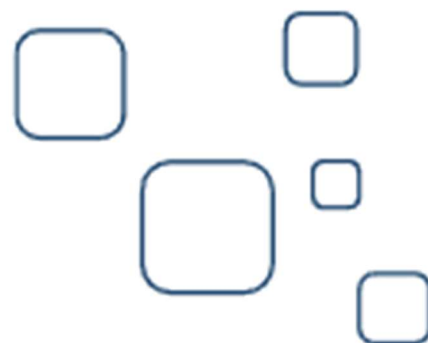


Ready 4Schoo^l



LESSON PLANS

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Educational Toolkit Lesson 1:

Following Classroom Rules

Age range: 4-6 years old

Lesson duration: 45 - 60 minutes

Overview & Purpose

Classroom rules in preschool are critical to providing a safe and nurturing environment for young children as they embark on their educational journey. These rules are a foundation for establishing clear expectations and guidelines for student behavior, promoting positive conduct, responsibility, and respect toward others in the classroom. In preschool, the rules are often tailored to the developmental needs of young children, with a strong focus on fostering social-emotional learning. This means that rules are designed to help children learn how to communicate, share, take turns, use kind words, and be attentive listeners. By following these guidelines, preschoolers can develop the social skills they need to interact positively with their peers, build strong relationships, and develop healthy self-esteem. The rules also help create a sense of structure and routine in the classroom, providing children with a sense of security and stability essential for their overall well-being.

Objectives

1. Understand the importance of following classroom rules for their safety and well-being.
2. Develop social skills such as communication, sharing, taking turns, using kind words, and being attentive listeners.
3. Learn to respect others in the classroom and follow the guidelines provided by the teacher.
4. Develop responsibility towards their learning environment and their behavior.
5. Understand the consequences of not following classroom rules and the impact it has on their peers and the learning environment.

Materials Needed

- Picture books about following rules and respecting others
- Visual aids such as posters or charts with pictures of classroom rules
- Role-playing materials such as dress-up clothes or puppets for demonstrating examples of rule-following



- Small toys or manipulatives for practicing turn-taking and sharing
- Writing and coloring materials for creating individualized classroom rule charts
- Audio or video resources such as songs or videos that reinforce the importance of following rules in a fun and engaging way.

Teaching Activity

- Introduction (5 mins)
 - Gather the children in a circle and ask them if they know the rules and why we have them.
 - Discuss the importance of rules and how they help keep us safe and happy.
- Books and Posters (15 mins)
 - Read a story about following rules and respecting others, such as “David Goes to School” by David Shannon.
 - Show pictures of classroom rules on posters and discuss each rule with the children.
 - Ask them why they think the rule is essential.
- Role-Playing (15 mins)
 - Use dress-up clothes or puppets to demonstrate examples of rule-following. For example, take turns pretending to be the teacher and the student and act out different scenarios where following the rules is essential.
- Turn-Taking and Sharing (10 mins)
 - Provide small toys or manipulatives and have the children practice taking turns and sharing.
- Individualized Rule Charts (10 mins)
 - Provide each child with writing and coloring materials and ask them to create their individualized classroom rule chart.
 - Encourage them to include pictures and words representing the rules they learned during the lesson.
- Audio or Video Resources (5 mins)
 - Play a fun and engaging song or video reinforcing the importance of following rules.
- Conclusion (5 minutes)
 - Gather children back in the circle and review what they learned about classroom rules.
 - Encourage children to use their skills in everyday situations.



Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):

- **Post Classroom Rules:** Display clear and concise classroom rules in a positive and visually appealing way (e.g., picture charts, short rhymes).
- **Review Rules Regularly:** Review classroom rules at the beginning of the year, after breaks, and whenever a reminder seems necessary.
- **Use Positive Language:** Phrase rules positively, focusing on what you want students to do (e.g., "Use walking feet inside" instead of "Don't run").
- **Daily Routines:** Establish consistent daily routines and post visual schedules to help students anticipate what comes next and feel comfortable within the structure.
- **Transitions:** Clearly signal transitions between activities using visual or auditory cues (e.g., bells, songs) and provide clear instructions for transitions.
- **"Catch" Them Following Rules:** Actively praise and acknowledge students when they are following the rules. This positive reinforcement strengthens desired behaviors.
- **Positive Role Models:** Model the expected behavior yourself and encourage students to help each other follow the rules.
- **Whole-Class Rewards:** Implement a system for whole-class rewards when students collectively follow the rules for a designated period.
- **Focus on Positive Interactions:** Build positive relationships with students and create a supportive classroom climate.
- **Choice and Control:** Offer students some choice or control whenever possible (e.g., choosing a seat for independent work).
- **Conflict Resolution Skills:** Teach students basic conflict resolution skills so they can navigate disagreements without breaking the rules.

Remember: Tier 1 strategies are implemented for all students in the classroom. The goal is to create a transparent, predictable, and positive learning environment where following rules becomes a natural part of the routine.

Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):



- Pre-teach rules with visuals and simple language.
- Post visual reminders of rules around the classroom.
- Ensure consistent enforcement of rules by all adults.
- Praise and acknowledge following rules.
- Use positive phrasing when giving instructions (e.g., "Walk feet" instead of "Don't run").
- Redirect the child's behavior to the expected behavior when a rule is broken. Offer choices whenever possible.
- Establish clear routines and schedules for the day.
- Break down complex activities into smaller, more manageable steps with clear instructions.
- Offer wait time after giving instructions before expecting a response.
- Teach children self-regulation skills, such as deep breathing exercises or counting to calm down.
- Practice following directions through games or activities to reinforce this skill in a fun way.
- Engage in role-playing scenarios where children can practice following rules and the positive consequences that result.

These Tier 2 strategies can be used in conjunction with Tier 1 strategies to create a well-rounded approach to helping children learn to follow rules. Tier 1 strategies are generally implemented in the classroom for all students, while Tier 2 strategies are used for children who need additional support.

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

- **Identify Specific Challenges:** Work with the child to identify specific challenges they face following rules. Is it difficult to understand the rule itself? Trouble with transitions? Sensory overload?
- **Individualized Rule Charts:** Create individualized rules with visuals and clear, concise language tailored to the child's needs. Use pictures, icons, or even simple drawings to represent the rule.



- Social Stories: Develop social stories that explain the importance of following rules and the consequences of not following them. These stories can be personalized with the child's name and specific classroom situations.
- Pre-correction: Remind the child of the expected behavior calmly and positively before a potentially challenging situation arises. This proactive approach can help prevent rule-breaking behavior.
- Social Skills Instruction: Provide targeted social skills instruction, particularly focusing on skills like turn-taking, listening attentively, and following instructions.
- Time-in/Time-out with Choices: Implement a modified time-out system where the child can choose a calming activity during a short break to regain composure. This gives them a sense of control and reduces their association with punishment.
- Token Economy: Implement a token economy system where the child earns tokens to follow the rules. These tokens can then be exchanged for preferred activities or rewards.
- "Catch them Being Good": Actively seek opportunities to praise the child for following rules, even seemingly small ones. This positive reinforcement strengthens desired behaviors.
- Choice Boards: Offer choice boards with two or three acceptable options for the child to choose from before an activity. This provides some level of control and reduces the likelihood of resistance.
- Structured Environment: Provide a structured classroom environment with clear routines and expectations.
- Sensory Modifications: If sensory overload contributes to rule-breaking behavior, explore modifications like noise-canceling headphones, fidget tools, or access to calming areas.

Remember: Tier 3 interventions are more intensive than Tier 1 or 2 and may involve collaboration with specialists. The goal is to provide targeted support that helps the child understand expectations, develop coping mechanisms, and build a successful track record of following rules.

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

Tier 4 instruction focuses on highly individualized and intensive support for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or other disabilities who require significant help following rules. Here are some strategies to consider:



- **Immediate and Frequent Reinforcement:** Use immediate and frequent positive reinforcement (e.g., praise, preferred toys, high fives) for even small attempts at following rules.
- **Pairing with Preferred Activities:** Pair following rules with highly preferred activities to increase motivation. For example, allow access to a favorite toy or activity only after a rule is followed.
- **Visual Schedules and Routines:** Create highly visual schedules using pictures or natural objects to depict upcoming activities and expected behaviors.
- **First/Then Boards:** Utilize first/then boards with visuals to communicate what needs to happen first (following a rule) before the desired activity (preferred toy).
- **Physical Prompts and Hand-over-Hand Guidance:** Provide physical prompts or hand-over-hand guidance to demonstrate the desired behavior (e.g., physically guiding the child to sit down during circle time). Gradually fade prompts as the child develops independence.
- **Simple and Clear Rules:** Focus on a few simple and straightforward rules at a time. Break down complex rules into smaller, more manageable steps.
- **Modeling Expected Behaviors:** Model the expected behavior yourself and encourage peers to do the same. This provides a clear visual example of what "following the rule" looks like.
- **Identify Triggers:** Collaborate with specialists (e.g., behavior analysts) to identify triggers that might make following rules difficult for the child (e.g., sensory overload, unclear expectations).
- **Proactive Strategies:** Develop proactive strategies to address potential triggers before they escalate into challenging behaviors. This could involve offering calming activities, providing visual reminders, or adjusting the environment.
- **Replacement Behaviors:** Teach the child replacement behaviors for challenging behaviors that occur when rules are not followed. For example, teach them to use a picture card to express a need instead of throwing a tantrum.
- **Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC):** If the child has limited verbal communication skills, explore using AAC methods like picture cards or communication apps to facilitate communication of needs and understanding of rules.



- Simple and Direct Language: Use simple, direct language with short sentences and positive phrasing when communicating expectations.
- Check for Understanding: Regularly check for the child's understanding of the rule by asking simple questions or using gestures.

Additional Behavioral Strategies

- Anticipated behavioral challenges:
 - Disruptive behavior, not following rules, lack of focus.
- Preventive strategies:
 - Use positive reinforcement, establish clear expectations, provide a structured routine, and use visual aids.
- Intervention strategies for challenging behaviors:
 - Use redirection, offer positive feedback, and provide a calm and safe space for students to take a break.

Collaboration Strategies

- Relevant collaborators:
 - Parents, school counselors, and administration.
- Possibilities for incorporation:
 - Involve parents in reinforcing classroom rules at home
 - collaborate with school counselors to address challenging behaviors, and
 - seek support from the administration when necessary.

Technology Inclusion

- App, tools, software, etc.. to be used:
 - Interactive whiteboards, educational apps, and videos.
 - Super Simple Rules - An interactive app that teaches kids about following rules and respecting others.
 - PBS Kids - A website that offers educational videos and games on rule-following and social-emotional learning.
 - Sesame Street - A popular children's show that has episodes on following rules and getting along with others.
 - Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood - An animated series that focuses on social-emotional learning, including following rules and showing respect.
 - Happy Kids Timer - An app that helps young children develop good habits and routines by following simple rules.
 - Kid-E-Cats - A show that teaches preschoolers about teamwork, taking turns, and following rules.



- ABCmouse - An educational website that offers lessons on social-emotional learning, including following rules and being responsible.
- BrainPOP Jr. - A website that offers educational videos on various topics, including following rules and making good choices.

Outcomes

Steps to check for student understanding:

1. Observation of students following the classroom rules.
2. Data collected on the number of times students break or follow the rules.
3. Student self-assessment of their understanding of classroom rules.

Additional Support Resources

Websites/links to other helpful resources on the targeted topic.

- <https://www.autismadventures.com/teaching-classroom-rules/>
- https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hub/94958/file-1524764724-pdf/dos_and_donts_of_classroom_management_your_25_best_tips.pdf
- <https://www.teachhub.com/classroom-management/2016/01/classroom-management-develop-clear-rules-and-expectations/>
- <https://www.autismadventures.com/classroom-rules-behavior-basics/>
- <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/ecbm/cresource/q1/p03/>
- <https://autismclassroomresources.com/visual-rules-and-expectations-freebie/>

Educational Toolkit Lesson 2: Following (Multi-step) Instructions

Age range: 3-8

Lesson duration: 60 minutes

Overview & Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to develop the child's ability to follow multi-step instructions, which is a fundamental skill for academic success and daily life. By breaking down tasks into manageable steps and providing clear instructions, children will learn to listen attentively, process information sequentially, and execute tasks effectively. Mastery of this skill fosters cognitive development, enhances academic performance, and promotes independence and confidence in completing tasks.



Objectives

1. Follow single step instructions from an adult during a group activity
2. Follow multi step instructions from an adult during a group activity
3. Follow single step instructions from a peer during a group activity
4. Follow multi-step instructions from a peer during a group activity

Materials Needed

- Red, blue, yellow and green crayons for each student
- Paper
- Pencils and markers
- Printouts of simple drawing designs
- Printed instructions

Teaching Activity

- Introduction (5 minutes):
 - Gather the children in a circle and introduce the concept of following multi-step instructions. Discuss why it's important to follow instructions and how it helps us complete tasks successfully. Give examples of multi-step instructions from daily activities, such as making a sandwich or cleaning up toys.
- Ordering Objects (10 minutes).
 - Line up the crayons on the table in front of the student (s). Explain to them that they have to rearrange the crayons based on your instructions.
 - For single step instructions, give simple one by one instructions like "Pick up the blue crayon." "Put it in front of the red crayon." or ask them to make shapes such as "Make a T using the crayons." At the end, all students should have the same order/shape.
 - For two step instructions, give two instructions at a time. For example: "Pick up the blue crayon and put it in front of the red crayon.", "Move the yellow crayon to second place." "Move the crayon from first place to third place."
 - At the end, all students should have the same order/shape. You can get as advanced as you want, making instructions gradually more complicated. For example: "Move the green crayon to third place and the last crayon to first place."
- Drawing (15 minutes)
 - Divide the children into pairs, ensuring each pair consists of partners with similar abilities. Encourage them to sit facing each other, with one partner designated as the "instructor" and the other as the "drawer."



