

TEACCH Autism Program: Learning Style of Autism and Program Overview

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Objectives - Day One



- Describe the learning styles of autistic individuals
- Recognize the core components of the TEACCH philosophy and program
- Explain the three principles of Structured TEACCHing



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Objectives - Day Two



- Recognize how informal assessment leads to individualized intervention strategies
- Explain how the application of Structured TEACCHing principles leads to improvements in flexibility and the generalization of skills across settings
- Learn about the TEACCH programs designed to help youth transition to adulthood

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Objectives - Day Three



- Describe strategies for improving the social communication skills of individuals with autism
- Explain the Structured TEACCHing approach to behavior management
- Share intervention strategies for improving emotional regulation skills

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Both “person-first” (i.e., “person with autism”) and “identity-first” (i.e., “autistic person”) terminology are used interchangeably because both are favored by different parts of the autism community. “Person-first” language attempts to focus on the person rather than their disability. “Identity-first” language acknowledges that some people feel autism is a central part of their identity. We use both “person-first” and “identity first” to be inclusive of the disability community as a whole. We use the language that is the individual’s preference.

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Clinical Services Across the Lifespan

- Diagnostic Evaluations
- Intervention Services:
 - Early Intervention (TEACCH for Toddlers)
 - Parent Teaching/Coaching
 - School-Aged Intervention Groups
 - Growing Living & Learning with Autism
 - Facing Your Fears
 - Transition Services (T-STEP)
 - Adult Counseling & Intervention Groups
- Community Workshops
- School Consultation Program
- Employment & Residential Consultation

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TEACCH Student & Professional Development Training Programs

- Student Clinical Practicum & Internships
 - Psychology
 - Social Work
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Speech Language Pathology
- Annual Conference
 - October 24-25, 2024
- Virtual Trainings
- 5 Day Classroom and Adult Training Model
- Professional Certification Program

Visit the TEACCH website: <https://teacch.com/trainings/> for additional information

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TEACCH Professional Certification Program

- A comprehensive Professional Certification Program for educators, psychologists, social workers, speech therapists and other service providers in the field of autism.
- Two levels of certification
 - TEACCH Certified Practitioner
 - TEACCH Advanced Consultant

Visit the TEACCH website: <https://teacch.com/trainings/teacch-professional-certification-program/> for additional information

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Research at TEACCH

Children

- TEACCH for Toddlers
- Facing Your Fears
- Growing Living & Learning with Autism (Group emotion regulation)
- DBT-ST group feasibility for autistic adults
- Primary Care and Mental Health Best Practices (Project ECHO)

Adolescents & Adults

- TEACCH School Transition to Employment & Post-Secondary Education Program (T-STEP) - Klinger
- HEELS 2 Participation: Improving community participation for young adults with I/DD - Tomaszewski
- Advancing the System of Care for Autistic Older Adults" designed to study health and mental health outcomes in autistic older adults. Klinger & Maddox
- Suicide Prevention for autistic adolescents and adults - Maddox

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University of North Carolina TEACCH Autism Program

TEACCH Intervention and Philosophy

Autism Independent UK, Kettering 2024



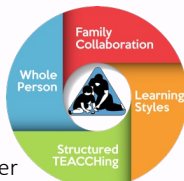
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Services Across the Lifespan

TEACCH Intervention Philosophy

- Family collaboration
- Culture of Autism:
 - learning styles and differences
- Strengths based approach:
 - visual supports
- Whole person view/life-long learner



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Parent Professional Collaboration

- Parents/caregivers know their child the best
 - Strengths, interests, and challenges
- As professionals, we know about autism in general and intervention strategies
- Together, mutually support one another
- Parent is likely to be the advocate in the long run

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Goals: Beginning Steps

1. Engagement
2. Learn new skills
3. Decrease behavior problems

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Goals: Lifelong Learner

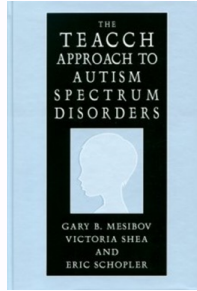
1. Independence
2. Flexibility
3. Generalization
4. Self Advocacy
5. Well-Being
 - Happy, healthy, self-efficacy, competence

