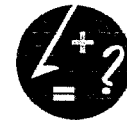


DIFFERENT ROADS
TO LEARNING

Autism
Spectrum
Disorders

Lester B. Pearson
School Board



Commission Scolaire
Lester-B.-Pearson

Autism Spectrum Disorder Newsletter
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Auditory KODAK moments

These amusing vignettes help us all to remember the unique perspective of a child with an ASD. As good as theories and strategies appear, they do not always translate into perfect interventions. These funny tidbits also remind us that sometimes students themselves can come up with some very creative solutions.

Initiating Requests: By now, you have all heard about how important this communication skill is. We work tirelessly to encourage students to independently express their needs and their wants. "Janice" mastered this skill... kind of. Janice was walking down the hallway with her books and a bunch of markers. Every few steps, a few markers would fall to the floor. After having to stop and pick up her materials a few times, Janice stood up, contemplated for a few moments and then spontaneously verbalized, "I want pockets please!"

Children come up with their own solutions: "Brad" had difficulty controlling his language. When he was angry, some very colourful, inappropriate language came out of his mouth. The resource

teacher met with Brad and told him, "Those bad words cannot come out of your mouth. They need to stay in your head." Brad pondered this solution for a few minutes, and then responded, "I can't keep them in my head." Brad then proceeded to spit / blow the bad words into his hands and put them in his pockets. Inappropriate language was no longer a problem.

Self-Regulation: "Jason" was also learning to monitor and filter his language. His solution was to "self-beep" himself, just like they do on TV. Instead of swearing, Jason would say, "You are a BEEP- BEEP- BEEP"

Initiating and responding to greetings: This is a social skill that we are constantly working on with our students. Upon my departure, I said to "Cindy," "Bye, see you later." The integration aide then prompted Cindy by saying, "What do you say when someone says see you later?" Cindy's response: "Alligator."

Processing: A number of our students have difficulties with language processing. The information is there in their heads, but it's hard for them to retrieve it. "Justin", for

example, had fallen while playing outside. While holding his knee, Justin expressed, "I hurt my...my... my leg's elbow."

Preparing students for transitions: Clearly defining the end of a task and providing warnings is a good way to prevent frustration and increase compliance, right? Meet "Kyle" who loves to write. The teacher warned Kyle, "One more sentence and then writing is finished." Kyle innocently reached for an eraser and replied, "Oops, I made a mistake." Kyle then proceeded to erase the period at the end of his sentence and create a never-ending run-on sentence using the words "and then...and then..."

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QUOTE

"If it is important to heap compliments and focus on building self-esteem in the quiet periods, it is one hundred times more important

to do the same during the hairy periods.”

Anne Addison

Occupational therapy Corner

A sensory diet is a prescribed combination of activities and environmental accommodations that are designed to meet an individual's sensory needs. It can include a formal schedule of sensory activities, a variety of sensory activities embedded into the individual's daily routine, structural adaptations of the individual's environment, specific leisure activities, and suggestions to implement during interactions. Short term goals to implement a sensory diet for a student with autism may include: facilitating optimal levels of arousal throughout the day, decreasing self-stimulatory behaviors, preventing uncomfortable reactions to sensory input as well as sensory overloads. On a long term basis, it is geared towards helping the child understand his/her sensory needs, teaching him/her self-regulation (i.e. appropriately seeking sensory input in order to facilitate optimal levels of arousal and support behavioral regulation), and improving the organization of the child's nervous system, which in turn will enhance occupational performance and quality of life.

Center of Excellence

Two resource teachers, Lynn Stewart from Riverview, Cheryl Wallace-Sevak from Spring Garden and a consultant for special needs, Gretta Goven, attended the workshop, “How to Reduce Anxiety in Children with Autism” in Ottawa on February 13 and 14, 2003.

Q. What is functional analysis?

A Procedures that test a relationship by manipulating the variables thought to trigger the behavior in order to verify a functional relationship.

Next time: What is generalization?

ASD Website

Visit our Website at www.lbpsb.qc.ca and scroll down to Autism Spectrum Disorders Network. Click on the **Contact** page to see the Centre of Excellence team of professionals who are available for consultation via phone, e-mail or school visits. Click on **Links** for access to numerous English- and French language sites.

Library

We have been accumulating many new books. The following are new ones that are available to you by contacting one of the ASD Team members.

- 1) *Comic Strip Conversations.*
- 2) *Teaching Children with Autism to Mind-Read.*
- 3) *The Out-of-Sync Child Has Fun.*
- 4) *Autism with Severe Learning Difficulties.*
- 5) *Maxwell's Manor: A Social Language Game.*

Speech and Language Tip of the Month.

By now, I hope you have stopped bombarding your students with questions (the ones that you already know the answers to) and you have reduced your verbal prompts. Hopefully your students are now initiating more language. They may, however, be “stuck” in only using language to request something that they want. Here is a list of other communicative functions your

students should be using. You could model and practice these types of initiations. Although the examples are in sentences, single word models could also be used for students with limited language.

- Questions-“What’s that?”
- Declaratives-“I went to a movie last night.”
- Directives-“Pick up the ball.”
- Offers/shares-“Here, this is for you.”
- Comments-“Look at that!”
- Compliments-“I like your haircut.”
- Greetings-“Good morning.”
- Suggestions-“Let’s play on the slide.”
- Show off-“Look at me.”

Autism Spectrum Disorders Team

Welcome to Dr. Andrew Bennett, psychologist, to Student Services and the ASD Team.

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Questions or requests to the Center of Excellence from other school boards should be directed to the ASD team co-ordinators.