



Intervention Strategies to Support Social Interaction

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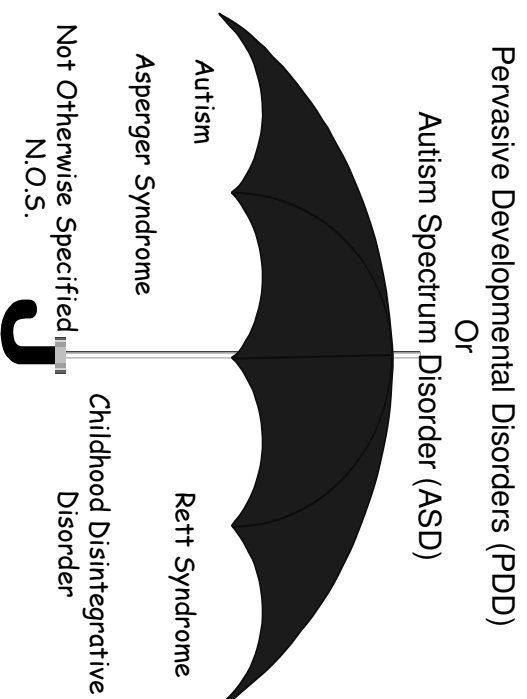
Objectives

- Identify social challenges common to individuals with ASD.
- Identify characteristics of students with ASD that interfere with successful social interactions.
- Identify and describe evidenced-based intervention designed to address social skill deficits.



Social Skills: What are we talking about?

“Socially acceptable *learned* behaviors that enable a person to interact with others in ways that elicit positive responses and assist the person in avoiding negative responses.” (Elliot, Racine & Busse, 1995, p. 1009)

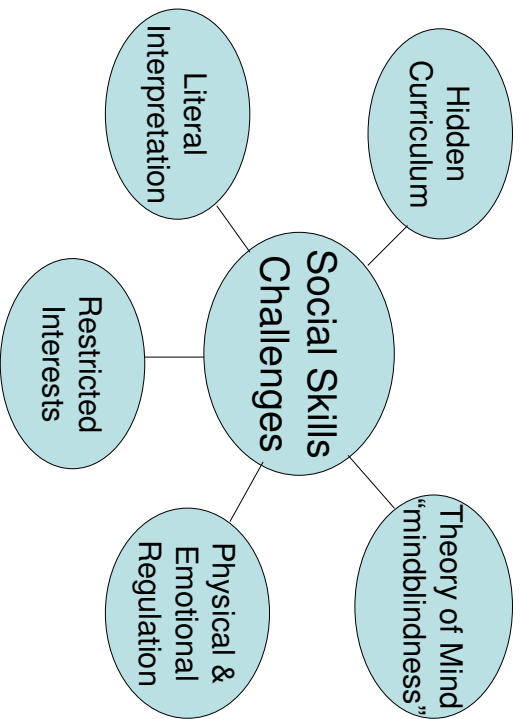


Why focus on social skills?

- Social skills are a core (defining) characteristic of individuals with ASD.
- Limited social skills have immediate and life long consequences
- Social skills are not acquired in the same manner as typically developing peers, therefore they need to be intentionally taught.
- Few children receive adequate social skills programming. (Bellini, 2006)

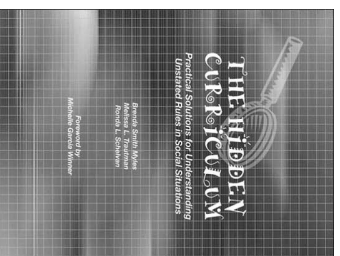
A moment to reflect

What are some of the social challenges that you have observed among your students?



The Hidden Curriculum

- The dos and don'ts of social interactions that most people learn incidentally or with little instruction but remain hidden for those with ASD.
- The unwritten social rules and expectations of behavior that we all seem to know, but were never taught.



Theory of Mind

- Refers to a limited ability of take the perspective of another person.
- Perspective-taking allows us to continually monitor our own behavior and predict the behavior of those with whom we interact.
- Example:



Literal Interpretation

A limited ability to understand commonly used expressions including idioms and sarcasm.

- "In over your head" "Put your foot in your mouth"
- "Button your lip" "Park your pencil"
- "A piece of cake" "All eyes on me"



Physical & Emotional Regulation

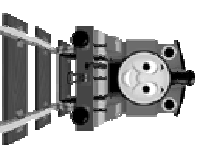
- A limited capacity to adjust levels of physical activity and/or emotional responses. May be inappropriate, an over-reaction or an under-reaction.
- Typically associated with stress, anxiety, frustration, confusion and/or misunderstanding.

**co-existence of ADHD



Restricted Interests

- Preoccupation with particular area of interest or topics.
- Occupies time, thoughts and interactions.





Potential Consequences of limited social skills

- Frequently anxious, agitated, frustrated and/or confused
- Refusal/resistance to comply
- Rage reactions/temper outbursts/meltdowns
- Zoning-out
- Low self-esteem (self-critical, depression, suicide)
- Victims of bullying and teasing
- Fewer friends/friendships
- Impact on adult outcomes (employment, independent living, leisure, etc.)