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TEACCH

- Generalist training
- Evidence-based practice



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Curriculum

- Knowledge of autism
- Working with families
- Structured teaching
- Communication
- Social and leisure skills
- Self-help and domestic skills
- Academic skills
- Vocational skills and behaviors

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Learning Styles in Autism



Objectives of Presentation

- Understand the unique learning styles and symptoms of individuals with autism
- Understand the connection between learning styles, challenging behaviors and Evidenced-Based Practices of Structured TEACCHing strategies and visual supports.
- Develop and implement interventions based on individual's learning styles and developmental differences

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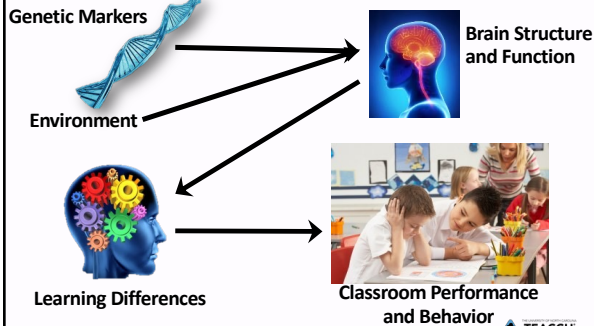
Autism: Understand the Culture of Autism

- Learning Styles
- Behaviors
- Strategies

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Current Understanding of Autism



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CDC Prevalence Data from the ADDM Network



- 2.8% of 8-year-old children in the US. Increase from 2.3% (1 in 44) in 2018
- 4% of boys and 1% of girls aged 8 years
- 49% evaluated by age 36 months; median age of diagnosis 49 months
- Black and Latine children are diagnosed, on average, 6 months to 2 years later

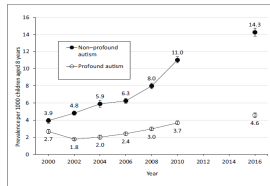
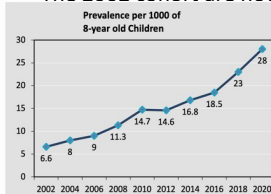
Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network
Maenner et al., 2023

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CDC Prevalence of Autism

- Rate of autism increased from 1 in 150 to 1 in 36.
- The 2002 cohort are now 29 years old.



ADDM Network estimates for overall autism prevalence in US over time. CDC website

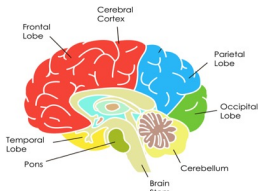
Huges et al (2023).

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Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Neurodevelopmental disorder – brain organized and functions differently
- Starts early in life but presentation of symptoms may be delayed



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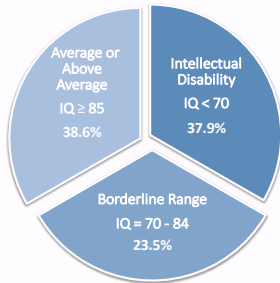
DSM-5: Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Social Communication
 - Deficits in social-emotional reciprocity
 - Deficits in nonverbal communicative behaviors
 - Deficits in developing and maintaining relationships
- Restricted, Repetitive Patterns of Behavior, Interests, or Activities
 - Stereotyped or repetitive speech, movements, or objects
 - Excessive adherence to routines, ritualized verbal or nonverbal behavior
 - Highly restricted, fixated interests (intensity or focus)
 - Hyper- or hypo-reactivity to sensory aspects of environment

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Intellectual Ability of Autistic Individuals

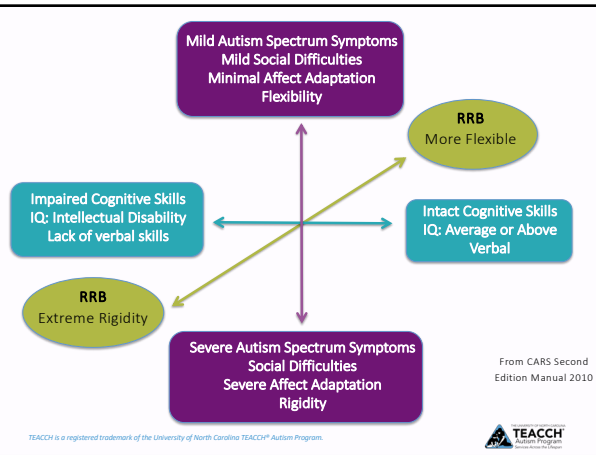


Decrease from 50% with an intellectual disability from the 2002 cohort.

Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network
Moenner et al., 2023

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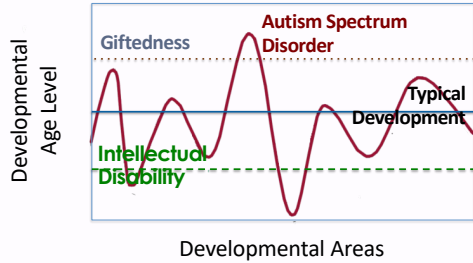




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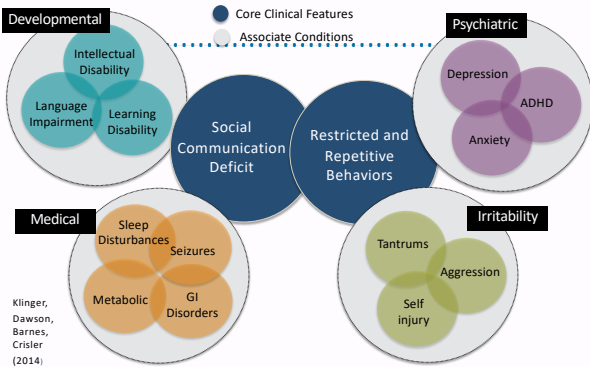
Uneven Patterns of Development



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DSM-5: Core Symptoms & Associated Conditions



Klinger, Dawson, Barnes, Crisler (2014)

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My Autism By George



Discussion Question

- What are some of George's strengths?
- What are some of George's symptoms of autism?

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**“Once you have met one person
with autism, you’ve met one person with autism”**

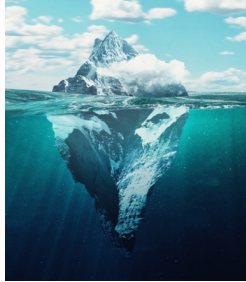
attributed to many including Stephen Shore

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Implications for Understanding Autism

- Individuals with autism learn differently
- Their learning differences can create unique strengths and challenges.
- Neurodiversity view that focuses on valuing strengths and supporting challenges



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Identify a Behavior Problem

WHY From the Perspective of Autism?

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Learning Styles of Autism

- Implicit learning
- Auditory processing
- Attention
- Executive functioning
- Social cognition

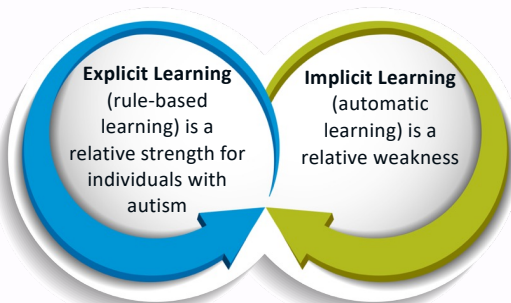


Learning Style	Strength	Weakness
Explicit Learning	Relative strength	Relative weakness
Implicit Learning	Relative weakness	Relative strength

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Learning Styles: Implicit Learning



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Learning Styles: Difficulty Learning Things Automatically

“Temple [Grandin] had longed for friends at school ...while they admired her intelligence, they never accepted her as part of their community. “I could never figure out what I was doing wrong. I had an odd lack of awareness that I was different. I could never figure out why I didn’t fit in.”
 Something was going on between the other kids, something swift, subtle, constantly changing-an exchange of meanings, a negotiation, a swiftness of understanding so remarkable that sometimes she wondered if they were all telepathic. ”

-Oliver Sacks writing about Temple Grandin

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Learning Styles: Implicit Learning

Difficulty with Generalization

- Trouble exhibiting the same skill across people, places and materials
- Knowing what to do based on prior learning or experiences

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Learning Style: Implicit Learning

IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING AND INTERVENTION

- Use **direct (explicit) instruction** to teach skills and to clarify what “to do”
 - Use **specific language**
 - Use **visual supports** to teach new skills
- Teach the use of visual strategies that **support generalization**
 - Use visual reminders to implement routine strategies
- Create narratives to **explain the “hidden” rules of social expectations.**

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Learning Styles: Auditory Processing

- Strength in visual processing
- Difficulty with abstract language (concrete or literal thinking)
- Delayed processing of language



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Auditory Processing: Temple Grandin



"I think in pictures. Words are like a second language to me. I translate both spoken and written words into full-color movies, complete with sound which run like a VCR tape in my head. When someone speaks to me, his words are instantly translated into pictures."