- Give a simple design/ drawing to the “instructor”, who then begins by giving oral instructions for the drawing to their partner, who listens carefully and follows the directions. After completing the drawing, the “drawer” needs to guess what the drawing was. Make sure the students switch roles, allowing each child to take turns as both the instructor and the drawer.
- Simon Says (15 minutes)
 - Play the classic game of Simon Says but with a twist. Start off with simple actions, and progressively advance to multi-step instructions, such as "Simon says, take three steps forward, spin around twice, and clap your hands." Children must listen carefully and follow all the steps correctly to remain in the game.
 - Generalisation: Ask a peer student to lead the game and give the instructions (you can provide a list of instructions you want to target).
- Group Challenge (15 minutes)
 - Have the children sit in a circle. Each child will get a slip of paper with a direction written on it. The catch is that they can only follow their direction after another child completes theirs. So, they must be paying close attention!
 - You will need to have as many slips as the students but the instructions must be in subsequent order for the game to work. You can create your own targets (or use the ones provided below), print each instruction in a slip of paper and pass them out randomly.
 - To make it even more complicated, you could give each student two directions so they are having to pay close attention to two different actions at once. This would also be a great game for kids with attention goals!

Example:

Teacher begins: Jump in place.

After someone jumps in place, stand up and spin around twice.

After someone spins around twice, stand up and clap your hands three times.

After someone claps their hands three times., stand up and stomp your feet.

After someone stomps their feet, stand up and shout your name.

After someone shouts their name, stand up and bark like a dog.

After someone barks like a dog, stand up and whip your hair back and forth.

After someone whips their hair back and forth, stand up and hop twice.

After someone hops twice, stand up and take a bow.



After someone takes a bow, stand up and say "THE END!"

Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):

- Challenge children with more complex and creative instructions during activities.
- Encourage them to create their own multi-step instructions for peers to follow.

Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):

- Provide clear and concise instructions during activities.
- Offer praise and encouragement for following instructions accurately.
- Provide opportunities for children to lead and give instructions to their peers.

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

- Break down instructions into smaller steps to make them more manageable.
- Offer visual aids or modelling to support understanding.
- Provide extra practice and repetition for children who may struggle with following multi-step instructions.
- Make "flexible" and "inflexible" cards to help the child recognise when they or someone else are being "flexible" and "inflexible"

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

- Offer 1-2-1 support from a teacher or teaching assistant during activities.
- Simplify instructions and use gestures, modelling, and physical prompting to help them understand and complete the tasks.
- Break tasks into smaller, more achievable steps and provide plenty of positive reinforcement for each success.
- Provide written instructions alongside corresponding pictures. Encourage them to match the written instructions to the pictures independently. This reinforces their understanding of written and oral instructions while incorporating visual cues for reinforcement.
- Consider incorporating sensory elements or alternative communication methods to engage children with limited verbal abilities.

Additional Behavioral Strategies



Anticipated behavioural challenges:

- Difficulty following multi-step instructions which could lead to frustration and result in challenging behaviours (tantrums, aggression etc).
- Difficulty coping with losing which could result in challenging behaviours
- Difficulty staying focused.
- Non-compliance or resistance to participating in group activities.

Preventive strategies:

- Provide clear and concise instructions using simple language and visual aids to support comprehension.
- Set the child up for success by making sure you break down instructions into smaller, manageable steps taking into account each student's abilities.
- Reward the child with praise, positive language or tangible rewards if needed (positive reinforcement) to motivate and encourage participation.
- Incorporate movement breaks and sensory activities to help children regulate their energy levels and attention.
- Establish consistent routines and visual schedules to promote predictability and reduce anxiety.
- Offer the child choices within activities to increase their sense of control and autonomy. Allow them to select preferred tasks or activities, or offer choices in how they complete tasks. This can help reduce resistance to participation and increase engagement and cooperation.
- Set clear expectations and rules for behaviour, and model appropriate social skills
- Encourage a positive and supportive atmosphere during games or activities, emphasising the enjoyment of participation rather than solely focusing on winning.
- Model appropriate reactions to winning and losing, demonstrating grace and resilience in both situations.
- Offer frequent opportunities for movement and active participation to prevent restlessness and boredom.

Intervention strategies for challenging behaviours:

- Redirect off-task behaviour.
- Remind the rules of the game
- Use a timer to indicate how much time there is left for the activity
- Use de-escalation techniques, such as deep breathing exercises or visual calming strategies, to help children manage strong emotions and behaviours.
- Offer individualised guidance and assistance as needed to ensure the child feels supported and capable of completing the task.
- If challenging behaviours occur during the lesson make sure all children are safe.



- Minimise the attention that you provide to the challenging behaviours. Instead, make clear statements praising the children who are engaging in the desired behaviours. If an activity must be terminated for a child, be sure to revisit the activity again when the child is calm.
- Once the child is calm, approach the child with empathy and understanding, acknowledging their feelings of frustration or disappointment. Offer reassurance and praise for their efforts, even if they didn't succeed. Encourage them to express their emotions verbally and validate their feelings.

Collaboration Strategies

- **Relevant collaborators:** Parents play a crucial role in supporting their child's learning and development. You can collaborate with them by asking them to practise the games at home. Other teachers and therapists can also collaborate by making sure they provide many opportunities for the child to follow instructions in class
- **Possibilities for incorporation:** Parents and teachers can practise "Following instructions" at home and in daily instruction, by instructing the child to complete daily tasks.

Technology Inclusion

Following instructions game: <https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/following-directions-game/id1203449640>

Simon says <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/word-vault-pro/id672989436>

<https://www.hearbuilder.com/>

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.DefaultCompany.Splingo&hl=en&gl=US>

Create visuals: <https://arasaac.org/index.html>

Outcomes

1. Observe the child's response when given an instruction by an adult or a peer during the lesson and throughout the day.
2. Collect data on the child's following instructions. You can tally the number of times the child followed a single or multi-step instruction correctly, either independently or with your additional help/prompts and the number of times they did not follow through. Additionally, collect data on the number of steps they successfully follow, so you can progressively increase the number of steps. Example of form down below:



Date	Targeted number of steps in instruction	Followed through independently	Followed through with prompts	Did not follow through	Challenging behaviour yes/no
1.3.	2			x	YES
1.3.	2		x		YES
1.3.	2		x		NO
1.3.	2	x			NO

Additional Support Resources

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xXgo3Dq214>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEk9FbPNv4E>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9vhBDUINSjw>

Educational Toolkit Lesson 3: Waiting for Access to an Adult and/or Item

Age range: 3-6 years old.

Lesson duration: 60 minutes

Overview & Purpose

To develop social and self-regulation skills by teaching the child to wait patiently for up to 90 seconds, while using waiting words such as “okay” or thumbs up (if appropriate), for access to an adult, help, and/or materials. If a child is not vocal, the child can be silent.

Developing the skill of waiting in preschool is vital for children before transitioning to primary school. It prepares them academically to participate in structured activities and follow routines, ensuring smoother transitions and better engagement. Socially, waiting fosters positive interactions with peers and adults, promoting empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution essential for primary school relationships. Additionally, it aids classroom management by reducing disruptive behaviors and allows teachers to focus on teaching. Emotionally, it builds self-regulation, crucial for handling challenges in the primary school environment. Ultimately, teaching waiting in preschool equips children



with the skills needed to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally in primary school and beyond.

Objectives

1. Wait patiently for 30 seconds when told to “wait” after asking an adult for help or for access to preferred items.
2. Wait patiently for 60 seconds when told to “wait” after asking an adult for help or for access to preferred items.
3. Wait patiently for 90 seconds when told to “wait” after asking an adult for help or for access to preferred items.

Ensure that the child genuinely desires the object or wishes to engage with the person or wants help (the child should express this desire, either by verbalizing it, pointing, or employing some form of communication to indicate their preference).

Materials Needed

Materials which are used are valuable for children, children want to play with it or be in contact with them.

- Picture books/social stories about waiting (e.g., "Waiting Is Not Easy" by Mo Willems or the provided social story on waiting)
- Timer or clock
- Visual aids (e.g., pictures or posters illustrating waiting)
- Props for role-playing (e.g., play food, toys)
- Paper and crayons/markers b

Teaching Activity

- Introduction (10 minutes):
 - Gather children in a circle and discuss the concept of waiting. Ask questions like, "What does it mean to wait?" and "Can you think of times when you have to wait?"
 - Read a picture book about waiting, engaging children in discussions about the characters' experiences with waiting. Use a book in your local language about waiting or a translation of the short social story about waiting that can be found here: <https://ellakids.app/s/b9009264-3c9b-4895-bdc3-34244a171a9c>



- Understanding Waiting (10 minutes):
 - Use visual aids (to illustrate different scenarios where waiting is necessary (e.g., waiting for a turn on the swing, waiting for a friend to finish playing).
 - Discuss why waiting is important and how it helps us and others.
- Strategies for Waiting (10 minutes):
 - Introduce various strategies for waiting patiently, such as deep breathing, counting, and distracting oneself with an activity.
 - Model the use of the strategies, have the children engage in the strategies with you (e.g., all taking deep breaths or counting together).
- Role-Playing Activity (10 minutes):
 - Divide children into pairs and provide them with props for role-playing (e.g., play food, toys).
 - Assign one child in each pair to be the "waiter" and the other to be the "person waiting."
 - Encourage the "person waiting" to practice patience while the "waiter" pretends to take their time serving or sharing toys.
 - After a few minutes, switch roles and repeat the activity.
- Art Activity (10 minutes):
 - Provide paper and crayons/markers.
 - Ask children to draw a picture of themselves waiting patiently.
- Conclusion (5 minutes):
 - Gather children back in the circle and review what they learned about waiting.
 - Practice waiting together as a group (e.g., asking the group if they would like to listen to a preferred song, then having them wait together - using a practiced strategy- for 30 seconds, before turning on the song).
 - Encourage children to use their patience skills in everyday situations and remind them that practicing waiting helps us grow and learn.

Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):

- Extend Learning: Provide opportunities for deeper exploration of the concept of waiting, such as discussing the benefits of why waiting can be beneficial.
- Encourage Critical Thinking: Ask open-ended questions that encourage children to reflect on their own experiences with waiting and consider alternative perspectives.
- Foster Leadership: Assign leadership roles to children who demonstrate advanced waiting skills, such as leading group practices "playing teacher"/ modeling waiting strategies for their peers.



- Provide Challenges: Introduce more challenging waiting scenarios during role-playing activities, such as waiting for a longer period of time or in situations with more distractions.

Promote Self-Reflection: Encourage children to reflect on their own progress in developing patience and waiting skills, setting personal goals for improvement.

Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):

- Maintain the Standard Lesson: Follow the lesson plan as outlined, ensuring that activities and discussions are age-appropriate and engaging.
- Differentiate Instruction: Offer varying levels of challenge during role-playing activities by adjusting the complexity of waiting scenarios or the length of time children are asked to wait.
- Provide Choices: Allow children to choose from a variety of waiting strategies during discussions and encourage them to select the ones they feel most comfortable with.

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

- Simplify Language: Use simpler language and shorter sentences to explain the concept of waiting.
- Provide Visual Supports: Use more visual aids, such as picture cards or real-life photos, to illustrate waiting scenarios, or a visual timer showing the countdown of the waiting time.
- Offer Concrete Examples: Use concrete examples of waiting that children can relate to, such as waiting for snack time or waiting for a turn on the slide.
- Using Shaping: Systematically use practice waiting scenarios that move from waiting for lesser to more preferred items.
- Use Modeling: Demonstrate waiting strategies yourself, and encourage children to model your behavior.
- Provide Additional Practice: Offer extra practice opportunities during role-playing activities and provide corrections and praise as appropriate, or work one-on-one with the child targeting repeated waiting opportunities.
- Offer Peer Support: Pair children with those with different levels of ability during role-playing activities, allowing them to see peer models.

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

- Provide visual support.
- Simplify Language: use just one word interaction with a child.
- Initiate shorter waiting times initially (even a duration as brief as 1 second can be enough).



- Gradual extension of waiting times should be approached with patience, progressing from 1 second to 3 seconds, 4 seconds, and so forth. Allow for ample time.
- Implement shaping techniques: Commence waiting for something or someone of lesser significance to the children, then progressively transition to more valuable items or individuals.
- Offer Peer Support: Pair children with those with different levels of ability during role-playing activities, allowing them to see peer models.
- Provide Additional Practice: Offer extra practice opportunities during role-playing activities and provide corrections and praise as appropriate, work one-on-one with the child targeting repeated waiting opportunities is recommended.

Additional Behavioral Strategies

Anticipated behavioral challenges: Tantrums (e.g., crying, flopping to the ground, yelling) or grabbing people/items may occur as a result of having to wait.

Preventive strategies: To work to prevent encountering challenging behaviors take the following steps before running the lesson:

- Modify the environment by having highly preferred items out of reach and distancing yourself/others from the child most likely to engage in the challenging behavior.
- Systematically select targeted items to practice waiting for by working to master waiting for items that are less preferred before having to work on waiting for items that are more preferred.
- Set the child up for success by making sure that they have had sufficient time with you and/or the preferred items before initially targeting working on waiting in the group lesson.
- Provide reinforcement (e.g., verbal praise) for the small successes that you observe in the child (e.g., sitting in the group, attending to the lesson).

Intervention strategies for challenging behaviors: If the challenging behaviors occur during the lesson be sure to keep all children safe. Minimize the attention that you provide to the challenging behaviors. Instead, make clear statements praising the children who are engaging in the desired behaviors. If the waiting activity must be terminated for a child, be sure to revisit the activity again when the child appears calm.

Termination indicates that a child has exhibited challenging behavior, having been provided two opportunities to calm down. If the child is not able to calm down, forfeits access to the desired item, assistance, or individual.

Collaboration Strategies



- **Relevant collaborators:** Consider collaborating with parents by asking them to send in a list of items/situations where their child finds waiting more challenging.
- **Possibilities for incorporation:** Ask parents to work on waiting at home, too, and send home copies of visual aids used in the lesson.

Technology Inclusion

Visuals can be used to help support waiting that are part of apps such as the time timer: <https://www.timetimer.com/collections/applications>.

