

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge that Lester B. Pearson School Board is located on the unceded territory of the Kanien'keha:ka People. Lester B. Pearson School Board honours, recognizes, and respects the Kanien'keha:ka people as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

SHIFTS IN PERCEPTIONS OF INTERVENTIONS

As more becomes known about ASD, practices adapt and change to better suit the needs of autistic individuals. Interventions which seemed appropriate in the past have been replaced with approaches that affirm and promote neurodiversity. Some of these changes are explained below:

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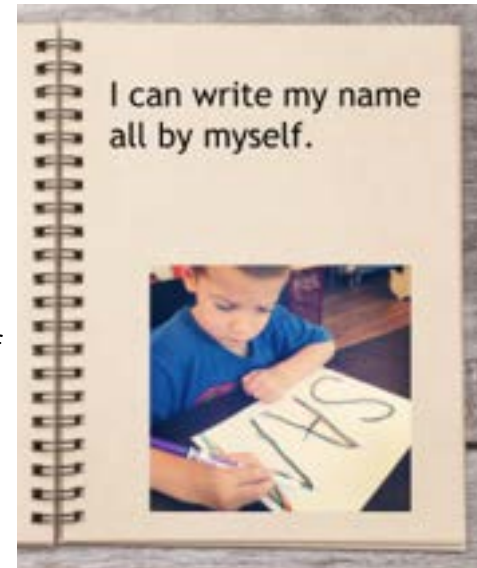
	What we used to do...	What we do now...
Eye Contact	Eye contact was viewed as a necessary part of social interaction. Autistic individuals were often prompted to look people in the eye when communicating.	Eye contact can be difficult and overwhelming for autistic individuals and should not be required for communication.
Scripting	Scripting was viewed as non-functional language and was often interrupted and re-directed.	Scripting is functional. We now understand that many autistic children learn language in chunks of words or full sentences, and we should look for meaning in their scripts.
Sensory Issues	Sensory issues would sometimes be addressed through exposure therapy. An autistic person with sound sensitivities would be exposed to loud environments to build tolerance.	Sensory issues are a common challenge experienced by autistic individuals. Special accommodations can be made to make environments more sensory-friendly.



TEACHER TIP



As we learn more about autism, we deepen our understanding of the factors that can influence behavior. One of the elements that is important to consider is how the individual perceives themselves. There are some individuals who may find themselves in a loop of negative self-talk, focusing on their weaknesses. When we notice that this is occurring, it is important to try to catch the individual being successful and bring their attention to this moment. The success could be academic, social, or emotional. For example, the student may write their name accurately, help a friend, or even stay calm in a difficult situation. Not only is it important to bring attention to this success in the moment, but such achievement can also be preserved in a more permanent manner. For example, a scrapbook of the student's successes could be made. This allows the student to look back on and remember achievements when their negative thoughts begin. The goal is to change their internal dialogue to something more positive. The scrapbook could include pictures of the student engaging in these successful behaviors, and then labeling what the behavior is. The student could be involved in making the book and even coming up with the label for what is happening in the picture or photo.



LISTEN TO THIS

Autism Canada is a non-profit organization established in 2015 (after a merger of Autism Society Canada and the Autism Canada Foundation). Its' mission is to advocate, educate, and support autistic individuals, their families, and their service providers living in Canada. Their website is: <https://autismcanada.org/>. One of the services of Autism Canada is the podcast *Sharing the Spectrum* which is an enlightening series of recordings by various experts, educators, and autistic individuals. Topics include parenting, schooling, employment, transitions, late diagnosis, and many other relevant subjects. One highly recommended recording is: *The Benefits of Looking at Autism from a Developmental Perspective* by Sue Simmons. Each *Sharing the Spectrum* podcast is between 30 and 60 minutes long and all are available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts. They can also be accessed through this link: <https://autismcanada.org/resources/sharing-the-spectrum-podcast/>.

SHARING THE SPECTRUM



ASD TEAM MEMBERS

PATRICIA ASSOUD
Consultant for Inclusive Education

Dr. ANDREW BENNETT
Coordinator/Psychologist

JENNIFER BOOTH
Consultant for Autism

PATTY CLORAN
Coordinator/Consultant for Autism
(On leave)

KATIE COHENE, PhD
Coordinator/Consultant for Autism

SASHA DESMARAIS-ZALOB
Consultant for Autism

OLIVIA DI MARINO
Occupational Therapist

DATEVIG ETYEMEZIAN
Consultant for Autism

JADE LAWSANE
Consultant for Autism

ILANA LOGGIA
Consultant for Autism (On leave)

NATALIE MONGEAU
Consultant for Autism

HELENE PACKMAN
Speech & Language Pathologist

KIM SEGAL
Consultant for Autism

EITHNE SHEERAN
Consultant for Autism

The Centre of Excellence for Autism Spectrum Disorder Presents:

INTEROCEPTION, THE 8TH SENSE: THE SCIENCE OF HOW WE EACH UNIQUELY FEEL

****OPQ ACCREDITED CONFERENCE****

Interoception is an important sensory system that helps us to feel internal body signals like a full bladder, a growling stomach, tense muscles, or a speeding heart. Research indicates that our ability to clearly notice and interpret these internal body signals enables us to accurately identify and manage how we feel: Are we anxious? Getting frustrated? Hungry? Full? In pain? Needing the bathroom?

Interoception differences are commonly experienced by autistic people and can have a significant impact on their quality of life. This course will provide an overview of what the latest research tells us about interoception, as well as how this important sense influences our ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and/or communicate how we feel. An evidence-based framework for supporting interoception connection will be shared, including multiple strategies for nurturing the 3 main aspects of interoceptive awareness: body, emotion, action.



Kelly Mahler OTD, OTR/L

Kelly Mahler OTD, OTR/L, earned a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy from Misericordia University, Dallas, PA. She has been an occupational therapist for 20 years, serving school-aged children and adults. Kelly is winner of multiple awards, including the 2020 American Occupational Therapy Association Emerging and Innovative Practice Award & a Mom's Choice Gold Medal. She is an adjunct faculty member at Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA as well as at Misericordia University, Dallas, PA. Kelly is a co-principal investigator in several research projects pertaining to topics such as interoception, self-regulation, trauma & autism.



April 25, 2024



Live webinar

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