Thinking in Pictures

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Concrete or Literal Thinking

"Clean Your Room" – Take a moment and draw this statement



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Concrete or Literal Thinking

• **"Behave"** – one word, many meanings



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Learning Styles: Auditory Processing

IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING AND INTERVENTION

- Use **gestures**, meaningful **concrete examples**, and **visual instructions/supports**
- **Allow time to process** information and formulate a response



If you cannot draw it, it might be too abstract

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Learning Styles: Attention

- Sticky Attention (Central Coherence)

- Strong attention for high-interest
- Difficulty disengaging and shifting
- Problems seeing big picture

- Narrow Beam

- Strength in focusing on details and facts
- Difficulty determining relevant vs. irrelevant details



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Learning Styles: Attention

IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING AND INTERVENTION

- Organize and segment the environment to **engage and maintain attention**
- Use visual structure to **direct attention** to important and relevant information
- Use visual supports to **enhance meaning** and understanding of abstract concepts
- Use a variety of visual cues to help **disengage and shift attention**
- Incorporate **special interests** to engage attention

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Learning Styles: Executive Functioning

- Weak organizational skills
- Sequencing / planning
- Trouble with initiation
- Understanding “finished”
- Set shifting / flexibility
- Difficulty with transitions



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Implications of These Learning Differences?



Need predictability
Routines are predictable

But, routines can encourage rigidity
So.... **TEACH FLEXIBILITY**

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Learning Styles: Executive Functioning

IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING AND INTERVENTION

- Provide **visual sequences** of activities
- Develop and teach **organizational strategies**
- Teach routine strategies for **self-monitoring**

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Learning Styles: Social Cognition

- Joint attention
- Responding to other's emotions
- Theory of mind
 - Inability to understand that others have perspectives that are different from one's own.
- Double empathy problem (Milton, 2012)
 - Mutual misunderstandings in the autistic/non-autistic interaction

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Learning Styles: Social Cognition

IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING AND INTERVENTION

- Use visual cues to **support social understanding** and promote social interaction
 - Use social narratives to teach social understanding and clarify expectations
- Incorporate interests to **promote social engagement** and joint attention
- Directly teach about **emotion in self and others**

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Sensory Processing Impacts Learning

- Problems filtering and modulating input
 - Hyper-reactivity (over-stimulated)
 - aversion, avoidance, over-aroused
 - Hypo-reactivity (under-stimulated)
 - Sensory seeking
 - May not notice sensory input
- Difficulty dealing with open space

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Sensory Processing

IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING AND INTERVENTION

- Organize and segment the environment to decrease stimulation
- Provide calm and quiet spaces
- Schedule breaks throughout the day

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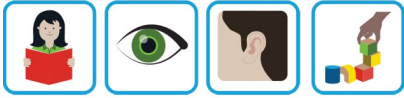
Summary: Learning Styles in Autism

Strengths

- Explicit learning
 - rules and routines
- Visual information
- Focus on details
- Restricted interests
- increased motivation

Weaknesses

- Intuitive (Implicit) learning
- Sticky attention
- Theory of mind
- Executive functioning
 - planning, organization, & time management



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Learning Styles in Autism Checklist

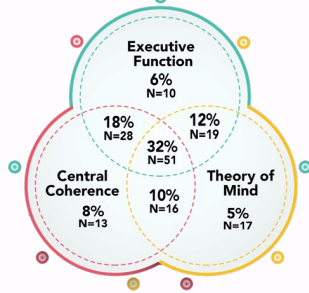
LEARNING STYLES IN AUTISM CHECKLIST: Learning Differences and Emotion Regulation Challenges In Autism
Definition: Check the characteristics that apply and make comments on observations regarding strengths and/or weaknesses.
 Note: Rarely will a student have all of these learning differences and emotion regulation challenges.

