Autism Spectrum Disorder Webinar Series

This presentation is a collaborative effort between the following:

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Low Tech Engagement for High Tech Classrooms

Strategies to increase engagement for young children with Autism
Learner Objectives

- Identify barriers to engagement
- Awareness of how engagement and participation looks for children with Autism
- Review of research based strategies
- Application and use of Learning Guidelines
- Strategies for planning increase engagement

The classroom has changed:

- Smart boards
- Promethean Boards
- IPads
- Smart Phones
- E readers
- Audio Books
- You Tube...
Teaching has changed:

- Online Assessments
- Online Curriculum
- Expectations for using Technology in Classrooms
- The COST of the technology in your classroom

Kids have changed?

- What we know:
  - Children with Autism are visual learners
  - Participation of children with Autism “looks” different than their typical peers
  - All children are exposed to more and more technology
  - Technology can be a great learning tool (when used with structure and purpose)
RESEARCH Shows

- Active engagement is critical for academic and social outcomes for students with and without disabilities (Carter, Sisco, Brown, Brickham, & Al-Khabbaz, 2008; Holifield, Goodman, Hazelkom, & Heflin, 2010; Iovanne, Dunlap, Huber, & Kincaid, 2003; Klem & Connell, 2004)

- Federal legislation of No Child Left Behind (2002) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) emphasize high expectations and active engagement as critical factors for student learning achievement. While other factors influence student outcomes, these two factors are particularly important because supporting students’ academic engagement is critical as it is directly related to learning and, therefore, improved academic and post secondary outcomes (Carter et al., 2008; Iovanne et al., 2003).

What is Engagement?

- High levels of Engagement = Increase in LEARNING
  - Attending to Learning tasks
  - Maintaining “on-task” behaviors for a predetermined period of time
  - Looks like:
    - Calm body
    - eye gaze/eye contact
    - Body oriented to the task
    - Responding to the task; Participation looks different for children with Autism
What lack of Engagement looks like

- Is it Challenging Behavior or Lack of engagement?
  - Turning away from speaker
  - Laying on the floor
  - Talking off topic

Reasons for lack of Engagement

- Child could...
  - be bored, the work is too easy
  - not understand the expectations
  - be frustrated, the work is too hard

- Teacher is responsible for reviewing the lesson vs. blaming the students behavior
Research-Based Strategies

- Joint engagement and Joint attention activities
- Structured Tasks
- Structured work times (Individual, Small group and Large Group)
- Systematic and planned interactions
- Opportunities for Imitation
- Differentiated Instruction
- Repetition and Routine
- Opportunities for participation – Interactive
- Clear expectations – how to act in group

Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

I. Provide Multiple Means of Representation
   1. Provide options for perception:
      1.1. Offer ways of receiving the display of information
      1.2. Offer alternatives for auditory information
      1.3. Offer alternatives for visual information
   2. Provide options for language, mathematical expressions, and symbols:
      2.1. Clarify vocabulary and symbols
      2.2. Clarify syntax and structure
      2.3. Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, and symbols
      2.4. Promote understanding across languages
   3. Provide options for engagement:
      3.1. Activate or supply background knowledge
      3.2. Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships
      3.3. Guide information processing, visualization, and manipulation
      3.4. Maximize transfer and generalization

II. Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression
   4. Provide options for physical action:
      4.1. Vary the methods for response and navigation
      4.2. Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies
   5. Provide options for perception:
      5.1. Use multiple media for communication
      5.2. Use multiple methods for construction and composition
      5.3. Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance
   6. Provide options for executive functions:
      6.1. Guide appropriate goal-setting
      6.2. Support planning and strategy development
      6.3. Facilitate managing information and resources
      6.4. Enhance capacity for monitoring progress
      6.5. Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence

III. Provide Multiple Means of Engagement
   7. Provide options for participation:
      7.1. Optimize individual choice and autonomy
      7.2. Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
      7.3. Minimize threats and distractions
   8. Provide options for self-regulation:
      8.1. Promote expectations and beliefs that optimize motivation
      8.2. Promote personal coping skills and strategies
      8.3. Optimize individual choice and autonomy
      8.4. Enhance self-awareness and reflection

Planning for Group Instruction

Ask your self these Questions:

- Are there ways I can make the idea more concrete?
- How can I create opportunities for meaningful participation?
- How can I make the lesson more visual?
- How can I offer an auditory learning experience?
- Are there any community-based learning opportunities to tie into my topic or theme?

(Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2007)

Features of Group Instruction that Promote Engagement in Students with ASD

The theme and activities need to be:

- reinforcing to the students
- age and developmentally appropriate
- concrete, real objects or activities
- visual representations of objects and actions
- multiple opportunities for students to have “hands- on”
- combination of familiar and novel activities and vocabulary
- highly structured with a clear beginning, middle and ending
- occur with relative frequency to create a sense of predictability and familiarity
- natural reinforcer as a terminating event

How can we get kids with Autism ENGAGED in learning?

- Think Old School
  - Popsicle sticks and Velcro
  - Finger plays
  - Reading and acting out books and nursery rhymes
  - Participation opportunities
  - Functional Jobs
  - Felt Board Stories

Strategies

- Finger plays and Felt Board
Finger Play and Felt Board

Strategies

- White board with Name tags
- More and Less
White board and name tags: More and Less

Strategies

- CORE words and Communication
CORE Words and Communication

Strategies

- Joint Engagement and Joint Attention
Joint Engagement to Joint Attention

Strategies

- Attendance Participation
Attendance Participation

Strategies

- Adapted Books
Adapted books

Adapted Books
Strategies

- Structured Teaching: Independent work
Strategies

- Theme based: Hands on Learning

Work Time: Building Theme
In Conclusion

- Active Engagement is important and achievable for all students
- Using a balance of “Old School” techniques and technology in a classroom enhances the students opportunity for learning
- Children with Autism need planned and systematic opportunities for engagement throughout their day.

References

- CAST  http://www.cast.org/udl/index.html