STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE THE INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
Workshop Purpose

• Provide participants with strategies and supports to help families and individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and other developmental disabilities experience success in:

  • Classroom-based activities
  • Group worship
  • Special activities within the religious setting
What are the features of Autism Spectrum Disorders?

- Challenges with Social Communication
- Presence of Restricted Interests/Repetitive Behaviors
Things to Remember

• Overall, ASD impacts:
  • How an individual responds to unspoken or assumed social rules
  • How an individual uses and understands language
  • How an individual responds to change, things that are not on their terms, unexpected, or ambiguous

• So, when children with ASD respond in a way that is different than we expect, it is often rooted in these areas of difficulty, rather than an inability to learn, purposely not listening, etc.
Taking Action

- Work with parents to determine what would be appropriate for their child
- Determine modifications to the activity
- Decide how to prepare the child/adolescent for the activity
- Decide what supports and strategies need to be available during the activity

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
Parent Questions

• What are your goals for inclusion for you and your family?

• How does your child currently communicate?

• What type of supports have been successful with your child at home, school, or in the community?
Parent Questions

• How do you reward your child’s good behavior (for example, favorite activities, type of praise, points, etc.)?

• What does your child enjoy doing?

• What are your child’s strengths?
Parent Questions

• What types of activities are particularly challenging for your child?

• What triggers often upset your child in his/her environment (for example, certain sounds, lights, textures, activities, etc.)?

• Are there certain behaviors we may expect to see when your child is upset?
Modify the Activity

- Decrease lag time to and from activity
- Involve child in only certain parts of an activity or for shorter amounts of time
- Change the order of the activity
Modify the Activity cont.

• Take out less essential parts of the activity/temporarily decrease the amount of demands

• Break up the activity, providing extra breaks

• Have extra people available to assist if needed
• Practice and exposure before

• Social Stories

• Peer support/coaching
Practice and Exposure

• Identify specific skills or tasks that may need to be practiced before the activity

• Gradually increase the length of time/amount required of the child to more closely match the activity’s demands
Selecting Peers

• Age:
  • Peers should be of the same age or slightly older

• Availability:
  • Peers should be consistently present at religious activities
  • Peers should be willing to participate

• Characteristics:
  • Peers should be patient, mature, and persistent

• Number:
  • Adults should train more than 1 peer to avoid burn-out and promote generalization
  • Adults should keep the number manageable for the child with ASD
Training Peers

• Introduce the goals

• Describe the child

• Explain the strategies

• Practice

• Check for understanding
Social Stories: Singing in Church

Most Sundays my family goes to church. My parents like to go to church.

Sometimes during worship there is singing. I like to sing! Sometimes the choir sings. Sometimes everyone sings. I will know when it is my turn to sing by watching the choir director. When he stands facing the choir, it is my turn to listen. When he stands facing the crowd and moves his arms, it is my turn to sing. If I am unsure, I can ask my parents.
Supports and Strategies

- Increase use of visuals
- Incorporate reinforcement

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
Visual Supports

• Decrease verbal communication
  • “Telegram speech”
  • Break down directions

• Make message concrete
  • Literal/black and white
  • Avoid presenting content in abstract/ambiguous way

• Supplement verbal information with visual information
  • Expectations
  • Sequence of activities

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
Structure of the Environment

• Present unspoken rules in a visual format

• Have clear physical and visual boundaries

• Minimize visual and auditory distractions
Defining Locations and Boundaries
Communicating Roles

Line Leader for the Day

When your name is the star next to it, you are the Line Leader for the day!
The Line Leader gets to wear a star tag all day!

- Nicholas Perry
- Justin Glass
- Baker Travis
- Jennifer Scallan
- Ryan DeSantis
- Brian Howlett

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
Clarifying Limits

STOP

take a break
listen to music
iPad

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
**Greeting Steps**

- **Stop**
- **Make Eye contact**
- **Decide**
  - Is it a person I know or a person I don’t know

**A person I know**

**Hello**

**Hello. My name is _____. What is your name?**

**A person I don’t know**

**Hi!**

---

**Visual Behavioral Expectations**
Making Abstract Content More Concrete

David watched sheep in a field.

David took bread and cheese to his brothers in Saul.

David put a sling shot.

David found 5 smooth stones.

David said "I will fight you, Goliath!"

www.theinclusivechurch.com

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
Promoting Participation in Group Activities

Make it Stick! Activity Page

Bible Verse Scramble
Can you place the words in the correct order?

We _______ the Lord our _______ to help us.