Teaching Social Skills: What does the research tell us?

- Match intervention strategies with specific skill deficits/needs.
- Provide sufficient intervention to assure acquisition, maintenance and generalization.
- Teach social skills in natural environments.
- Social skills training is most effective when parents and teachers believe in the effectiveness and appropriateness of the selected intervention strategies.



Assessing Social Skills Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)

- Describe specific behavior in observable/ measurable terms
- Identify when, where, with whom and under what conditions a certain behavior is most/least likely to occur, what triggers the behavior and how adults/peers typically respond when this behavior occurs.
- Identify the function of the behavior (attention, escape/avoidance, sensory, control, etc.)



A word of caution

**Performance deficit
or
Skill deficit?**



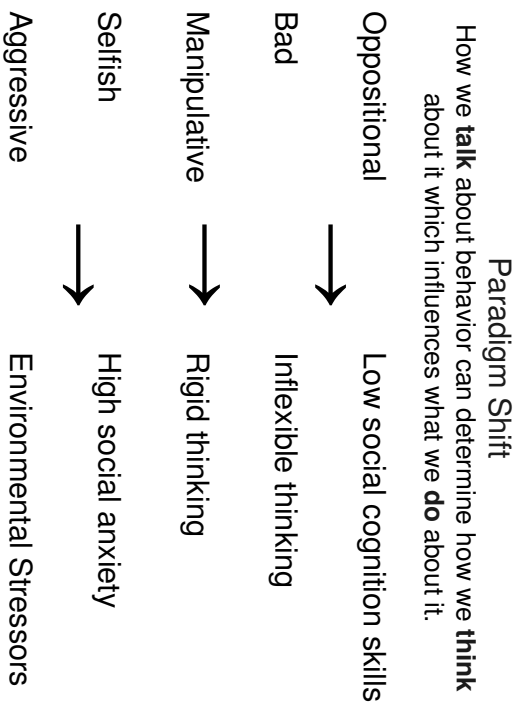
Performance Deficit

The student is able to engage in the desired behavior but fails to do so when specific conditions are present. For example: Jeff generally is able to control his temper when confronted by a peer. (“What’s your problem jerk”?) In some instances, however, outside factors influence his behavior (hunger fatigue, frustration) and override self-control.



Skill Deficit

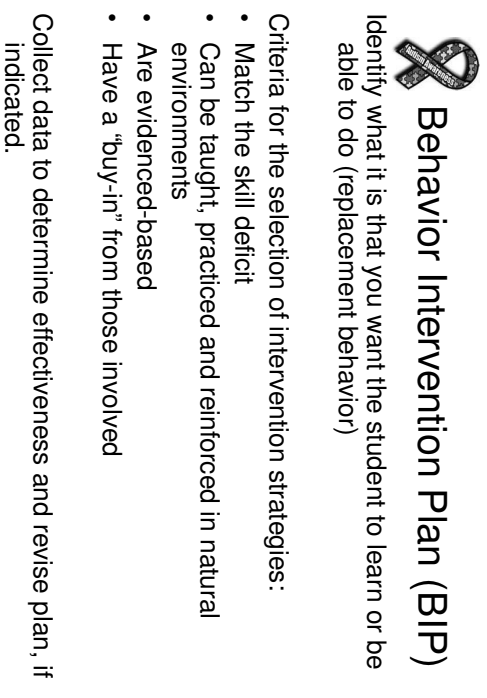
An inability to perform the appropriate behavior. Craig may not be able to discriminate exactly what behavior is expected of him within a particular social context. He may not see any relationship between what he is expected of him and what he wants to get out of the situation. OR He may be unable to deal with the competing emotional responses.



Selected Evidenced-Based Practices

- Social Stories
- Power Cards
- Incredible 5 point scale
- Video-modeling
- Priming
- Self-monitoring
- Visual Supports

Example



Social Stories™- Carol Gray

A Social Story™ presents social concepts and rules to the child in the form of a brief story. The focus of a social story is to explain and/or clarify something the child does not understand. (lack of knowledge or misunderstanding)

Components that enhance success:

- Written in response to a child's personal need
- Child wants to read the story
- Written at the child's ability and comprehension level
- Employs more descriptive and affirmative sentence than directive sentences.

Storymovies™





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Carol Gray
 Author - Social Stories™
 Mark Strainey
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Comic Strip Conversations

How can comic strip conversations be used?

- to convey important information
- for problem-solving and conflict resolution
- to learn social skills
- to follow simple classroom rules
- to communicate perspectives, feelings, and ideas

Elements of comic strip conversations

- a description of the event that caused the problem
- feelings and thoughts of everyone involved
- a solution to the problem and ideas on how to avoid it in the future
- reinforcement
- appropriate symbols (stick figures, smiley faces, thought bubbles)
- colors used to express feelings (green-happy, blue-sad, black-angry)

The more involved the child is in creating his or her own comic strip conversation, the more helpful it will be in future situations



Example
Jimmy reacts inappropriately when people in his environment use a loud voice. He created this comic strip conversation using characters from his favorite TV show to provide him with the appropriate response of "Ouch, that hurts my ears. Don't talk so loud, okay?" instead of Jimmy hitting the loud person in his environment.