Outcomes

1. Observe the child engaging in waiting behavior during the lesson and throughout the day.
2. Collect data on the child’s waiting behavior. This can be as the number of times that they waited independently or with your additional help/prompts. Additionally, collect data on the duration of waiting (e.g., 30 seconds), so that you can systematically practice parts of the teaching activity again for extended waiting periods. Example of form down below:

Date	Targeted time for waiting	Challenging behavior yes/no
1.3.	30s	YES
1.3.	30s	YES
1.3.	30s	NO
1.3.	30s	NO

Additional Support Resources

<https://best-practice.middletonautism.com/teachingcoreskills/waiting/>

<https://youtu.be/WYgZb3B87pw?si=6-65KH2zL5uo3ZR>

<https://autismclassroomresources.com/teach-waiting/>



Educational Toolkit Lesson 4: Sharing with a Peer

Age range: 3-6 years

Lesson duration: 60 minutes

Overview & Purpose

Social skills give kids a wide range of benefits. They are linked to greater success in school and better relationships with peers.

Sharing is a fundamental social skill most children typically acquire as they grow and interact with others. It's an important aspect of building positive relationships and navigating social situations. Learning to share is a crucial social skill that helps children build relationships, cooperate, and engage positively with peers.

A willingness to share a snack or a toy can go a long way to helping kids make and keep friends. According to a study published in *Psychological Science*, children as young as age 2 may show a desire to share with others—but usually only when their resources are abundant. However, children between the ages of 3 and 6 are often selfish when it comes to sharing resources that come at a cost. Kids might be reluctant to share half of their cookie with a friend because it means they'll have less to enjoy. But those same children might readily share a toy that they're no longer interested in playing with.

For children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), learning to share can present unique challenges.

Objectives

1. When another child is without toys or activity materials, within 10 seconds of a newcomer's arrival, the target child will offer some of the toys or materials within reach

Materials Needed

- Multiple scissors, crayons, markers, glue sticks, and any other art materials needed to complete a group art project
- Picture books, social stories
- Large sets of toys, toys for free play
- Visual schedule, visual support cards
- Building blocks toys
- Tablet/laptop



Teaching Activity

- Introduction (10 minutes):
 - During circle time discuss the concept of sharing. Ask questions like, "What does it mean to share?" and "Can you think of times when you need to share something with your friends?"
 - Read a picture book about sharing, engaging children in discussions about the characters' experiences with sharing. Use a book in your local language about sharing or a translation of the short social story about waiting that can be found here.
 - Describe sharing: "When you see someone that does not have any toys, share some toys with them."
- Role play (10 min.)
 - The teachers will model the appropriate interactions. The lead teacher will recruit a child to play with a large set of toys (e.g., 10 trucks). The lead teacher will then recruit another child to join the play area. .If the child engages in sharing, which is to offer a toy to the newcomer, the teacher will praise the child, "Great job sharing toys when you saw someone who didn't have any. That was very friendly." If the child does not engage in sharing, the teacher will temporarily remove the play items from the child and say, "When you see someone who does not have any toys, share some toys with them. Let's practice".
- Build a Tower (10 min.)
 - Build a tower as a team. Take turns placing bricks on the tower.
 - Emphasize the importance of sharing resources and working together to achieve a common goal.
- Free-Play (10 min.)
 - While child is engaging a preferred activity during free-play, the teacher will arrange the following situation with a child "helper"; the helper will not have any materials and will approach the target child while s/he is playing with multiple materials. Within 10 seconds of a newcomers arrival, the target child will offer some of the toys or materials within reach. The situation is the same as above except construct these situations within the Free Play activities.
 - Establish structured playdates or activities that encourage sharing. Provide a variety of toys and activities that require turn-taking and sharing. Supervise these interactions closely and provide positive reinforcement when the child engages in sharing behaviors.
- Working on a group art project. (15 min.)
 - Set up two tables with art materials that the children can use to complete a group art project. Split the class into two groups and assign each child to one of the two tables. Provide the children with appropriate instructions to complete an art project. Once the art project is underway, prompt a child to



switch tables. When the child joins a table, the child closest to that child should engage in PLS sharing. Continue switching the children around until every child has had an opportunity to engage in sharing and until the art projects are completed.

- Conclusion (5 min.)
 - Gather children back in the circle and review what they learned about sharing
 - Encourage children to use their sharing skills in everyday situations and remind them that sharing is caring.

Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1: (children with developmentally appropriate skills):

- Maintain the Standard Lesson: Follow the lesson plan as outlined, ensuring that activities and discussions are age-appropriate and engaging.
- Provide clear and concise instructions during activities.
- Offer praise and encouragement for following instructions accurately.
- Provide opportunities for children to lead and give instructions to their peers.

Tier 2: (children needing additional support):

- Simplify Language: Use simpler language and shorter sentences to explain the concept of sharing.
- Provide Visual Supports: Use more visual aids, such as picture cards or real-life photos, to illustrate sharing scenarios
- Offer Concrete Examples: Use concrete examples of sharing that children can relate to, such as sharing a toy during free play.
- Use Modeling: Demonstrate sharing yourself, and encourage children to model your behavior.
- Provide Additional Practice: Offer extra practice opportunities during role-playing activities and provide corrections and praise as appropriate, or work one-on-one with the child targeting repeated sharing opportunities.
- Offer Peer Support: Pair children with those with different levels of ability during role-playing activities, allowing them to see peer models.

Tier 3: (children with advanced skills):

- Extend Learning: Provide opportunities for deeper exploration of the concept of sharing, such as discussing the benefits of why sharing is important
- Encourage Critical Thinking: Ask open-ended questions that encourage children to reflect on their own experiences with sharing and consider alternative perspectives.



- Foster Leadership: Assign leadership roles to children who demonstrate advanced sharing skills, such as leading group practices “playing teacher”/ modeling sharing strategies for their peers.
- Provide Challenges: Introduce more challenging sharing scenarios during role-playing activities, such as waiting for a longer period of time or in situations with more distractions.
- Promote Self-Reflection: Encourage children to reflect on their own progress in developing sharing skills, setting personal goals for improvement.

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

- Read/ show adaptation of picture book or short social story to the child. Use simple pictograms/or real photos, only a few. Describe sharing through modeling or video modeling.
- Simplify language: use just one word interaction with child.
- Role play
 - The teachers will model the appropriate interactions.
 - Work one on one, provide many opportunities to share, always use praise. Also prompt the child if needed- physically (guide his hand), with gesture, with visual support.
- Free-Play
 - Use visual support,
 - Use prompting if needed
 - Provide Additional Practice: Offer extra practice opportunities during role-playing activities and provide corrections and praise as appropriate, work one-on-one with the child targeting repeated waiting opportunities is recommended.
- Encourage child to use their sharing skills in everyday situations.
- Offer Peer Support: Pair children with those with different levels of ability during role-playing activities, allowing them to see peer models.

Additional Behavioral Strategies

Anticipated behavioral challenges:

- Tantrums (e.g., crying, flopping to the ground, yelling) or grabbing people/items may occur as a result of having to share.
- Difficulty following instructions which could lead to frustration and result in challenging behaviors (tantrums, aggression etc).
- Difficulty staying focused.
- Non-compliance or resistance to participating in group activities
- Avoidance-escape from task

Preventive strategies:

To work to prevent encountering challenging behaviors take the following steps before running the lesson:



- Modify the environment by having highly preferred items out of reach and distancing yourself/others from the child most likely to engage in the challenging behavior.
- Systematically select targeted items to practice sharing by working to master sharing items that are less preferred before having to work on sharing items that are more preferred.
- Set the child up for success by making sure that they have had sufficient time with you and/or the preferred items before initially targeting working on sharing in the group lesson.
- Set the child up for success by prompting if needed
- Provide reinforcement (e.g., verbal praise) for the small successes that you observe in the child (e.g., sitting in the group, attending to the lesson).
- Provide clear and concise instructions using simple language and visual aids to support comprehension.
- Incorporate movement breaks and sensory activities to help children regulate their energy levels and attention.
- Establish consistent routines and visual schedules to promote predictability and reduce anxiety.
- Offer the child choices within activities to increase their sense of control and autonomy. Allow them to select preferred tasks or activities, or offer choices in how they complete tasks. This can help reduce resistance to participation and increase engagement and cooperation.
- Set clear expectations and rules for behavior, and model appropriate social skills
- Offer frequent opportunities for movement and active participation to prevent restlessness and boredom.

Intervention strategies for challenging behaviors:

If the challenging behaviors occur during the lesson be sure to keep all children safe. Minimize the attention that you provide to the challenging behaviors. Instead, make clear statements praising the children who are engaging in the desired behaviors. If the sharing activity must be terminated for a child, be sure to revisit the activity again when the child appears calm.

Termination indicates that a child has exhibited challenging behavior, having been provided two opportunities to calm down. If the child is not able to calm down, forfeits access to the desired item, assistance, or individual.

Redirect off-task behavior

- Use de-escalation techniques, such as deep breathing exercises or visual calming strategies, to help children manage strong emotions and behaviors.
- Offer individualized guidance and assistance as needed to ensure the child feels supported and capable of completing the task.
- Once the child is calm, approach the child with empathy and understanding, acknowledging their feelings of frustration or disappointment. Offer reassurance



and praise for their efforts, even if they didn't succeed. Encourage them to express their emotions verbally and validate their feelings.

Collaboration Strategies

- **Relevant collaborators:** Parents, siblings, play a crucial role in supporting their child's learning and development. You can collaborate with them by asking them practice sharing in more natural environment at home. Other teachers and therapists can also collaborate by making sure they provide many opportunities for the child to share.
- **Possibilities for incorporation:** Parents and siblings can take home materials and visual aids used in the lesson, and can practice sharing with the child in a natural environment, by instructing the child and help them through prompting and modeling.

Technology Inclusion

- Social stories
[Ella - Sharing \(ellakids.app\)](#)
- Visual supports
[AAC symbols - ARASAAC](#)

Outcomes

1. Observe the child engaging in sharing behaviors during the lesson and throughout the day.
2. Collect data on the child's sharing behavior. This can be as the number of times that they shared a toy/material independently or with your additional help/prompts.

Date	Targeted time for sharing	Followed through independently	Followed through with prompts	Did not follow through	Challenging behavior yes/no
1.3.	10s			x	YES
1.3.	10s		x		YES
1.3.	10s		x		NO
1.3.	10s	x			NO



Additional Support Resources

<https://www.theblueparachute.com/blogs/learning-to-share-how-to-teach-a-child-to-share/>

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/seven-social-skills-for-kids-4589865>

<https://www.educationoutside.org/preschool/activities/sharing/>

<https://veryspecialtales.com/sharing-activities-for-kids/>

<https://yourschoolpsych.com/free-social-story-templates/>

<https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=sharing+social+story+free+example&mid=D6C18C40032CC8970BFFD6C18C40032CC8970BFF&FORM=VIRE>

<https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=sharing+social+story+free+example&mid=542DAC846272F80FAC8F542DAC846272F80FAC8F&FORM=VIRE>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVgerbLQ_pl&t=534s

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmodfzWIRak>



Educational Toolkit Lesson 5: Greeting and/or Complimenting a Peer

Age range: 3-6 years old

Lesson duration: 60 min.

Overview & Purpose

Greeting and complimenting play a crucial role in social interactions. They serve as the foundation for building relationships and establishing connections with others. Teaching greetings and complimenting promotes verbal and nonverbal communication. Children learn to use their words effectively and communicate their feelings and thought, but also, it provide an opportunity to practice important nonverbal communication skills, such as making eye contact, using appropriate body language and using a friendly tone of voice. When children learn to greet and compliment one another, they develop important social skills such as turn-taking, active listening, engaging in conversations and development of empathy, as children learn to acknowledge and respond to the emotions of others. And after all, when children are greeted and complimented by their peers and others of their environment, they feel valued and accepted. This sense of belonging contributes to their overall well-being and self-esteem.

Objectives

1. When another child enters the room or the play group, within 10 seconds of a newcomer`s arrival, the target child will greet (“Hello”) and/or compliment (“I like ___) the newcomer.

Materials Needed

- Social stories/ picture books about greetings and/ or complimenting
- Glove puppet (or any kind of puppet)
- Visual aids (pictures and posters illustrating ways of greetings), visual support cards
- “I like” visual cards

Teaching Activity

- **Introduction** (5 min.)
 - Gather the children in a circle and start the activity with the song **Make A Circle | Preschool Song | Super Simple Songs** or any other song in local language .



- Stimulate further conversation about the importance of greetings and their impact on social-emotional learning and explain the importance of greeting (Do you remember a time when someone didn't say hello to you? How did you feel then? And how do you feel when someone greet you?)
- **Visuals and video presentation** (10 min.)
 - Use video modeling about greetings -**Social skills video modeling: Greetings**
 - Use visual aids to introduce the way of greeting and different kinds of greetings (poster/ cards with illustrated steps and kinds of greeting e.g. look, smile, say "Hi", wave, shake hands, hug, fist bump...) and demonstrate them **Greeting visuals**
- **Greeting game** (15 min.)
 - Get a glove puppet (or any kind of puppet) and put it in a bag before the activity started. Have students sit in a circle. Bring out the bag, open it enough to see in and shout into the bag "Hello!" . Then move your ear to the opening to listen - nothing. Get all the students together to shout "Hello!" at the same time. This time the puppet wakes up and jumps out of the bag! Say, "When someone new comes, say 'Hello'. Then model the Role play with the puppet: move onto the first student and say "Hello". Encourage him/her to say hello back in his/ her own way (smiling, waving, saying "Hi", "Hello", etc.). After that, the student who receives the greeting should performing it to the person on their right. The next student then performs the same greeting to the person on their right or can choose different way of greeting. The cycle continues until every student has both given and received a greeting.
- **Complimenting peer**
 - **Introduction** (5 min.)
 - The teacher addresses the puppet with words: "I noticed that you have a very nice/ beautiful... / I like your...." (gestures "Like" with thumb up and giving a visual card- "I like" to the puppet). Then explains that gave the puppet a compliment and that a compliment is when you say something nice to someone – about the way they look, something they have, something they did, something they said, or the way they are
- **Social story and video modelling** (5 min.)
 - Use video modeling about giving compliments (Sesame Street: Heidi Klum: Compliment)
 - Read a picture book in your local language or a translation of the short social story about giving compliments that can be found here: <https://ellakids.app/s/6d32ed53-8c87-4417-874a-315b4b97f6b4>
- **Role play activity- Complimenting game** (15 min.)
 - Have students sit in a circle, facing each other. Explain that the purpose of the activity is to practice giving compliments and engaging in conversations with their peers. Ask each student to give a compliment to the person sitting



to their right and to give a paper heart. Encourage them to be specific and genuine in their compliments. Continue around the circle until all students have given and received a compliment.

