

## Social Communication and Self Regulation in Children with Asperger Syndrome

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## Goal and Purpose

- To increase knowledge of the implication of higher level thinking skills and social interactions for those with AS
- To provide strategies to assist those with AS to develop better self regulation, theory of mind, and problem solving strategies

## Self Regulation

- Framework
  - Occurs on three level
    - Physiological: Fright and Flight; Self Calming Sensory Behaviors (adaptive and maladaptive)
    - Cognitive: Planning and Problem Solving, Self Talk-Self Regulation
    - Communicative: Sharing with another to assist in problem solving-Mutual Regulation

## Social Communication

- Starting and Keeping an Interaction Going
  - Beyond topic initiation and responding
  - Beyond requesting and protesting
  - Requires perspective taking metalinguistic/metacognitive skills
  - Requires the ability to comment, request and provide clarification, repair communicative breakdowns
  - Requires interpretation and use of non-linguistic and paralinguistic behaviors

## Integrating Self Regulation and Social Communication

- Within 1 individual 4 different elements to social competence
  - 1. The ability to manage one's internal state at a cognitive and communicative level
  - 2. The ability to think about the perspective of the other
  - 3. The ability to use a variety of communication devices to remain engaged in an adaptive manner
  - 4 The ability to read and use non-linguistic and paralinguistic behaviors (gestures and voice)

## Managing Internal State: Cognitive and Communicative Components

- Self Talk
  - Develop the ability to use language to regulate one's own behavior
  - Benefits of self talk: autonomy and independence
  - Strategy: Self Talk Cards with gradual fading of cues
    - Choral Reading is Faded
    - Develop an Icon for Self Talk
    - Create a File Box of Self Talk
    - Use with children of all ages-consider level of representation
    - Goal: Child will manage him or herself independently

## Perspective Taking

- Executive Functioning and Theory of Mind
  - Begin by taking the child's perspective
  - Be direct: Use language to obtain information about how another person experiences something
  - Use non-emotional events to teach
  - Be concrete: Integrate concrete activities to illustrate different perspectives
  - Draw attention to facial expressions in different media
  - Talk about what facial expressions mean
  - Begin Young

## Use of Communicative Behaviors

- Conversation as more than Ask and Answer Events
- Obtain a pragmatic discourse analysis for:
  - repair, request clarification, provide clarification, disagree, add information, request information
- Create opportunities to practice skills (based on speech act theory)
  - I say, You say activity
  - I say, add, ask, feel, think, reject, fix
  - Extending skill for more turns

## Read and Use Non-linguistic and Paralinguistic Behaviors

- Integrating into self talk: Do I understand? Am I being understood? How do I know? How can I be sure?
- Teaching: guessing vs. knowing; thinking vs. sharing; compromise as winning
- Children come to understand their own emotional states before they understand those of others....so...
  - Assist child to examine how he/she knows he/she has a particular feeling
  - Assist child consider how another person would know he/she has a particular feeling
  - Assist the child in developing alternative ways to demonstrate the feeling
  - Use visual supports: self talk cards and/or social stories to address this...I have to show people how I feel in ways that help them and me. I can do this by.....
  - Then move to interpreting the feelings of others: what do I see, what do I guess, what do I know, how can I find out, what can I do about it.
  - Guide the child to develop alternatives to problem solving

## Goal Development

- Samples
  - The child will complete his work within x minutes at an 80% accuracy level using self talk strategies.
  - The child will maintain a conversation initiated by another for x exchanges, using discourse visual supports
  - The child will request information regarding another person's emotional state x times per day
  - The child will modify his/her own behavior based upon feedback from another x times per day
  - The child will request clarification when his/her request is denied or when confused about an academic task x% of the time
  - The child will label his/her emotional state when faced with a social or academic problem.
  - The child will verbally obtain assistance from others when faced with a problem x% of the time challenged.

## Questions

- Social Competence, Self Advocacy, and Relationship Building are Central to Our Work as SLPs
- Thank you