and need quiet times to “regroup” so that they can move forward in their day calmly.

Consider ways to incorporate a buddy system into your classroom.

Be sure to check with the parents of the child with ASD about what can be shared about the child’s diagnosis.

Helping with Self Regulation

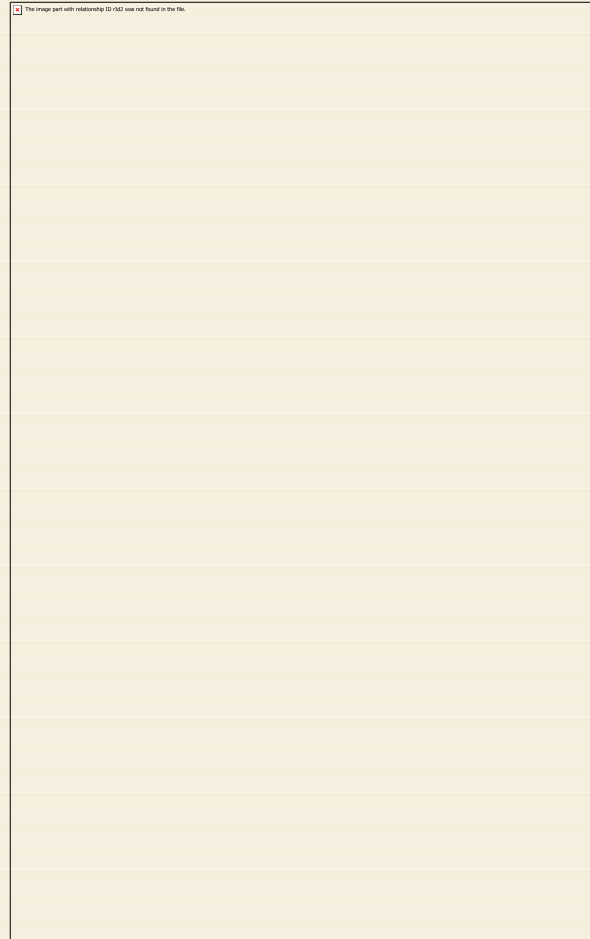
Many children with ASD have special interests or objects that hold their attention. These interests can be used to motivate a child to complete classroom tasks. A common visual technique used with children is the “FIRST...THEN” board. Picture cues are added and removed from this board.



Source: E-Learning. (n.d.). Retrieved June 25, 2015, from http://visuals.autism.net/main.php?g2_itemId=81

IF....THEN

In these examples, positive reinforcement comes in various forms.



Source: Making a Contract. (n.d.). Retrieved June 26, 2015, from <http://www.eup.k12.mi.us>

This example offers choice, giving the student a sense of control.



Source: The Autism Helper. (n.d.). Retrieved June 26, 2015, from <http://theautismhelper.com>

Summary:

A Functional Behaviour Analysis is collecting data about an antecedent, behaviour, and consequence. Completing a FBA helps to better understand the function of a behaviour when a child cannot fully explain it. It is one of the first steps in coming up with a plan to help prevent and replace problematic behaviour.

One antecedent of problematic behaviour to consider is sensory overload. Children with ASD may be hyper or hypo sensitive to sensory stimuli.

Visuals are an effective tool for teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviour and routines.

Explicitly teaching social skills and communication skills is a key component to helping a child with autism make and keep friends. Social stories [™] is one way to help develop social skills as well as working with peers to equip them to be a good friend to a child with autism.

Finally, self regulation can also be promoted with visuals.

Utilizing appropriate tools can reduce problematic behaviour.

Celebrate the uniqueness
of each child!



In supporting the
communication and social skills of
children, a teacher can have a
huge impact on the lives of her
students!

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