- **Conclusion** (5 min.)
 - Review with the children what they learned about the greeting and complimenting
 - Set up the visual aids on the entrance of the classroom
 - Encourage children to use their skills for greeting and complimenting in everyday situations.

Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):

- Encourage them to explore different types of greetings (in the different time of the day) and increase awareness of how others might feel when they receive compliments
- Assign leadership roles to children, such as leading group practices “playing teacher”/ modeling greeting and/ or complimenting strategies for their peers.
- Encourage them to create their own way of greeting and complimenting something their peer is good at

Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):

- Follow the lesson plan as outlined, ensuring that activities and discussions are age-appropriate and engaging.
- Allow children to choose from a variety of greeting and complimenting strategies during discussions and encourage them to select the ones they feel most comfortable with

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

- Use simpler language and shorter sentences and more visual aids, such as picture cards or real-life photos
- Offer extra practice opportunities during role-playing activities and provide corrections and praise as appropriate, or work one-on-one with the child
- Pair children with those with different levels of ability during role-playing activities, allowing them to see peer models.
- Create and offer them concrete and simple visual support with practical steps to perform the exercises (e.g. Step 1- Look at me; Step 2- Smile; Step 3- Say "Hello")
- Use, every day, simple visuals for giving compliments

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

- Provide support from a teacher/assistant or pair children with those with different levels of ability during role-playing activities, allowing them to see peer models
- Give simple instructions using a single word, gesture or physical prompting



- Provide simple visual directions that will be accompanied by one written/spoken short word (e.g. Step 1- Look; Step 2- Smile; Step 3- Give five/ High five, gesture “thumb up”- “Like”)
- Be patient – initially allow more time to respond to your requests (20 – 30 sec.)
- You should over-respond to any successful initiation by your child (if they look and wave, or even just look at you, you’ve got to make it clear that this is super important)
- Giving compliment is a very complex process for children with limited communication skills, so encourage them to express themselves with a single gesture (e.g. Thumb Up- “Like”)
- Use, every day, simple visuals for giving compliments
- Keep in mind that these social skills for this category of children should be developed gradually - first learn to greet, and only then learn to give a compliment.

Additional Behavioral Strategies

Anticipated behavioral challenges:

- Tantrums (e.g., crying, flopping to the ground, yelling) or grabbing people/items
- Avoiding eye contact and social interaction
- Lack of social motivation or resistance to participating in group activities

Preventive strategies: To work to prevent encountering challenging behaviors take the following steps before running the lesson:

- Modify the environment by having highly preferred items out of reach and distancing yourself/others from the child most likely to engage in the challenging behavior.
- Set the child up for success by prompting if needed
- Provide reinforcement (e.g., verbal praise) for the small successes that you observe in the child (e.g., sitting in the group, attending to the lesson)
- Use simple visual aids, provide a non-verbal approach or initiation to another person
- Establish consistent routines and visual schedules to promote predictability and reduce anxiety
- Set clear expectations and rules for behavior, and model appropriate social skills
- Create a simple plan for a child telling how, who, when, and where to greet and/ or complimenting people
- Offer frequent opportunities for movement and active participation to prevent restlessness and boredom.

Intervention strategies for challenging behaviors: If the challenging behaviors occur during the lesson be sure to keep all children safe. Minimize the attention that you provide to the challenging behaviors. Instead, make clear statements praising the



children who are engaging in the desired behaviors. If the activity must be terminated for a child, be sure to revisit the activity again when the child appears calm.

Termination indicates that a child has exhibited challenging behavior, having been provided two opportunities to calm down. If the child is not able to calm down, forfeits access to the desired item, assistance, or individual.

Collaboration Strategies

- **Relevant collaborators:**
 - Parents, siblings and other relatives of the child play a crucial role in supporting child's learning and development. You can collaborate with them by asking them practice greeting and/ or complimenting in more natural environment at home. School employees/ other teacher and speech therapist can also participate in developing these child`s social skills.
- **Possibilities for incorporation:**
 - Practicing greeting and/ or complimenting with parents and siblings in the familiar environment of the home with materials and visuals used in the lesson.

Technology Inclusion

App, tools, software, etc. to be used.

- Interactive board, apps and videos
- <https://ellakids.app/s/d62ac681-ea48-4d38-88db-d4ddbe4847f7>
- <https://ellakids.app/s/6d32ed53-8c87-4417-874a-315b4b97f6b4>

Outcomes

Steps to check for student understanding

1. Observe the child engaging in greeting and/ or complimenting behaviors during the lesson and throughout the day.
2. Collect data on the child's greeting and/ or complimenting behavior. This can be as the number of times that they greet and/ or compliment a peer independently or with your additional help/prompts.

Date	Targeted time for greeting and/ or complimenting	Followed through independently	Followed through with prompts	Did not follow through	Challenging behavior yes/no
1.3.	10s			x	YES
1.3.	10s		x		YES
1.3.	10s		x		NO



1.3.	10s	x			NO
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Additional Support Resources

Websites/links to other helpful resources on the targeted topic.

Make A Circle | Preschool Song | Super Simple Songs

https://youtu.be/ALcL3MuU4xQ?si=R_rkFy20YINXPQo9

Social skills video modeling: Greetings <https://youtu.be/Ch9nB8mF1XM>

[Greeting visuals](#)

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/browse/free?search=greeting%20visuals>

https://youtu.be/OOryAGXqXBI?si=qRpzPWIFD5_PdHLq - Sesame Street: Heidi Klum:

Compliment

<https://littlepuddins.ie/greetings-visuals-autism/>

https://youtu.be/hQ3_AlyxNI0?si=lv15ZvpWM2TN43DK Autism and Greetings :

Animated Social Stories for Children With Autism

<https://arasaac.org/> <https://arasaac.org/materials/en/124> - We learn to say hallo and

goodbye

<https://autismclassroomresources.com/video-modeling-tips-and-tricks/>

<https://luxai.com/blog/how-to-teach-greeting-to-children-with-autism/>

<https://theautismhelper.com/social-skills-teaching-complimenting/>

<https://paigebessick.com/compliment-circles-creating-kind/>



Educational Toolkit Lesson 6:

Recognizing Someone is Hurt/Upset (Empathy)

Age range: 3-6 years old

Lesson duration: 60 minutes

Overview & Purpose

It is crucial for preschool educators to foster empathy and emotional support for pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), promoting the social and emotional development of all children and cultivating a more empathetic and inclusive learning environment. This lesson plan aims to equip educators with strategies to effectively recognize and respond to the emotions of children with ASD, particularly when they are hurt, upset, or sad.

Understanding and expressing emotions can be difficult for children with ASD, which can affect their social interactions and general wellbeing. Recent research has shown that people with ASD may have difficulty reading social cues and recognizing facial expressions, which may hinder the development of empathy (Baron-Cohen et al., 2001; Pelphrey et al., 2002). However, with appropriate support and intervention, children with ASD can develop the essential social and emotional skills needed for long-term success and school readiness (Kasari et al., 2015; Wodka et al., 2013).

Objectives

1. Encouraging emotional expression: Educators can teach students with ASD how to interact productively with others by empowering them to express themselves appropriately and validating their emotions.
2. Building empathy and understanding: Research has shown that children with ASD can develop empathy with explicit instruction and modelling of empathetic behaviours (Hobson et al., 2013; Rieffe et al., 2011). Children learn to understand and identify the emotions of their peers through activities and discussions that promote empathy. In the classroom, educators can promote kindness, compassion and inclusivity by cultivating empathy.
3. Improve school readiness: By giving children with ASD the support they need to manage their emotions and socialise, we help to prepare them for the academic and social challenges of primary school.



Materials Needed

- Emotion cards (showing different facial expressions), Feelings Chart or Wheel. You can find printable versions here: <https://www.twinkl.gr/resource/t-s-150-feelings-and-emotions-cards> and here: <https://www.autistichub.com/free-emotions-flashcards-for-autism-and-speech-therapy/>
- Picture books about emotions (e.g. "The Feelings Book" by Todd Parr). You can buy it here: <https://www.amazon.com/Feelings-Book-Todd-Parr/dp/0316012491> or use the following video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBFbQ70AJjs>
- Tablet or computer to show the video or use digital educational materials (visual aids) to develop these social skills.
- Puppets
- Quiet corner or calming area with sensory tools (e.g. stress balls, fidget toys)
- Art materials (crayons, markers, paper)
- Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices or visual communication aids

Teaching Activity

Introduction (10 minutes):

- Gather the children in a circle and introduce the topic of emotions. Discuss how they can respond to questions such as "What's wrong?", "Are you OK?", "How can I help?", etc.
- Show emotion cards and discuss different facial expressions. Children with autism can benefit from using emotion cards, such as the Emotions Rating Scale, to express their emotions to others and to help adults respond to them in the healthiest and most encouraging way possible. If you notice patterns, you can help them regulate by changing the environment, circumstances, etc. This should tell you that you need to find out what is bothering them at the moment. It could be a sensory issue, such as the smell of lunch filling the room, or it could be an understanding of the approaching unstructured time which they are finding difficult.
- Introduce the Emotions Chart or Wheel and explain how it can help to identify emotions. There are different forms, such as different faces, traffic light colours or numbers. Make sure that the pictures you use are meaningful to the child and that they can understand them by working on them with them. If you are introducing new vocabulary, make sure the child understands it and provide additional information to help them remember it. For example, 'angry' might include 'face feels hot' if this is how the child experiences and recognises anger.
- Discuss why understanding emotions is important for communication and relationships.

Interactive Activity: Emotion Charades (15 minutes):

- Divide the children into small groups and give each group a set of emotion cards.



- One child from each group picks a card and acts out the emotion without speaking, while the other children guess the emotion.
- Rotate the roles so that each child has a chance to act out and guess different emotions.
- Use this activity to reinforce understanding of facial expressions and non-verbal communication cues.

Group Activity: Emotion Exploration (20 minutes):

- Read a picture book about emotions, such as "The Feelings Book" by Todd Parr. Picture books, like all fiction, depict the feelings of imaginary characters and how they perceive each other's feelings. Unlike novels, picture books evoke our emotional response not only through words but also through the amplification of words through pictures. The main function of wordless picture books is to evoke strong emotions in the reader. Wordless double-spreads are used in many picture books to evoke powerful emotions for which words would be insufficient.
- Encourage children to identify the emotions of the characters and discuss why they might feel that way.
- Use a puppet show to act out different scenarios with different emotions, allowing children to take on different roles.
- Facilitate discussions on coping strategies for managing different emotions, such as deep breathing or taking a break in a calm area.

Art and Expression Activity (10 minutes):

- Provide art materials such as crayons, markers, and paper.
- Ask children to draw or create a collage representing how they feel today. To date, the drawing skills of children with ASD have been examined from a developmental perspective to determine whether their drawings follow a similar developmental pattern to those of typically developing (TD) children (Charman and Baron-Cohen 1993;). The drawings of children with ASD have the same level of overall expressiveness as those of children with moderate learning difficulties and children of the same mental age. On the other hand, children with ASD tend to produce qualitatively different, i.e. less advanced or even incomplete representations of the human figure, often depicting only the face and including fewer social scenes in their drawings than their matched control children.
- Encourage them to use colors, shapes, and symbols to express their emotions creatively.
- After completing their artwork, invite children to share their creations with the group and explain the emotions they depicted.

Closing and Reflection (5 minutes):

- Gather the children back together and reflect on the activities of the lesson.
- Ask questions such as "What did we learn about feelings today? "How do you feel now compared to when you started the lesson?", "How can you ask someone if he/she is ok?", "How you can understand if he/she is happy or sad?"



- Reinforce the importance of understanding and expressing emotions in building positive relationships with others.

Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):

- Offer enrichment activities to kids who show a high level of ability in recognizing and expressing emotions.
- Give more difficult assignments, like recognizing nuanced emotions or investigating empathy in complex social contexts.
- By assisting their peers in understanding and managing their emotions, kids can be inspired to assume leadership roles.

Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):

- Adapt activities to each child's developmental stage, offering assistance and direction as required.
- To help kids understand and communicate their emotions, break tasks down into smaller steps and use visual cues or prompts.

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

- Offer tailored assistance to kids who might need more help comprehending and expressing their feelings.
- Provide kids with clear explanations and hands-on activities to help them understand concepts.
- To reinforce learning and provide predictability, use visual aids

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

- To assist kids who lack communication skills in expressing their feelings, emphasize nonverbal cues.
- To enhance understanding and communication, make use of picture communication systems or AAC devices.
- In order to help students regulate their emotions and increase engagement, include sensory tools and activities in your lessons.

Additional Behavioral Strategies

Anticipated Behavioral Challenges:

Sensory sensitivity, communication impairments, and difficulties understanding and expressing emotions can all contribute to a variety of behavioral challenges in children diagnosed with ASD. The following are a few typical behavioral issues:



- Meltdowns when overwhelmed by sensory stimuli or emotional distress.
- Difficulty switching between activities
- Difficulty changing routines.
- Anger or self-destructive actions triggered by irritation or disruption of communication.
- Withdrawal or avoidance behaviour in response to social interactions or sensory overload.

