

Respecting Autism

What We Learn From Our Friends On The Spectrum

Bluegrass Autism Symposium

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10 Things the Student with Autism wishes you knew.

1. Behavior is Communication.
2. Never assume anything.
3. Look for sensory issues first.
4. Provide me a break to allow for self-regulation before I need it.
5. Tell me what you want me to do in the positive rather than the imperative.

10 Things.....

6. Keep your expectations reasonable.
7. Help me transition between activities.
8. Don't make a bad situation worse.
9. Criticize gently.
10. Offer real choices.

by Ellen Notbohm

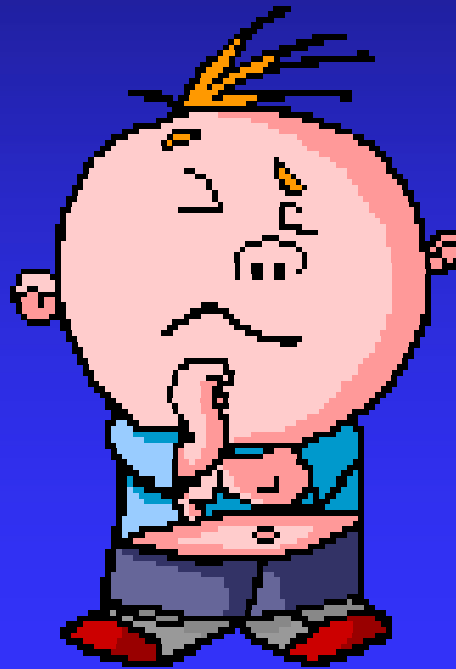
Relationships And Environment

Social Responsibility
Independence

Relationships

Benchmark: Faculty, staff, and group(s) of peers use specific strategies and processes to facilitate interactions and to promote mutually satisfying relationships.

What do you need in your life to
consider it fulfilled and
complete?



Statistics to think about:

- 90% report being bullied.
- 80% have significant anxiety problems.
- 35% have never been invited to a birthday party.
- 31% habitually chosen last for team activities.
- 11% often eat lunch alone.

Mutually satisfying relationships:

EMPATHY
AFFIRMATION
RESPECT

Dr. Asa Grant Hilliard

To restructure we must first look deeply at the goals that we set for our children and the beliefs that we have about them. Once we are on the right track there, then we must turn our attention to the delivery systems. None of the applied approaches or strategies will mean anything if the fundamental belief does not fit with new structures that are being created.

Social Skills

- Difficulty reading nonverbal language
- Limited use of nonverbal language
- Inferring emotions (not connecting emotions to events)
- Play skills
- Narrowed interests
- Hidden curriculum

Building relationships:

- Teacher training
- Peer Education
- Social skills instruction
- Friendship groups

Environment

Benchmark: The environment in which the student with autism learns fosters the highest level of independence possible by providing structure, predictability and routine across all settings.

Sensory Processing

- Organizing and extracting meaning from the information we get from our bodies and the world around us to make appropriate responses.

Sensory Systems

- No ONE system operates independently.
- All systems serve two functions
 - ◆ Protect
 - ◆ Discriminate

Sensory Systems

- Tactile
- Vestibular
- Proprioception
- Visual
- Auditory
- Gustatory
- Olfactory

Sensory Processing continued...

- In order to attend to others it is necessary to feel comfortable, filter out distractions, and know what is relevant.
- Problems with sensory processing cause distractibility, disorganization, and discomfort.
- Result = overselectivity/attention to repetitive stimulus in part as a means to create order amid chaos.
- Fright, Flight, Fight!

Environmental supports to promote structure and predictability as well as to decrease stress and anxiety.

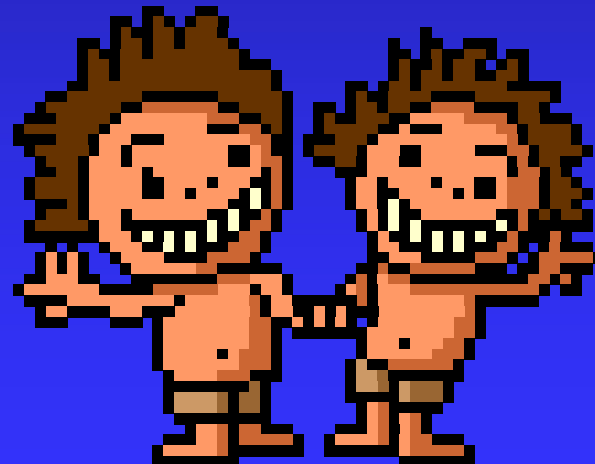
- Visual schedules
- Mini-schedules
- Sequence strips
- Work systems
- Clearly defined spaces
- Clearly defined activities

Environmental supports continued...

- Meaningful activities
- Preferred vs. non-preferred activities
- Home-Base/Calming area

Thank you for your participation.
Check your schedule...we are
finished!

II



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