<p>Implicit Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't pick up on information intuitively (needs explicit instruction) <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with generalization <input type="checkbox"/> Strength in rule-based learning (pick to develop routines) <p>Sticky Visual Attention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Narrow focus of attention <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty disengaging and drifting attention including attending to relevant information <input type="checkbox"/> Strength in focusing on details <p>Executive Function (Organization & Time Management)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with planning, organizing, and sequencing tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with concept of finished <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Poor concept of time management <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with less structured tasks and/or environments <p>Language and Auditory Processing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty understanding verbal language <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with expressive communication, specificity <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete and literal understanding of meaning/abstract language <input type="checkbox"/> Delayed processing speed <input type="checkbox"/> Strength in visual processing <p>Social Cognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty taking another's perspective <input type="checkbox"/> Poor understanding of social rules <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty understanding and responding to other's emotions <p>Sensory and Perception Problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Over-responsive sensory information <input type="checkbox"/> Under-responsive to sensory information <p>Signs of Anxiety, Depression, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Asking repetitive questions <input type="checkbox"/> Affected by changes or unexpected events in environment 			Examples of Observed Learning Differences
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Percentage of Adolescents with Autism with Atypical Cognitive Performance



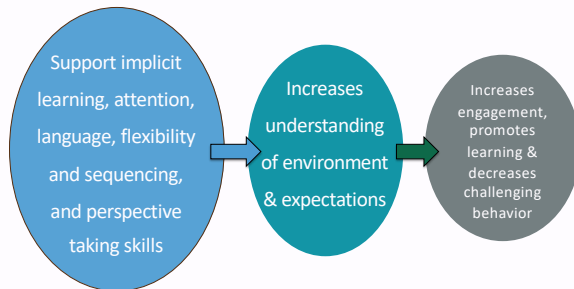
Atypical Performance:
 All 3 areas: 32%
 Two areas: 40%
 One area: 19%
 None: 9%

Francesca Happé research: Brunsdon et al. (2015)

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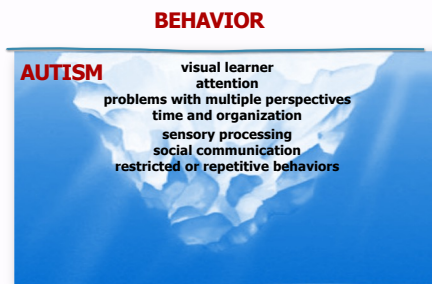
Supporting Learning Styles Reduces Challenging Behaviors



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Autism Framework to Interpret Challenging Behaviors



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Behavior

When it is time to go into the library, James is upset when he has to stop playing with his cars, cries, and drops to the ground.

Autism

visual learner: cannot understand verbal explanation of what is happening next
attention: difficulty disengaging and shifting attention
time and organization: does not know when he can play with cars again
multiple perspectives: problems with perspective taking
sensory processing: sensory sensitivities
restricted or repetitive behaviors: strong interest in cars

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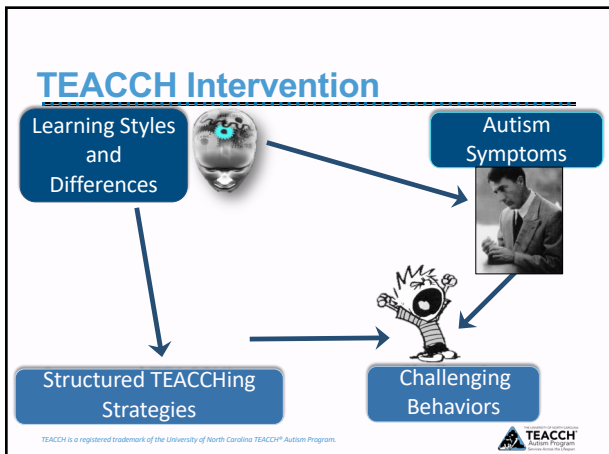
Identify a Behavior Problem for Your Client/Student

WHY From the Perspective of Autism?

visual learner
 attention
 problems with multiple perspectives
 time and organization
 sensory processing
 social communication
 restricted or repetitive behaviors

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Structured TEACCHING is...

- An evidenced-based practice approach.
- Based on the understanding of the symptoms and learning styles of individuals with autism and capitalizes on the individual's strengths.
- Uses strategies and visual supports to provide meaning and promote independence.