Preventive Strategies:

To prevent challenging behaviors from occurring, it's important to create a supportive environment and proactively address triggers that may lead to distress or frustration. Some preventive strategies include:

- Create routines and visual schedules to provide structure and reduce anxiety.
- Create a calm, sensory-friendly space with quiet corners and sensory tools for self-regulation.
- To prepare children for upcoming adjustments or transitions, use easy-to-understand communication techniques or visual aids.
- To empower children and reduce their feelings of helplessness or frustration, give them more autonomy.
- Throughout the day, incorporate movement exercises or sensory breaks to help control arousal and avoid sensory overload.

Intervention Strategies for Challenging Behaviors:

When challenging behaviors arise, it's essential to respond promptly and effectively to de-escalate the situation and support the child in managing their emotions. Some intervention strategies include:

- Stay calm and relaxed.
- Give the child a sense of safety and security
- Encourage desired behaviour with praise and positive reinforcement
- Use visual signals or cues to redirect attention and guide behaviour towards more adaptive responses.
- Provide options and choices to help the child regain control and autonomy
- Use the calm areas and corners
- Provide sensory tools to help control arousal and promote relaxation.
- Use progressive muscle relaxation or deep breathing as de-escalation techniques to help the child calm down.
- Work with parents and therapists to develop individualised strategies and supports to manage challenging behaviour.



Collaboration Strategies

- **Collaborate with parents and caregivers** to reinforce learning and support consistency between home and school environments.
- **Consult with therapists** to develop individualized strategies for children with specific needs.

Technology Inclusion

- Integrate educational apps that focus on developing social skills and emotional regulation. For example, "Choiceworks" is a visual support app designed to help children with ASD understand and manage their daily routines, emotions and behaviours. It uses visual schedules, choice boards and social stories to support communication and independence. Download it here: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/choiceworks/id486210964>
- Use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) technology or visual supports to support communication and expression of emotions. For example, the communication app "Proloquo2Go" is designed for individuals with speech and language impairments, including those with ASD. It offers customisable communication boards with icons and text-to-speech capabilities to support expressive communication. Download it here: <https://www.assistiveware.com/products/proloquo2go> and "Emotionary", a digital tool that helps children express their emotions through visual supports such as emoticons, drawings and written descriptions. It provides a platform for children to share how they're feeling and communicate their emotional experiences. Download it here: <https://appadvice.com/app/emotionary-by-funny-feelings/515860459>

Outcomes

1. Note the child's facial expressions, body language, and verbal responses to determine their emotional state.
2. Look for signs of frustration, confusion, excitement, or engagement in response to different instructions and activities.
3. Notice patterns or trends.
4. Observe the child's ability to demonstrate empathy towards peers and respond to their emotions (verbal and non-verbal expressions) during various classroom activities and collect data. For example:



Child's Name:	Date:	Peer Interaction	Empathetic Response Observed	Quality of Response
Maria	08/05/2024	Peer fell and got hurt	Asked if they were okay	Medium
		Peer feeling sad	Offered a hug	High
		Peer struggling with task	Offered assistance	High

Additional Support Resources

1. Autism Speaks: <https://www.autismspeaks.org/>
2. National Autism Association: <https://nationalautismassociation.org/>
3. Zero to Three: <https://www.zerotothree.org/>
4. Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD): <https://www.centerforautism.com/>
5. The Autism Society: <https://www.autism-society.org/>

These resources offer valuable information, support, and guidance for educators, parents, and caregivers working with children with ASD. By incorporating evidence-based practices and leveraging support from reputable organizations, we can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all children.



Educational Toolkit Lesson 7:

Requesting Peer Attention/Access to Something

Age range: 3-7 years old.

Lesson duration: 60 minutes

Overview & Purpose

In order for children to develop social and self-regulation skills effectively, it is crucial that they learn how to politely request attention or access to items such as toys, food, or activities from their peers. If a child lacks this ability and resorts to problem behavior instead, their development of social and self-regulation skills may be hindered, presenting a barrier to their overall growth. For non-verbal children, utilizing signs or pictures to communicate their desires can be beneficial. Mastering the art of requesting attention or items from peers is among the most vital skills a child can acquire. This skill holds significance for several reasons. Being able to ask peers for attention or items in a courteous manner, without resorting to disruptive behavior, is a fundamental social skill. Without it, a child's social development may suffer, potentially impeding their ability to form new friendships among peers.

Objectives

1. Students will be able ask peer for their attention.
2. Students will be able to ask peer for some activity.
3. Students will be able to ask peer for something/toy etc.

Ensure that the child genuinely desires the object/attention from someone or activity (the child should express this desire, either by verbalizing it, pointing, or employing some form of communication to indicate their preference).

Materials Needed

- Visual aids (such as picture cards)
- Picture books/social stories about requesting

Teaching Activity

Introduction (10 minutes)

- Gather all children in a circle and explain why polite requests are crucial. Describe what a polite request should entail and in which situations it's necessary to utilize it. Provide concrete examples of suitable situations for its use.



- Also, illustrate how they should ask for attention, demonstrating different approaches.
- Incorporate a brief social story about making polite requests to peers (**available here**), or a short narrative about requesting attention from peers.
- Ensure they grasp the importance of politely asking peers for things.

Discussion (10 minutes)

- Prompt children to recall if they've been in situations where they needed to politely ask a peer for something or for attention. Discuss any mistakes made and alternative approaches.

Strategies for requesting (5 minutes)

- Divide children into pairs and explain what's expected. Instruct them on how to request items or attention from peers, emphasizing appropriate language and behaviour. Also, explore various methods for seeking attention.

Modelling (5 minutes)

- Demonstrate the correct and polite way to make requests, as well as examples of incorrect approaches. Show different methods for seeking attention.

Trying and feedback (15 minutes)

- This segment can be divided into two phases. In the first phase, provide clear instructions on what the children should do, and have each pair attempt to politely request something. Then, in the second phase, encourage them to devise their own scenarios and practice. In the initial phase, present two situations: one for requesting an item and the other for seeking attention. In the second phase, they should create their own two scenarios. Offer feedback on their attempts.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

- Bring the children back into the circle and review what they've learned about requesting from peers.
- Discuss any specific challenges or situations they encountered.
- Encourage children to apply their requesting skills in everyday situations, emphasizing its importance.

Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):

- You can discuss with them, why is politely asking of something to peers better and how they could use it also not just in the classroom but also outside of the classroom.
- You can also ask them about their experiences and analyse how they react and how they could react better.



Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):

- Maintain the Standard Lesson: Follow the lesson plan as outlined, ensuring that activities and discussions are age-appropriate and engaging.
- Offer choices how they could ask for attention.

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

- Simplify Language: Use simpler language and shorter sentences to explain the concept of requesting.
- Provide Visual Supports: Use more visual aids, such as picture cards or real-life photos, to illustrate requesting scenarios.
- Offer Concrete Examples: Use concrete examples of requesting different things/activities and attention.
- For children of this type, encourage them to ask for items only if they know the name or have a corresponding sign or picture. Otherwise, they may struggle to express their needs if they lack the vocabulary. • When seeking attention, it's helpful to provide them with a single phrase or word to use consistently. It's preferable for them to have a set way to ask rather than having to choose each time. For instance, phrases like "excuse me," or, if they know the person's name, using that, or employing a commonly understood signal for attention. Provide Additional Practice: Offer extra practice opportunities during role-playing activities and provide corrections and praise as appropriate, or work one-on-one with the child.
- Offer Peer Support: Pair children with those with different levels of ability during role-playing activities, allowing them to see peer models.

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

- Provide visual support.
- Simplify Language: use just one word interaction with a child.
- You can use more additional practise and with those children it would be better if they would try it firstly with you and then choose child, who will cooperate and try it with him or her.
- Implement shaping techniques: You can start with something which won't be the most favourite toy or activity, start with something neutral-what the child wants but usually don't have a problem behaviour for it.
- Offer Peer Support: Pair children with those with different levels of ability during role-playing activities, allowing them to see peer models.
- Provide Additional Practice: Offer extra practice opportunities during role-playing activities and provide corrections and praise as appropriate, work one-on-one with the child targeting repeated waiting opportunities is recommended.



Additional Behavioral Strategies

Anticipated behavioral challenges

Anticipated behavioral challenges may include tantrums when the child is unable to obtain something immediately, or resorting to grabbing people instead of asking for their attention, or grabbing toys without asking. Another challenge may be escaping tasks that require too much effort and seeking alternative activities.

Preventive strategies

To prevent encountering these challenging behaviors, take the following steps before beginning the lesson:

- Modify the environment by placing highly preferred items out of reach and ensuring that access to desired activities or items is controlled.
- Systematically choose specific items for practice in requesting, starting with less preferred items before progressing to more preferred ones. The same approach applies to activities.
- Ensure that the child knows the names of the activities or items being targeted.
- Confirm that the child knows how to appropriately request attention.

Intervention strategies for challenging behaviors.

- If challenging behaviors occur during the lesson, prioritize the safety of all children. Reduce the amount of attention given to the challenging behaviors.
- Instead, guide the child on how to ask appropriately and provide them with an opportunity to try again; you can offer up to two chances.
- If the child fails to ask politely even after assistance, they will not have access to the item/activity or attention.
- Termination of access signifies that a child has displayed challenging behavior, despite being given two opportunities to calm down. If the child is unable to calm down, they forfeit access to the desired item, assistance, or interaction.

Collaboration Strategies



Relevant collaborators: It's essential to collaborate closely with parents to gather insights into their child's preferences and activities. Inquire about the items and activities their child enjoys to better tailor the teaching of requesting skills. Additionally, ask parents if child is aware of the names for these items.

Possibilities for incorporation: Encourage parents to continue practicing waiting skills at home and provide them with copies of any visual aids utilized in the lesson for reinforcement.

Outcomes

Steps to check for student understanding

1. Monitor the child's interactions throughout the lesson and during the day, observing their ability to politely request attention, items, or activities from peers.
2. Document the child's requesting behavior by recording the frequency of polite requests for attention or items/activities. See example form below:

Date	Attention (A)/things or activity (TA)	Challenging behaviour yes/no (everything what is not politely request)
		YES / NO
		YES / NO
		YES / NO
		YES / NO

Additional Support Resources

Websites/links to other helpful resources on the targeted topic.

<https://autismclassroomresources.com/teaching-appropriate-attention-seeking/>



Educational Toolkit Lesson 8: Asking for Help from an Adult or Peer

Age range: 4-7 years old.

Lesson duration: 60 minutes

Overview & Purpose

A child's preschool age is a period of formation of the ability to establish and maintain contacts with the surrounding people. Methods of raising and teaching children in an inclusive group (class) should be focused on the formation of communication skills, and interaction between a child with ASD and other children.

Learning to ask for help from peers and adults is important for the successful socialization of a child with autism. A child with ASD, who knows how to ask for help, demonstrates the ability to show alternative behavior in case of difficult situations, and therefore, there is a decrease in the number of manifestations of aggressive, unwanted behavior, which, in turn, affects the child's academic skills. After all, the ability to ask for help from others becomes part of the child's life experience, and therefore, later on, a child with ASD is able to use this skill in appropriate situations.

The lesson aims to teach children with ASD to ask for help from peers and adults in case of need.

Objectives

1. To teach children to use verbal and non-verbal ways of communication while asking for help.
2. To teach children to use language constructions "I want...", "I need help with...", "Please give...", "Please help..." etc.
3. To teach children to identify the situations when it is needed to use polite forms of asking for help.
4. Provide children with visualization and structural diagrams of building a polite form of addressing others with a request for help.

Materials Needed

Materials for the lesson

- modeling cards
- social history (video, cards)
- communication card "Help"



- Visual prompt "Help"
- household object
- materials for creativity
- toys
- data collection forms

Teaching Activity

- **Introduction (10 minutes):**

The teacher in the circle invites the children to recall situations when they helped someone in any matter or observed how adults helped each other. The teacher encourages children to share their own experiences. How did relatives or friends ask for help? What words did they use?*

The teacher brings the children to the point that there are things that we do easily, and we are great at it, we can even help others with it. But some cause certain difficulties, then we can turn to others for help: parents, educators, friends, etc. Just as they did when they needed help and turned to others.

The teacher invites the children to recall situations when they need help and talk about them.

** It's possible to offer kids to play in pairs*

- **Reviewing the situation when children need help (10 minutes)**

Revision of the social story about the possibility of asking for help from others (repeating and consolidating the information that was discussed in the circle).

The content of the story

There are things in our lives that we can do easily, and some things we need help with. When we can't cope on our own, we can feel sadness, anger, despair, fear, dissatisfaction, or anxiety.

Such situations can be, for example:

- during the game: you cannot get the toy, open the box with pencils;
- during class: you fail to complete the task in class.

In such situations, you can ask for help. That's what they always do when they can't cope on their own.

For adults or friends to hear your request and help, you need:

1. Decide if you really need help and what exactly.
2. Turn to someone who is nearby (for example: mother, teacher, friend).
3. When applying, use phrases asking for help: "I need help" or "Help, please." If you cannot cope with the task in class - raise your hand or use a card* so that the teacher can see. If you can't say, show with the "Come" gesture and point out what exactly you can't do.
4. Thank you for the help.



You will feel satisfaction, and joy from the fact that you managed to complete the task.

Now you know how to ask for help and how to ask others for help. After reviewing the social story, children, if necessary, with the help of a teacher, name the sequence of actions when asking others for help and make an algorithm of actions in the form of cards.

** If there are rules for interaction in the group, remind the child about it.*

● **Activity 1. Making an algorithm for asking for help (5 min)**

Children are invited to put the cards (modeling cards) in a logical sequence: what first and what next. The teacher facilitates the process.

- ***A situation in which I need help. Decide what help you need.***
- ***I do ask for help. Decide who can help you: parents, a teacher, a friend. If you need help during class, raise your hand or show a card*. If you can't say, then use the "Come" gesture and point to something that doesn't work (or you need to take, get, etc.). If you can make a request, say, "Please help me" or "I need help."***

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
The situation in which I need help	I do ask for help	I will be grateful

● **Activity 2. Play "It's easy. It's hard" (10 minutes)**

The objective of this activity is to teach children to identify situations in which help is needed.

The teacher shows story pictures (modeling cards) with household actions and asks children to decide whether it is difficult or easy for them to perform.