Power Cards

A brief scenario is used to explain how the hero or special interest has encountered and solved the problem.



Then a POWER CARD (typically the size of a trading card or business card) is created and summarizes the strategy and contains a picture of the special interest. Is carried by the student as a reminder.



The Power Puff Girls Play a Game

The Power Puff Girls like to play games. Sometimes they win the game. When they win games the Power Puff Girls feel happy. They might smile; give each other a high five; or say, "Yay!" Sometimes they lose the game. When they lose games the PowerPuff Girls might not feel happy. They might take a deep breath; say, "Good job" totheir friend; or say, "Maybe next time."



The Power Puff Girls Play a Game

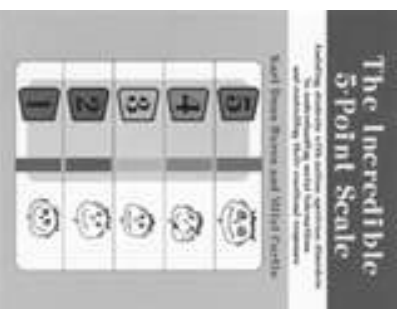
The Power Puff Girls want everyone to have fun playing games. They want you to

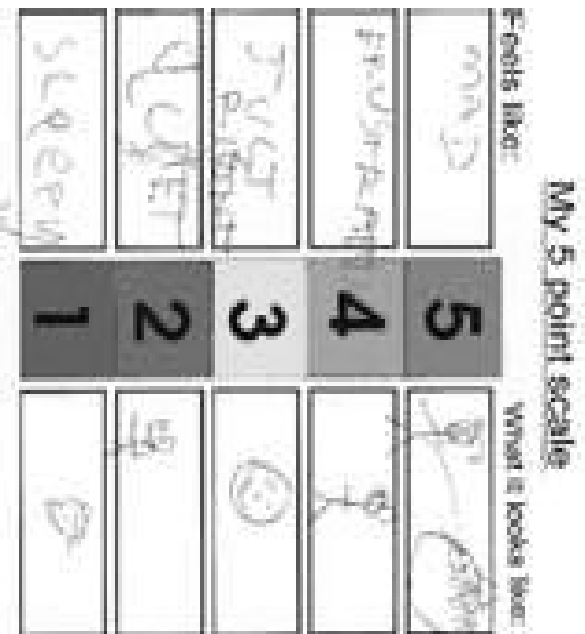
remember these three things when playing games the Power Puff way:

1. Games should be fun for everyone.
2. If you win a game, you can: Smile; give a high five; or say, "Yay!"
3. If you lose a game you can: Take a deep breath; say, "Good job" to your friend; or say, "Maybe next time."

Play games the Power Puff way and your friends will have fun playing games with you!

Incredible 5 Point Scale





Video Modeling

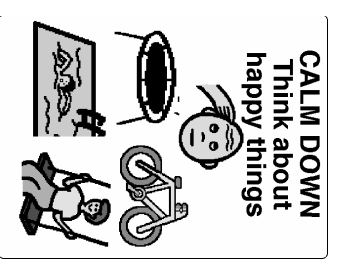
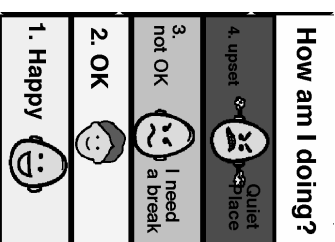
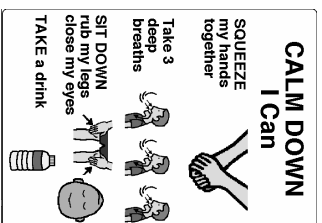


Video modeling involves watching a video demonstration and then imitating the behavior of the model.

- Incorporate visual learning
- Increases attention
- Decreases anxiety
- Increases motivation
- Increases self-awareness

Preparing Your Own Video

- Select a very specific, targeted skill
- Video the child engaged in the selected skill
- Edit the video to 3 or less minutes, only including footage of the child successfully engaged in the selected skill.



Video Modeling

There are some videos available commercially



Manners Videos for Social Skills Training



My School Day
C.D., Classroom
Social Skills,
Listening
Problem
Solving, Teasing
Bullying



Priming



- Rehearsal or practicing a skill prior to performing in a natural environment
- Priming does not teach new skills or behaviors, but it is a powerful strategy for activating skills and behaviors already in the behavioral repertoire (i.e. pictures, videos, modeling, social stories)



Self-Monitoring

- Typically involves the child recording the occurrences, duration and/or frequency of behaviors and the quality of the behavioral performance
- Primary goal is self-awareness, therefore a key component is to teach and reinforce the accuracy of the recording as opposed to a specific behavioral performance.



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