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Elements of Structured TEACCHing

- Individualized daily schedule
- Work/activity systems
- Material structure and visual supports
- Physical organization

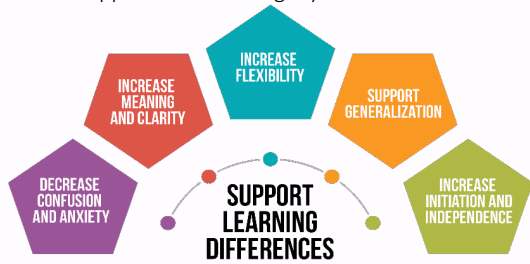


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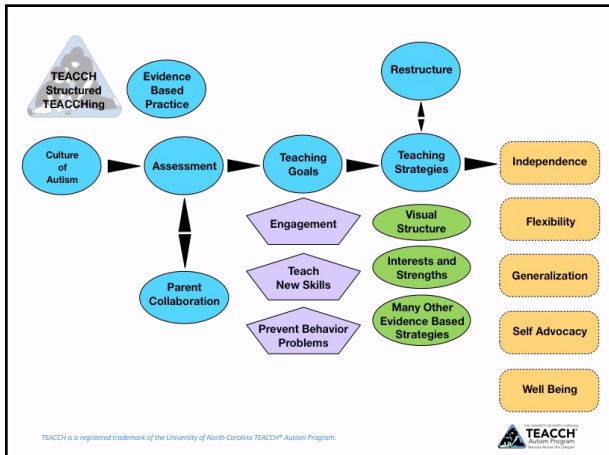
Structured TEACCHing as Intervention

Antecedent-based Approach
Supports the Learning Styles and Behaviors



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Structured TEACCHing

References

- Mesibov, G.B., Shea, V. & Schopler, E. (2005). The TEACCH Approach to Autism Spectrum Disorders. New York: Springer.
- Odom, S.L., Boyd, B., Hall, L. & Hume, K. Evaluation of Comprehensive Treatment Models for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 40: 425-436
- Mesibov, G.B., Shea, V. (2010). The TEACCH Program in the Era of Evidence-Based Practices. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 40: 570-579
- The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders – Evidence Based Practices
<http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices>

Group Discussion

- Name one learning style strength or challenge that you will take away from today's presentation

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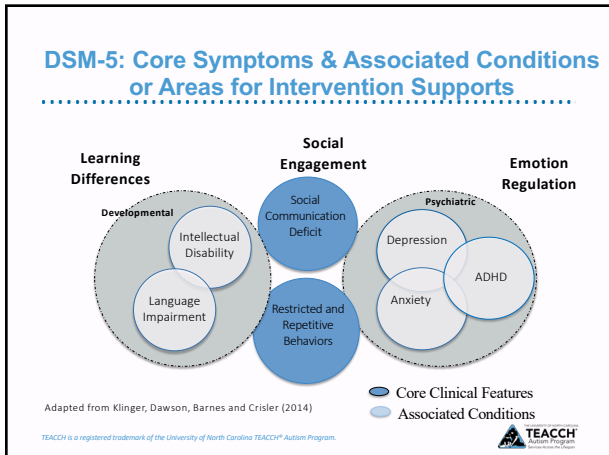
TEACCH Research: Understanding Autism, Integrating Structured TEACCHing with other Evidence Based Interventions and Focusing on Community Based Autism Independent UK, Kettering 2023





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Intervention Targets of Structured TEACCHing

- **Learning Styles:**
 - Focus attention on relevant information
 - Teach organization skills (time management)
 - Teach explicit routines (play, school, work)
- **Social Engagement Skills:**
 - Teach developmentally appropriate social skills (turn taking for toddlers, professional social skills for adults)
 - Teach ways to ask for help
- **Comorbid Anxiety/Depression:**
 - Teach emotion regulation (coping) skills that can be used at school, work, or home.