If the child can do this independently, have him clap his hands. If the action is difficult and help is needed the child can raise his head.

Examples of plot pictures:

- making the bed;
- having a meal;
- ball game;
- shoe lacing;
- cutting with scissors;
- cycling;
- dressing;
- hand washing;
- brushing teeth;



- making puzzles;
- feeding a pet;
- washing-up.

- **Activity 3. Game “Who can help me” (10 minutes)**

The activity aims to teach to identify which of the close or familiar people can provide help in difficult situations; and update children's knowledge of emergency services.

Children are given cards with pictures of adults (mother, teacher, and peer). The teacher asks the children to decide who they should turn to in case of the proposed situations.

The teacher describes the situation, and the children have to pick up a card that can help in this situation. It is possible that several people can provide help in the same situation, for example: a mom, a teacher, and a friend can help to fasten a button. In such a situation, the child picks up three cards.

Approximate situations:

- I can't draw a nice circle;
- I can't make the bed;
- I can't make a sandwich;
- I can't fasten the button;
- I cannot connect the details of the designer;
- did not understand the task given by the teacher;

During the exercise, different options for children's answers are possible. The teacher encourages discussion.

- **Free-option Game (20 minutes)**

During the free-option game, give children the opportunity to choose any location in the game environment (for example: drawing, sculpting, construction, story role-playing game). In a joint activity, children have to determine in which situation it is worth asking for help. Example:

- "Help me cut."
- "Help me connect."
- "Help me build" etc.

The teacher facilitates children's play activities and makes suggestions when it is possible to turn to others for help.

- **Conclusion (5 minutes):**

- Gather children back in the circle and review what they learned about requesting help in a difficult situation.
- Encourage children to ask for help in a difficult situation.
- Watching the video “Ask For Help” <https://youtu.be/ohkiH4NGopg>

Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):



- Establish the child's need (for help), and motivation to apply (for example, when something does not work out and she needs the help of an adult).
- If it is during a break, the teacher approaches the child and uses a prompt, saying "Say - help, please" (prompt). The child says "Help, please, (calls the teacher by name)", and the teacher helps.
- As it is in class, the teacher shows a visual prompt and says "If you need help, raise your hand."
- The child raises his hand and asks the teacher for help.
- The teacher answers "Yes, I am listening to you. How can I help you?" (positive reinforcement).
- Next time we delay the prompt by 2 seconds. If the child does not react, the adult remains silent.
- The child asks - and the teacher answers.
- The third time in the motivational situation, the prompt is not provided. The child asks for help - the teacher helps.

Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):

- Establish the child's need (for example, help with something), and the motivation for the appeal (for example, when something when something doesn't work out).
- If it is during a break, the teacher approaches the child and uses a visual prompt "Help", and at the same time says "Say - help, please" (prompt). The child says "Help, please, (calls the teacher by name)", and the teacher helps.
- As it is in class, the teacher can come up and show a visual prompt and say "If you need help, raise your hand."
- The child raises his hand and asks the teacher for help.
- Introduce variability. In the activity "Who can help me" ("Who can help me")

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

- Establish the child's need (for example, help with something), and the motivation for applying (for example, when the child really needs something, but he cannot do it or take it on his own).
- If it is during a break, the teacher approaches the child, uses a visual prompt, and says "Help me" while simultaneously saying "Help" (prompt). The child gives the teacher the communication card "Help" or uses another alternative communication system. If the child can repeat - he repeats "po-po" / "Help", the teacher helps in the current situation.



- As it is in class, the teacher approaches the child, shows a visual prompt, and at the same time says "Raise your hand." You can use a partial physical prompt, touching the child's elbow, to get the child to raise his hand.
- The child raises his hand.
- The teacher asks "What do you need?" (positive reinforcement).
- The child gives the teacher the communication card "Help". The teacher says "Help me". If the child can repeat - he repeats "po-po" / "Help". The teacher helps in the current situation. Do this procedure three times.
- Next time we delay the prompt by 2 seconds. We are waiting for the child's actions. If the child asks for help, the teacher helps. If the child is nervous or spins but does not ask for help - silently show the child a visual prompt and touch the child's elbow.
- The child asks for help - the teacher helps. Do this procedure three times.
- The third time in the motivational situation, only a visual prompt is provided. The child asks for help three times based on a visual prompt - the teacher helps.
- If the child asks independently for help three times in a row, the training ends.

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

- Establish the child's need (for example, help with something), and the motivation for applying (for example, when the child really needs something, but he cannot do it or take it on his own).
- If it is during a break, the teacher approaches the child, uses a visual prompt, and says "Help me" while simultaneously saying "Help" (prompt). The child gives the teacher the communication card "Help" or uses another alternative communication system, the teacher helps in the current situation.
- As it is in class, the teacher approaches the child, shows a visual prompt, and at the same time says "Raise your hand." You can use a partial physical prompt, touching the child's elbow, to get the child to raise his hand.
- The child raises his hand.
- The teacher asks "What do you need?" (positive reinforcement).
- The child gives the teacher the communication card "Help". The teacher says "Help me". If the child can repeat - he repeats "po-po" / "Help". The teacher helps in the current situation. Do this procedure three times.
- Next time we delay the prompt by 2 seconds. We are waiting for the child's actions. If the child asks for help, the teacher helps. If the child is nervous or spins but does not ask for help - silently show the child a visual prompt and touch the child's elbow.
- The child asks for help - the teacher helps. Do this procedure three times.
- Only a visual prompt is provided the third time in the motivational situation. The child asks for help three times based on a visual prompt - the teacher helps.
- If the child asks independently for help three times in a row, the training ends.

Additional Behavioral Strategies



Anticipated behavioral challenges: Tantrums (e.g., crying, flopping to the ground, yelling) or grabbing people/items may occur as a result of having to wait.

Preventive strategies: To work to prevent encountering challenging behaviors take the following steps before running the lesson:

- Modify the environment by having highly preferred items out of reach and distancing yourself/others from the child most likely to engage in the challenging behavior.
- Systematically select targeted items to practice waiting for by working to master waiting for items that are less preferred before having to work on waiting for items that are more preferred.
- Set the child up for success by making sure that they have had sufficient time with you and/or the preferred items before initially targeting working on waiting in the group lesson.
- Provide reinforcement (e.g., verbal praise) for the small successes that you observe in the child (e.g., sitting in the group, attending to the lesson).

Intervention strategies for challenging behaviors: If the challenging behaviors occur during the lesson be sure to keep all children safe. Minimize the attention that you provide to the challenging behaviors. Instead, make clear statements praising the children who are engaging in the desired behaviors. If the waiting activity must be terminated for a child, be sure to revisit the activity again when the child appears calm.

Termination indicates that a child has exhibited challenging behavior, having been provided two opportunities to calm down. If the child is not able to calm down, forfeits access to the desired item, assistance, or individual.

Collaboration Strategies

- **Relevant collaborators:** Consider collaborating with parents by asking them to send in a list of items/situations where their child needs help.
- **Possibilities for incorporation:** Ask parents to work on asking for help at home, too, and send home copies of visual prompts used in the lesson.

Technology Inclusion

Creating social stories to consolidate skills and visual support using Dyvogra Cards

<https://www.dyvogra.com/produksiia/symvoly/>

data	The number of calls for help per hour	Prompt level (physical/verbal; full/partial)	Unwanted behavior
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Outcomes

1. Observe the child’s behavior to ask for help during the lesson and throughout the day.
2. Collect data on the child’s behavior to ask for help. This can be as the number of times that they ask independently or with your additional help/prompts. Additionally, collect data on the behavior so that you can systematically practice parts of the teaching activity again for extended waiting periods. Example of form down below:

Date		
1.3.		
1.3.		
1.3.		
1.3.		

Additional Support Resources

<https://autismclassroomresources.com/teach-waiting/>



Educational Toolkit Lesson 9:

Requesting Adult Attention

Age range: 3-6 years old.

Lesson duration: 60 minutes

Overview & Purpose

Social development of preschool children includes the process of their assimilation of the system of rules and norms of behavior in society. In the process of social adaptation, children learn to live by certain rules and develop norms of behavior.

The skill of using polite forms of attracting an adult's attention, while he is busy, is important for a child who learns the norms and rules of behavior in society, and at the same time, it is one of the useful skills of social interaction with others.

For a child with autism spectrum disorders, in order to feel confident in society, it is very important to have ready-made tools for social interaction in the arsenal.

Aim of the lesson is to teach children with ASD to politely attract the attention of an adult, establish eye contact for further interaction.

Objectives

1. Teach children to identify the situation when it's necessary to attract the adult's attention when she/he is busy.
2. Teach the children to use the polite language form of appealing/addressing to establish an interaction with adults "Excuse me".
3. Teach children with ASD to make eye contact when addressing

Materials Needed

- Cards for modeling
- Social history (video, cards)
- Cards for non-verbal children
- Visual cue (two sheets with sequential steps in different situations: at recess, in class)
- Visual cue "Raised hand"
- Toys for interaction
- Household object
- Forms for data collection



Teaching Activity

- **Introduction (5 minutes):**

The teacher invites the children to discuss the situation, what they do when they want to turn to an adult, when he/she is busy: communicating with another person or busy with his business. During the discussion, the teacher emphasizes that it can be done in an accepted way and offers to review social history on this topic.

- **Reviewing the situation when children need help (10 minutes)**

Watch the social history.

<https://youtu.be/VaruOweSbSI?t=172>

Content of the story.

If I need to approach another adult at a time when they are busy, during their free time, I will do it like this:

- I will move closer.
- I'll say: "'Excuse me,' and call them by name.
- Or I will touch the adult's hand.
- I will wait for the adult to turn to me and answer me.
- I will tell them what I need.

After watching the video, the teacher and the children repeat the sequence of actions, imitating the movements:

- I will come (step forward).
- I will say (children say "I'm sorry" in a chorus).
- Or touch your hand.
- I will wait (waiting position).
- I will tell you what I need (hands with open palms forward).

Repeat the activity several times.

If I need to get the attention of a tutor or teacher in class, I will do it like this:

- I will raise my hand.
- I will wait for the tutor/teacher to come to me.
- I will tell them what I need.

The children and the teacher recall the classroom rules (the "Raised Hand"* rule).
Visual cue "Raised hand".

** The Raised Hand Rule: During the lesson, if a child wants to say something or needs help, they should raise their hand to get the teacher's attention.*



- **Activity 1. Modeling the situation "At recess" (10 minutes)**

The teacher and the children model the situation: the teacher pretends to be busy (e.g., flipping through a book, writing something). One child comes closer to the teacher and says: "Excuse me, (name, patronymic of the educator). The educator immediately responds and turns to the child. Says "I'm listening to you".

Act out the situation 3 times.

** For children aged 3-6 years.*

- **Activity 2. Modeling the situation "During classes" (20 minutes)**

The teacher invites children to perform a creative activity (origami, modeling, application). The child may have difficulties with this task (the child does not know how to hold scissors, does not know how to glue, does not know how to sculpt, etc.), the task is given to the child a little more difficult than his/her skill level. When the child has difficulties, the child raises his or her hand, the teacher approaches the child and asks "How can I help you?" The child answers "Help me do..."

Repeat the situation 3 times. Each time you can offer different topics for the lesson.

** For children aged 3-6 years.*

- **Activity 3. Generalization. Role-playing game "Shop" (20 minutes) (generalization of the skill)**

In the role-playing game "Shop" or "Supermarket", children, with the help of the teacher, choose roles: seller, buyer, cashier*. In the course of the game, the children should use the attention-getting techniques they learned in class. The teacher facilitates the children's play. During the interaction they can ask "Are you the last one in line", to the cashier "Excuse me, I want to buy..."

** For children aged 5-6 years old.* The number of roles depends on the age group of the children.*

- **Conclusion (10 minutes):**

- The children return to the circle and discuss what they have learned about ways to get an adult's attention.
- The children name actions they can use when addressing an adult and actions they can use when addressing their classmates.
- If there are children in the group who are sensitive to touch, repeat the specifics of addressing them.



Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):

- Identify the child's need (e.g., help with something), motivation for approaching (e.g., when something turned out well and the child wants to share his or her emotions).
- Approach the child.
- If it is during a break, the teacher approaches the child and uses a visual cue and says "Turn to me" (cue). The child says "I'm sorry, he/she is calling FULL NAME", and the teacher responds.

- If it is in the classroom, the teacher can come up and show a visual cue and say, "If you need something, raise your hand."
- The child raises his hand and addresses the teacher.
- The teacher responds, "Yes, I am listening to you. How can I help you?" (positive reinforcement of the skill).
- The next time we delay the prompt for 2 seconds. If the child does not respond, the adult shows a visual cue and remains silent.
- If the child speaks, the teacher responds.
- The third time in a motivational situation, the prompt is not given. The child speaks - the teacher responds.

Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):

- Identify the child's need (e.g., help with something), motivation for approaching (e.g., when something turned out well and the child wants to share his or her emotions).
- Approach the child.

- If it is during a break, the teacher approaches the child and uses a visual cue and says "Turn to me" (immediately followed by a visual cue) (cue). The child says, "Excuse me, he says his name," and the teacher responds.
- If it is in the classroom, the teacher can come up and show a visual cue and say, "If you need something, raise your hand."
- The child raises his hand and addresses the teacher.
- The teacher responds, "Yes, I am listening to you. How can I help you?" (positive reinforcement of the skill). Perform this procedure three times.
- Each time we delay the prompt by 2 seconds. We wait for the child's actions. If the child speaks, the teacher answers. If the child does not speak, we silently show the child a visual cue.
- If the child speaks, the teacher responds. Perform this procedure three times.
- The third time, in a motivational situation, the prompt is not given. The child speaks three times - the teacher responds.



- If a child applies three times in a row on their own, the training ends.

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

- Determine the child's need (e.g., help with something), motivation for approaching (e.g., when something turned out well and the child wants to share his or her emotions). Approach the child.

If it is during a break, the teacher approaches the child and uses a visual cue to say "Come to me" (immediately show the visual cue and immediately follow it with the word "can" depending on what the child can repeat) (cue). The child repeats "I can" and the teacher responds.