We have __________ God.

From 2 Chronicles 32:8

Pop Quiz
Can you answer each question with a YES or NO?

Goliath was a giant. __________

David brought food to Goliath. __________

Word Search
Can you find each word?
GOLIATH SLING UP MEN LORD

BUILD ROPE PM OP BOE SLING

2 Chronicles 32:8
New International Version (NIV)

"With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles." And the people gained confidence from what Hezekiah the king of Judah said.

New International Version (NIV)

2 Chronicles 32:8 in all English translations

www.theinclusivechurch.com
Visual Schedules: Large and Small Group Worship

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
Visual Schedules: Small Group Worship

Church School

- Table work
- Prayer
- Bible verse
- Story
- Questions/Answers
- Song
- Game
- LEGOS!!!
Sunday School – April 24, 2016

• **Group Activity**
  - I read the first verse of the assigned passage. I read aloud the first question on the group worksheet. I answer the question from the verse that I read.
  - The person to my right will read the next verse and read aloud the second question on the group worksheet. He or she will answer the question.
  - Every person in the circle will follow these directions. The last person to read will be the person sitting to my left.
  - After everyone reads, Mr. Smith will ask a few more questions about the verses we read as a group.
# Visual Schedule: Special Services/Ceremonies

## December

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notes:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candlelight service</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14 Church supper</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Candy light service</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24 Christmas Eve Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Service</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reinforcement

• What is it?
  • Something a child is willing to “work for”

• Why is it important?
  • Different social motivation
  • Task demands

• How do I use it?
  • Clear, immediate, and specific
First-Then Boards

First

Then

First

sing song

Then

play with car

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
Token Boards

I am working for

I am working for:

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
Token Boards + Visual Schedules

Today is ___________

LARGE GROUP
- Announcements
- Music
- Prayer

SMALL GROUP
- Prayer requests
- Prayer
- Lesson

Today I learned about ___________________

******************************************************************************

Today I will try to earn ___ stars. I earn stars by participating.
Participating means: 🍎 🍗 🗺

When I earn ____ stars I can 🍩 🍔 🎮
Token Boards and Visual Schedules Combined

Activity-Based Behavioral Support

- Walk into auditorium
- Sit down in seat
- Sing 2 songs
- Close eyes during first prayer
- Take 1 page of notes during lesson
- Close eyes during second prayer
- Walk out of auditorium

Worship Service

- Each Box equals a 10-minute interval

Rules:
- Bottom on Pew
- Quiet Mouth
- Hands in Lap or Reading Silently

Ride in elevator for 5 minutes!!!

Time-Based Behavioral Support

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
**Case Scenarios**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGE:</th>
<th>MODIFICATION/SUPPORT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Child struggles with transition to small group worship setting</td>
<td>• Determine order/length of events in classroom that would increase chances of a successful transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide visual schedule beginning before transition to class to increase momentum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide reinforcement for each transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide object for transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Decrease amount of words during transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minimize reaction to challenging behaviors and keep transition smooth and efficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Case Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGE:</th>
<th>MODIFICATION/SUPPORT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Child has difficulty following directions during their role in a religious ceremony | • Decide if activity can be modified in some way to make it easier to follow directions during it  
• Decide if expectations can be altered to ensure success  
• Practice role outside of ceremony  
• Add visual supports to clarify instructions  
• Provide clear reinforcement for following each instruction |
## Case Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGE:</th>
<th>MODIFICATION/SUPPORT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Child becomes upset during circle time when the lesson is being presented</td>
<td>• Initially decrease how long child is in circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide a visual breaking down each activity during circle time for child to follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide something the child can hold that relates to the lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide a timer showing length of lesson/circle time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide reinforcement for specific participation behaviors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Case Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGE:</th>
<th>MODIFICATION/SUPPORT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Child has trouble sitting throughout the entire group worship service</td>
<td>• Practice appropriate sitting outside of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Set scheduled breaks to take a walk before child begins moving around instead of waiting and responding to challenging behavior by providing breaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Add visual supports to clarify “appropriate sitting” in service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reward child’s quiet sitting for short portions of service by taking walk or providing another reward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Visually indicate length of service, breaks, and rewards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

© Vanderbilt TRIAD
Keep in Touch!

Browse and sign up for upcoming events by TRIAD!
http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/triad/events

Like us on Facebook!
We post tips, visuals, resources, pictures from workshops!
https://www.facebook.com/VKCTRIAD

© Vanderbilt TRIAD