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Structured TEACCHing Across the Lifespan

Early Childhood Engagement

School-Age

Adolescent

Adult

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Early Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions (Child Directed ABA)

Early Start Denver Model for Young Children with Autism
Promoting Language, Learning, and Engagement
Sally J. Rogers and Geraldine Dawson

Family Implemented TEACCH for Toddlers
TEACCH strategies that fit into your day

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FITT: Structured TEACCHing for Toddlers

Goal is not independence but instead is to support and promote social engagement (attention)

- Schedules
 - Using objects to help children transition to new activity (e.g., giving a cup when it is time to go to highchair)
- Activity Systems
 - Embedding social goals (imitation, gesture) into structured activities at the table.
- Online Resources
 - Early Learning Activity Library (<http://fitt.fpg.unc.edu/early-learning-activities>)
 - Online professional training program



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Family Implemented TEACCH for Toddlers Online Course

modules.fpg.unc.edu/fitt/getting_started/

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School-Aged Interventions

- Predictable Routines to Provide Increased Organization and Support Emotion Regulation to Increase Learning

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Growing, Learning and Living with Autism (GoriLLA Group)

- Group psychotherapy
 - Organization/Routines (Structured TEACCHing)
 - Social Engagement (Social Thinking)
 - Self regulation (Zones of Regulation)

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Structured TEACCHing: Provides Organization in the Environment



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Social Engagement: Social Thinking™ Concepts

- Social Explorers Curriculum
 1. Thinking Thoughts and Feeling
 2. The Group Plan
 3. Thinking with our Eyes
 4. Body In the Group
 5. Whole Body Listening



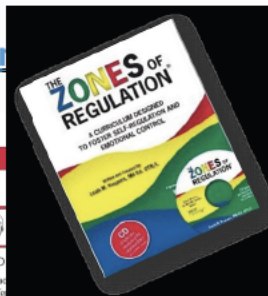
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Identifying Emotion

The ZONES of Regulation®

BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	Meltdown Tantrum Yelling/Crying Elated Out of Control

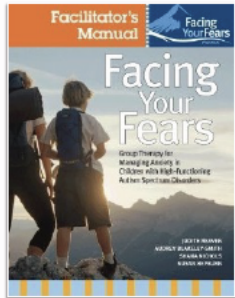


(Leah Kuypers)

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Emotion Regulation/Anxiety Interventions for School Aged Youth



Cognitive behavioral intervention to treat comorbid anxiety in 8-14 year-old youth with autism.

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Transition Interventions (Bridging the Gap Between High School and Adult Life)

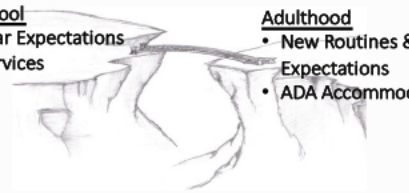
- Routine Strategies
- Professional Social Skills
- Emotional Regulation & Coping (CBT)

High School

- Familiar Expectations
- IEP Services

Adulthood

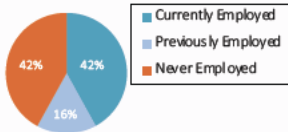
- New Routines & Expectations
- ADA Accommodations



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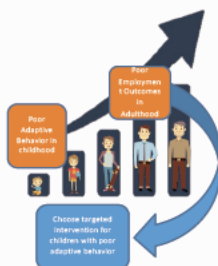


Improving Adult Quality of Life



Being Employed is Associated with:

- Higher quality of life
- Increased contact with friends
- Fewer symptoms of anxiety
- Fewer symptoms of depression



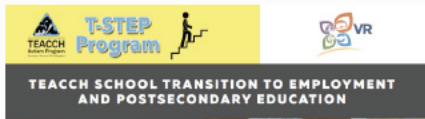
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What is a Good Quality of Life for Adults with Autism?

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Laura Klinger



Brianne Tomaszewski



Glenna Osborne

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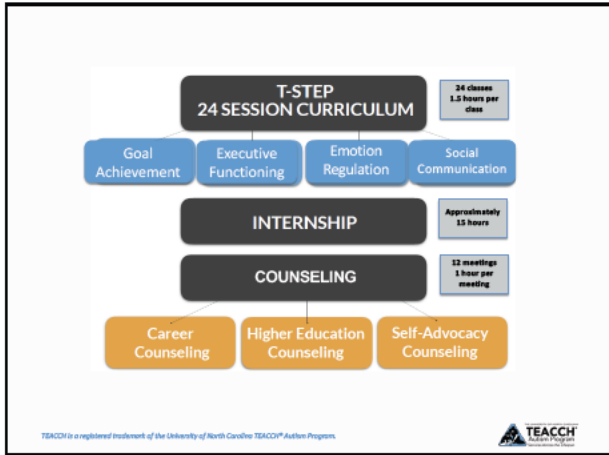


Strategies to Support Positive Adult Outcomes

- Goal Setting & Attainment
- Learning Styles (Executive Function & Attention):
 - Teach executive function (organization; time management)
 - Teach explicit routines (study skills, work routines)
- Social-Communication/Perspective Taking:
 - Teach professional social skills
 - Teach ways to ask for help
- Emotion Regulation:
 - Teach coping skills skills for school, work, & home.