- If this is in the classroom, the teacher can come up and show a visual cue and at the same time say "If you need something, raise your hand." You can use a partial physical cue, touching the child's elbow, to get the child to raise their hand.

The child raises their hand and the teacher responds.

Teacher responds, "Yes, I'm listening. How can I help you?" (positive reinforcement of the skill). Perform this procedure **three times**.

Next time, we delay the prompt by 2 seconds. We wait for the child's actions. If the child speaks, the teacher responds. If the child does not respond, we silently show the child a visual cue and touch the child's elbow.

If the child raises his/her hand, the teacher responds. Perform this procedure **three times**.

The third time in a motivational situation, only a visual cue is given. If the child responds three times with a visual cue, the teacher responds.

- If the child turns independently three times in a row, the training ends.

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

- Establish the child's need (e.g., help with something), motivation for contact (e.g., when something turned out well and the child wants to share his or her emotions). Use an alternative communication system, gestures or PEXs.

Approach the child.

The teacher speaks and physically touches the child's hand to his/her arm (cue). The teacher responds with "How can I help you" or a "Wow, cool" response. Perform this procedure three times.

- If it is in the classroom, the teacher comes over and physically lifts the child's hand while saying, "I'll help you." Do this three times.

Next time, we delay the prompt by 2 seconds. We wait for the child's actions. If the child does not respond, give a physical cue and say "I'll help you" or "Wow, cool" - depending on the situation. Do this three times.

For the third time in the motivational situation, the teacher approaches the child so that he or she can touch him or her. The child touches the teacher's hand independently. The teacher says "I'll help you". Or the child raises his/her hand on his/her own and the teacher says "I'll help you" or "Wow, cool" - depending on the situation.



If the child raises his/her hand three times in a row on his/her own, the training is over.

Additional Behavioral Strategies

Anticipated behavioral challenges: Tantrums (e.g., crying, flopping to the ground, yelling) or grabbing people/items may occur as a result of having to wait.

Preventive strategies: To work to prevent encountering challenging behaviors take the following steps before running the lesson:

- Modify the environment by having highly preferred items out of reach and distancing yourself/others from the child most likely to engage in the challenging behavior.
- Systematically select targeted items to practice waiting for by working to master waiting for items that are less preferred before having to work on waiting for items that are more preferred.
- Set the child up for success by making sure that they have had sufficient time with you and/or the preferred items before initially targeting working on waiting in the group lesson.
- Provide reinforcement (e.g., verbal praise) for the small successes that you observe in the child (e.g., sitting in the group, attending to the lesson).
- A strategy for learning the behavior of waiting for an adult's attention.

Intervention strategies for challenging behaviors: If the challenging behaviors occur during the lesson be sure to keep all children safe. Minimize the attention that you provide to the challenging behaviors. Instead, make clear statements praising the children who are engaging in the desired behaviors. If the waiting activity must be terminated for a child, be sure to revisit the activity again when the child appears calm. Termination indicates that a child has exhibited challenging behavior, having been provided two opportunities to calm down. If the child is not able to calm down, forfeits access to the desired item, assistance, or individual.

Collaboration Strategies

- **Relevant collaborators:** Consider collaborating with parents by asking them to send in a list of items/situations where their child finds waiting more challenging.
- **Possibilities for incorporation:** Ask parents to work on waiting at home, too, and send home copies of visual aids used in the lesson.

Technology Inclusion

1. Observing the child during interaction in the group, noting the number of times the child raised his/her hand or addressed the teacher, analyzing whether the quality of the action increased during the day in the kindergarten.



Date	Requesting attention	Challenging behavior yes/no
	+/-	YES / NO
	+/-	YES / NO
	+/-	YES / NO
	+/-	YES / NO

Outcomes

Additional Support Resources

<https://best-practice.middletonautism.com/teachingcoreskills/waiting/>

<https://youtu.be/WYgZb3B87pw?si=6--65KH2zL5uo3ZR>

<https://autismclassroomresources.com/teach-waiting/>



Educational Toolkit Lesson 10:

Managing Time

Age range: 3-6 years old

Lesson duration: 60 minutes

Overview & Purpose

The purpose of this lesson plan on Time Management and Daily Scheduling for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is to provide teachers with evidence-based strategies to support children with ASD in developing essential life skills such as managing their time, setting and following a daily schedule.

Children with ASD often benefit from routine and predictability in their environment. Research has shown that structured schedules can help reduce anxiety and promote a sense of security for children with ASD (Boyd et al., 2011; Evans et al., 2013). In addition, teaching time management skills to children with ASD can improve their executive functioning skills, which are often impaired in this population (Kenworthy et al., 2013; Demetriou et al., 2018).

Objectives

1. Promoting Independence: By teaching children how to manage their time and follow a daily schedule, we empower them to take ownership of their daily routines and activities. Children gain confidence and independence as they learn to manage their days with more autonomy.
2. Supporting Executive Skills: Supporting executive functioning skills: Children with ASD often struggle with executive functioning skills, which include time management and daily planning. Our structured support and guidance help to develop children's organisational, planning and task initiation skills.
3. Increasing Predictability and Decreasing Anxiety: Children with ASD often benefit from routine and predictability in their environment. We can reduce anxiety and foster a sense of security in the classroom by creating a consistent daily schedule that is predictable and stable.



Materials Needed

- Visual schedule board or chart. Watch the tutorial here: <https://youtu.be/1yE8SPYxnEs?si=fe8exQnsQN3OEEA7>
- Picture cards representing daily activities (e.g., playtime, snack, circle time). Find printable examples here: <https://adayinourshoes.com/free-printable-visual-schedules-for-home-and-daily-routines/>
- Timer or clock
- Whiteboard or chart paper
- Markers or crayons
- Visual supports such as social stories or visual schedules
- AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) devices or visual communication aids
- Tablet or computer with educational apps or programs for time management like <https://www.kazutime.com/> or <https://happykidstimer.com/>

Teaching Activity

- **Introduction to Time Management (15 minutes):**
 - Discuss the importance of time management and daily routine and their objectives. It would not be surprising if time perception is indeed weaker in children with ASD than in non-ASD children, as atypical sensation and perception are common features of the disorder. Furthermore, as many individuals with ASD struggle with weaknesses in working memory and attention, it may be even more difficult for them to consistently reconstruct time intervals and process time (Jurek et al., 2019). However, time management is an important life skill that children with ASD need to develop for their future, as it is necessary for them to be successful in school, at play, or even in making sure there is enough time to eat. You have to focused on the following six complementary skills: time telling, scheduling, budgeting time, efficient use of time, prioritising, and awareness of the passage of time.
 - Show a visual timer or clock and explain how it helps us understand the passage of time.
 - To help the children understand the visual timer or clock, you can engage them in a simple activity where they estimate how long it takes to do different tasks (e.g. prepare your backpack, eat a snack etc).
- **Creating a Visual Schedule (15 minutes):**
 - One picture-based tool that supports children with ASD is the visual schedule board or chart. A visual schedule illustrates the sequence of events that will occur during a particular task, activity or throughout the day.



It can consist of a series of pictures, videos, drawings or other visual components that make tasks easier for children to understand what is expected of them. Therefore, demonstrate how to create a visual schedule board or chart using picture cards representing daily activities like: saying hello to your teacher, sitting at your desk, working on your reading, going outside for recess, eating lunch etc. Find a tutorial video here: <https://youtu.be/1yE8SPYxnEs?si=fe8exQnsQN30EEA7> and printable cards here: <https://adayinourshoes.com/free-printable-visual-schedules-for-home-and-daily-routines/>

- Discuss the benefits of visual schedules in promoting predictability and reducing anxiety
- **Interactive Activity: Following the Visual Schedule (20 minutes):**
 - Use the created visual schedule to guide children through the sequence of activities for the day.
 - Establish a visual clock or timer to show the start and end times of each activity.
 - Encourage kids to independently consult the visual schedule and move between activities in accordance with it.
 - Provide prompts and positive reinforcement when someone follows the schedule successfully.
- **Reflective Discussion and Adjustment (10 minutes):**
 - Bring the children together and reflect on how well they followed the visual schedule.
 - Talk about any difficulties or successes they had during the exercise.
 - Ask the children to suggest any changes or additions they would like to see in the schedule for the next day.
 - Give children praise and encouragement for their participation and hard work.
 - Remind children that they will have another chance to practise planning and time management in future lessons.

Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):

- Give children who show advanced skills in understanding and managing time more complex tasks, such as a weekly schedule that includes extra events and activities or using an educational time management application like <https://www.kazutime.com/> or <https://happykidstimer.com/>
- Encourage these children to take a leadership role by helping their friends understand and stick to the schedule.

Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):



- To help children with developmental skills understand and use the visual schedule, break tasks into smaller steps (e.g., follow a shorter schedule) and guide them with visual cues or prompts.
- Provide opportunities for practical experience using the visual schedule, progressively boosting independence over time.

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

- Provide individualized support for children who may require extra assistance in understanding and using the visual schedule.
- Utilize visual supports such as social stories or video modeling to reinforce learning and provide predictability.

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

- Focus on non-verbal communication and sensory strategies to help them to use the visual schedule.
- The visual schedules you use with these children should combine clear visual cues to represent each activity with simple, easy-to-understand language or symbols.
- Use augmentative and alternative communication devices or picture communication systems to support understanding and expression of preferences for daily activities.
- Incorporate sensory tools and activities into lessons to help regulate emotions and promote engagement with the visual schedule.

Additional Behavioral Strategies

Anticipated Behavioral Challenges:

- Transition barriers: Children with ASD may have difficulty transitioning between activities (e.g. free playtime to circle time), which can lead to resistance, frustration or meltdowns.
- Rigidity: Some children may be very rigid about following their previous routine, so teachers may have difficulty making adjustments or interruptions.
- Anxiety: Children who are anxious or uncertain about upcoming activities or changes in routine (e.g. may be unsure of what materials will be used or how long the activity will last), leading to increased stress levels.
- Attention and engagement: Some children may find it difficult to stay focused and engaged during activities, which can lead to off-task behaviour or disinterest.

Preventive Strategies:

- Appealing visual schedule boards or charts: To give children consistency and structure, and to help them anticipate and prepare for changes, use visually



appealing and clear schedule boards or charts, including transitions between tasks.

- Visual countdowns: To help children feel less anxious and uncertain, use visual timers or countdowns to indicate the end of an activity or the remaining time for each activity and prepare them for upcoming transitions.
- First-Then statements: To help children understand what's coming up in the schedule, use short first-then statements to describe the sequence of activities and set expectations. For example: "First we clean up, then we go to snack time." There is a helpful app for download it here: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/first-then-visual-schedule/id355527801>
- Choice-making: Offer different options (e.g. two preferred activities for free playtime) within the schedule to give children more authority and control over their education, which will increase their sense of control, reduce resistance and encourage cooperation.
- Consistent routine: To reduce stress and anxiety caused by schedule changes, establish and maintain a consistent daily routine that provides stability and predictability.

Intervention Strategies for Challenging Behaviors:

- Visual cues and reminders: Use visual cues, such as a picture of a clock showing snack time, to remind students of upcoming activities or transitions. Place these reminders around the classroom.
- Transition supports: To make transitions easier and more comfortable for children, provide a transition object, such as a visual timer or a favorite toy.
- Rewards and reinforcement: Set up a token system where children can participate in activities and earn stickers or points for staying on time. These can be exchanged for their preferred rewards.
- Social stories: To reduce anxiety and build excitement, write a social story about the art project, for example. This can include information about the materials needed, how long it will take and what to expect. A fun app for download here: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/scene-speak/id420492342>
- Tailored Assistance: Provide tailored assistance and modifications according to every child's requirements. For instance, give extra visual aids or sensory breaks to kids who have trouble focusing and participating.

Collaboration Strategies

- **Collaborate with parents and caregivers** to create consistent routines and schedules or use the same tools (schedule boards or charts) at home that align with those in the classroom.
- **Communicate regularly with support professionals**, such as therapists or behavior specialists, to share strategies and coordinate interventions for children with ASD.



Technology Inclusion

- Integrate educational apps that focus on time management and daily scheduling, such as visual timer apps. With the aid of visual timer applications, which show a countdown timer visually and sometimes include a graphic depiction of time passing, children with ASD can more effectively manage transitions and comprehend the concept of time. For example, the app "Time Timer" helps kids easily measure how much time is left for an activity or transition by offering a straightforward visual representation of time passing. Find it here: <https://www.timetimer.com/collections/applications>
- Use AAC technology to support communication and expression of preferences regarding daily activities and routines. This technology facilitates communication by providing alternative means of expression, such as symbols, pictures, text, or speech output. It can be used in order to support children to communicate their needs, preferences, or feelings, supporting non-verbal communication and expression. For example, "Boardmaker" <https://goboardmaker.com/> is a popular symbol software program that offers a vast library of symbols and templates for creating communication boards, visual schedules, and educational materials.

Outcomes

1. Observe the child's ability to manage their time effectively during scheduled activities throughout the day and collect data on the child's adherence to the visual schedule, including their ability to transition between activities in a timely manner.
2. Track the child's adherence to the visual schedule by recording the time spent on each scheduled activity and the time taken to transition between activities. For example:

Child's Name:	Date:	Scheduled Activity	Time Spent (minutes)	Transition Time (minutes)
Helen	05/01/2024	Circle Time	15	2
		Snack Time	10	3
		Story Time	20	1
		Art Activity	25	4
		Outdoor Play	30	2

Additional Support Resources

1. The Organization for Autism Research (OAR): <https://researchautism.org/>
2. Teaching Strategies: <https://teachingstrategies.com/>
3. Autism Internet Modules (AIM): <https://www.autisminternetmodules.org/>



4. Autism Focused Intervention Resources and Modules (AFIRM): <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/>
5. Autism Educator: <https://www.autismeducator.com/>
6. Autism Classroom Resources: <https://www.autismclassroomresources.com/>

These additional support resources offer a wide range of materials and information to help educators enhance their knowledge and skills in supporting children with ASD effectively.