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TEACCH Toolkit for Empowering Employees with Autism, Managers, and Mentors

Laura Klinger

Brianne Tomaszewski

Michael Chapman

C. Felix Harvey Foundation

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Work Together NC helps individuals find the community supports they need to transition and thrive as adults. This might include finding a job or a place to volunteer, postsecondary education, housing, social and recreational opportunities, and more.

Work Together NC

Possibility to Opportunity

Work Together NC uses the *Collective Impact Framework* to support collaboration between self advocates, employers, service providers, and others involved in the transition to adulthood for people with ID/DD.

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Project ECHO: Supporting Rural Providers in North Carolina: Teleconsultation



Nicole Dreiling



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Summary

- Understanding autism, the learning style and comorbidities informs intervention.
- Targeted interventions focused on organization skills (executive function), social engagement skills, and emotion regulation skills are used across the lifespan.
- A growing number of evidence-based interventions incorporate components of each of these targeted intervention areas from toddlers through adulthood.
- Training future professionals and community providers to increase access to evidence-based interventions.

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References

<p>Research Report Examining the Feasibility and Fit of Family Implemented TEACCH for Toddlers in Rural Settings Heather Coleman¹, Kara Hume², Leslie Fanning², and Samantha Scott²</p>	<p>Research Report Proficiency Efficacy of Family Implemented TEACCH for Toddlers: Effects on Parents and Their Toddlers with Autism Spectrum Disorder Susan Taylor Brown¹, Sara Rame², Brian A. Reid², Monica Kuhn²</p>	<p>Journal Article Mental health Project ECHO Autism: Increasing access to community mental health services for autistic individuals Nicole Dreiling¹, Michael L. Cook, Betsy Lavantho and Laura Gruber-Klinger</p>
<p>Journal Article Training Clinicians to Deliver Group CBT to Manage Anxiety in Youth With ASD: Results of a Multisite Trial Judy Davine and Eric J. Mandi</p>	<p>Journal Article A pilot study of dialectical behaviour therapy skills training for autistic adults Lisa K. Maxwell¹, Lisa Gray² and Bethan B. Stokell²</p>	<p>Journal Article Gorilla group, Nowell et al., 2018</p>

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LEARNING STYLES IN AUTISM CHECKLIST: Learning Differences and Emotion Regulation Challenges In Autism

Instructions: Check the characteristics that apply and make comments on observations regarding strengths and/or weaknesses.

Note: Rarely will a student have all of these learning differences and emotion regulation challenges.

Learning Differences	Implicit Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't pick up on information intuitively (needs explicit instruction) <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with generalization <input type="checkbox"/> Strength in rule-based learning (quick to develop routines)		Examples of Observed Learning Difference(s)
	Sticky Visual Attention <input type="checkbox"/> Narrow focus of attention <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty disengaging and shifting attention including attending to relevant information <input type="checkbox"/> Strength in focusing on details		
	Executive Function (Organization & Time Management) <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with planning, organizing, and sequencing tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with concept of finished <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Poor concept of time management <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with less structured tasks and/or environments		
	Language and Auditory Processing <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty understanding verbal language <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty with expressive communication; specify _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete and literal understanding of meaning/abstract language <input type="checkbox"/> Delayed processing speed <input type="checkbox"/> Strength in visual processing		
	Social Cognition <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty taking another's perspective <input type="checkbox"/> Poor understanding of social rules <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty understanding and responding to other's emotions		
Behavior and Emotion Regulation	Sensory and Perception Problems <input type="checkbox"/> Over-responsive sensory information <input type="checkbox"/> Under-responsive to sensory information		
	Signs of Anxiety, Depression, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Asking repetitive questions <input type="checkbox"/> Affected by changes or unexpected events in environment		