Educational Toolkit Lesson 11: Accepting Change

Age range: 3-6

Lesson duration: 60min

Overview & Purpose

Creating a consistent environment and routine is a crucial aspect of classroom management for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) (Iovannone, Dunlap, Huber, & Kincaid, 2003). Without consistent scheduling, students on the spectrum may exhibit inflexible or rigid behaviors. However, it's inevitable that daily activities will undergo changes due to factors like school schedules, staff absences, weather fluctuations, or human error. In addition to these unpredictable changes, educators may see benefits in exposing students to new environments, materials, peers, and activities throughout the school year to broaden their experiences. Yet, when faced with alterations in environment or routine, students with ASD may resist new tasks or locations, experiencing feelings of stress, anxiety, or confusion (Kluth, 2003). Research has shown that during periods of transition or change, students are prone to engaging in tantrums, aggression, and refusal (Schreibman & Whalen, 2000; Flannery & Horner, 1994). This aversion to change can hinder the acquisition of new skills. The ability to think about how you do or say something in a new or different way.

Flexible thinking is a cognitive skill, forming part of the executive functions which can be difficult for people with autism. Types of flexible thinking include knowing that things may have to happen in a different way or order than we are used to. Typically developing individuals learn how to be flexible implicitly, by watching and learning from other people. We need to offer opportunities to teach flexible thinking explicitly to autistic children and young people, as they often do not learn this from their peers.



Objectives

1. To teach students coping strategies for accepting and adapting to changes in their environment and routines.
2. To provide students with visual support and structured routines to aid in successful transitions.
3. To foster flexibility and resilience in students with ASD when faced with changes.

Materials Needed

- Flexible items such as play dough, pipe cleaners, rubber bands, slime
- Inflexible items such as lollipop sticks, toothpicks, dried pasta
- Paper
- Index cards
- Colour pencils/ markers

Teaching Activity

- **Introduction: Flexible vs Inflexible Brain (15 min)**

Introduce the concepts and vocabulary “flexible” or “stretchy” and “inflexible” or “rigid” or “hard” (depending on your child’s language abilities). Start with concrete examples of items that are flexible – such as pipe cleaners, rubber bands, stress balls and play dough – and inflexible – such as lollipop sticks, hair grips, toothpicks, and dried spaghetti. Get your child to sort these into each category.

Next, support them to make a circle shape on a piece of paper with the pipe cleaners or play dough and then toothpicks or hair grips. Discuss which was better and why? Remark on how it is easier to work with flexible materials.

At this point, you can mention that our brains can be flexible too. Flexible brains make flexible thoughts. Discuss with the group about the different ways you can do an activity (making a sandwich, putting on your shoes and socks, walking to a certain, familiar place). Point out that there might be a different order in the steps, different materials used, different routes; and all achieve the same end result.

- **Problem-Solving Activity (45 min)**

Prepare the index cards. Write different situations involving change or unexpected events on separate index cards (e.g., “Your favourite toy breaks,” “You have to wait longer than expected for your turn,” “Your friend moves away”). On additional index cards, write down various emotions that children might feel in response to these situations (e.g., happy, sad, frustrated, anxious). Make sure there is more than one card for each emotion. Write down coping strategies and solutions on more index cards (e.g., take deep breaths, talk to a friend, ask for help, find a new activity to do).

- **Introduction:**



Gather the children in a circle and explain that they will be playing a game to practise coping with different situations and solving problems. Show them the different sets of cards (situations, emotions, coping strategies) and explain how the game will work.

- **Drawing Cards:**

Have each child select one card from the “situations” and “emotions” pile. Hand them empty index cards and have them draw the “situation”, and “emotion” they selected. After drawing their cards, ask each child to share the situation they drew, the emotion they feel in response to it. Explain that it is okay to feel these emotions.

- **Coping Strategies Brainstorming:**

Explain to the group what “coping strategy” is and give them several examples (counting to ten, using a stress ball, taking deep breaths, talking to an adult etc). For each situation the student drew, brainstorm with the group what coping strategy they could use to deal with it. Have them all draw their coping strategies in separate index cards.

- **Role-play**

Divide children in pairs and have them role-play each situation. This will give them the opportunity to practise the coping strategies they just learnt

Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):

- Encourage critical thinking and creativity by challenging students to develop their own coping strategies or solutions to situations.
- Offer leadership roles within the activity, such as guiding peers through problem-solving processes.
- If the child is able to use a calendar, mark important upcoming events or use a count-down calendar to the event.

Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):

- Allow extra time to adjust to the change if possible.
- When first introducing a new strategy try to be in a calm, quiet environment. For example, when introducing the change card, wait for the other children to leave the classroom so there are not as many distractions or noises.

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

- Offer additional visual support and cues to assist students in understanding and following along. While many of the visual support examples use black line drawings (i.e icons from Mayer-Johnson’s Boardmaker), this may not be most appropriate for all students. Assess the comprehension and understanding of your



students prior to developing supports, since some students may require the use of objects or photographs to gain meaning from the cues

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

- Offer additional visual support and cues to assist students in understanding and following along. While many of the visual support examples use black line drawings (icons from Mayer-Johnson's Boardmaker), this may not be most appropriate for all students. Assess the comprehension and understanding of your students prior to developing supports, since some students may require the use of objects or photographs to gain meaning from the cues
- Break tasks down into very small, simple steps and provide hands-on guidance as needed.
- For the drawing activity, If the child is not able to hold a pencil/draw, use premade icon cards
- When first introducing a strategy or activity, use physical guidance (aka physical prompts) to help the child

Additional Behavioral Strategies

Anticipated behavioural challenges:

Tantrums (e.g., crying, flopping to the ground, yelling) or aggressive behaviour (e.g. throwing items) may occur as a result of unexpected change to the routine

Preventive strategies:

- **Visual timetables:** Provide the child with daily visual schedules and timers so that they can see clearly what is happening and when. These visual supports can help a child to understand the order of daily events, the steps involved in daily living skills, and the daily schedule at school, including any changes in routine that may occur
- **The Change Card:** Once your student understands how to use the visual timetable, it is important to start introducing changes into the schedule content (Mesibov, Shea, & Schopler, 2005). Make sure the schedule varies each day, and deliberately change some pre-planned activities. This will help the child tolerate change. When activities are changed, however, a strategy to support the student should be in place.

First of all, select a meaningful visual cue to use with students when introducing the concept of change. This can be a "surprise" icon, a "question mark", a specific photograph or a written word depending on the student's needs and abilities. Place the selected change cue on top of the scheduled activity that will not be occurring (i.e., recess on the playground), and the new activity next in the day's sequence of events (i.e., watch a movie in the classroom). When teaching the change concept,



it is helpful to go to the visual schedule with the student, look at the change card together, and assist with the transition to the new activity.

You could also create a “change envelope” where the students can place the visual change cue and the schedule card of the activity that will not be occurring.

It is helpful to introduce change gradually and in a positive way. Begin by changing activities that are typically seen as non-preferred by the student to activities that are preferred (i.e., changing a student’s schedule from maths to extra computer time). Once the student is tolerating changes from a non-preferred to a preferred activity, introduce change of a neutral event (i.e., changing maths to language arts), and finally, introduce change from a preferred activity to a neutral and/or non-preferred.

- **Priming:** Priming is a method of previewing information or activities that a student is likely to have difficulty with before the student is engaged in the challenging situation. A student previews future events such as a fire drill, substitute teacher, field trip, or rainy-day schedule, so they become more predictable (Schreibman & Whalen, 2000). Priming has been used effectively in academic instruction and social interaction (Harrower & Dunlap, 2001), and has recently been used in preparing students for novel settings or changes in routine.
 - Social Stories: Social stories can also be a great resource in preparing for change or an anxiety-provoking event. They are a method for explaining what is happening and what is expected across environmental settings. Typically, social stories are written in first person, include illustrations, provide the perspective of a person with ASD, and should be at the student’s comprehension level. Often social stories provide answers to questions that students on the spectrum may not know to ask. Carol Gray, the originator of Social Stories, describes the recommended story structure and sentence types on her website, <http://www.thegraycenter.org/>. Though precise story structure is ideal, when faced with an unexpected change or novel event, modified social stories that can be quickly written by staff members (which do not contain an exact sentence ratio) are viable priming strategies. After identifying the novel event, and assessing the comprehension skills of the students, write a story following Gray’s guidelines. Staff members should read the story to and/or with the student consistently over a period of days. Providing a copy for use at home is helpful as well. When new activities are planned well in advance, preparing a social story following Gray’s guidelines is recommended.
 - Video Priming: Videotaped instruction has proven effective in teaching new skills to students with autism (Schreibman & Whalen, 2000), and recently has been used to prepare students for upcoming events. For example, go



to the location with a video camera and walk through the steps that will be required while taping and provide a simple narration one to four minutes long about the process and requirements. For example, if planning a field trip to the zoo, visit the zoo and while videotaping, explain aspects of what will happen there, such as riding the train, using new restrooms, and eating at the snack bar. After making the video, show it to your child several times to help prepare for the event. Research has shown that when using videos in this manner, with children with ASD, disruptive behaviour decreased greatly as the routines were made more predictable.

- Teach students alternative means of expressing emotions, such as using visual emotion cards or a feelings chart.
- Encourage the use of calming strategies, such as deep breathing or taking a break, when feeling overwhelmed.

Intervention strategies for challenging behaviours:

- Try to redirect your child to a calming activity or encourage the use of coping skills such as deep breathing or self-talk phrases (for example, “I’ve been through change before, and I can do it again.”). Praise your child or use other rewards for coping with change.
- If the challenging behaviours occur during the lesson be sure to keep all children safe. Minimise the attention that you provide to the challenging behaviours. Instead, make clear statements praising the children who are engaging in the desired behaviours.
- Use the visual timetable or a “Now and Next” board to make sure the child understands what is happening next
- If challenging behaviour occurs during transitioning from one activity to the other, make sure you follow through with the transition to the new activity. Do not allow the child to continue the current activity if they exhibit challenging behaviour

Collaboration Strategies

- **Relevant collaborators:** Parents play a crucial role in supporting their child's learning and development. Other teachers and therapists can also collaborate
- **Possibilities for incorporation:** These strategies (visual timetables, timers, priming) can easily be incorporated into the home environment as well (i.e., preparing for a new babysitter, explaining that a favourite DVD is broken, going to a different restaurant). Professionals may assist parents in identifying novel and challenging situations, creating materials, and modelling their implementation.
- In order to encourage flexibility, parents may want to include a new daily activity in their visual schedule that is a positive event. That way, the child can learn that change can bring fun and exciting things as well!



Technology Inclusion

Games that help with dealing with change: <https://idealvr.eu/vr-game/>
<http://www.whizkidgames.com/?game=rufusgoestoschool>

Visuals can be used to help with transitioning to new activities, such as a timer and visual timetable app: <https://www.timetimer.com/collections/applications>.

<https://www.pictogramagenda.es/en/pictogramagenda-en/>

Apps to help you create your own visual timetables:

Boardmaker: <https://goboardmaker.com/>

<https://arasaac.org/index.html>

Outcomes

1. Observation of transitioning from one preferred activity to a non-preferred activity without exhibiting challenging behaviour
2. Observation of child tolerating an unexpected change to the daily routine without exhibiting any challenging behaviour/ using their coping strategies
3. Data collected on the number of times the child transitioned to the next activity/tolerated change without challenging behaviour and using their coping strategies, as opposed to the number of times they did not.

Date	Transitioned from one activity to the other/ Tolerated unexpected change	Activities/ what changed?	Used coping strategies with prompts	Used coping strategies independently	Challenging behaviour yes/no
1.3.	No	Recess to Maths	x		YES
1.3.	No	Substitute teacher	x		YES
1.3.	Yes	Recess to Maths	x		NO
1.3.	Yes	School trip cancelled		x	NO



Additional Support Resources

Using visual timetables:

<https://reachoutasc.com/the-right-way-to-use-visual-timetables/>

https://ed-psych.utah.edu/school-psych/_resources/documents/grants/autism-training-grant/Visual-Schedules-Practical-Guide-for-Families.pdf

Change in routine card:

<https://www.autism360.com/using-change-in-routine-card-as-a-visual-tool-for-autism/>

Teaching emotional regulation:

<https://www.healisautism.com/post/coping-strategies-teach-children-autism>

Flexible vs Rigid cards:

<https://autismteachingstrategies.com/autism-strategies/flexibility-in-kids-with-asd-card-activity-to-teach-this-social-skill-to-children-on-the-autism-spectrum/>

Educational Toolkit Lesson 12: Using Coping Strategies in Challenging Sensory Situations

Age range: 3-6 years old

Lesson duration: 60 minutes

Overview & Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to teach young students how to use coping strategies to manage challenging sensory situations. Students will learn how to identify when they are experiencing sensory overload and how to use various coping strategies to help them feel more comfortable. This lesson will help students develop self-awareness and self-regulation skills that will serve them well throughout their lives.

Objectives

1. Students will be able to identify situations that may cause sensory overload.
2. Students will be able to explain at least two coping strategies for managing sensory overload.
3. Students will be able to demonstrate how to use at least one coping strategy in a simulated sensory overload situation.

Materials Needed



- Sensory toys (e.g. fidget spinners, stress balls, etc.)
- Noise-cancelling headphones
- Quiet space or sensory-friendly area
- Chart paper and markers
- Storybook about sensory processing
 - "The Good Egg Presents: The Great Eggscape!" by Jory John
 - "The Hugging Tree: A Story About Resilience" by Jill Neimark
 - "Too Loud, Too Bright, Too Fast, Too Tight: What to Do If You Are Sensory Defensive in an Overstimulating World" by Sharon Heller
 - "Arnie and His School Tools: Simple Sensory Solutions That Build Success" by Jennifer Veenendall
 - "The Reason I Jump: The Inner Voice of a Thirteen-Year-Old Boy with Autism" by Naoki Higashida

Teaching Activity

- Introduction (5 minutes):
 - Begin by reading a storybook about sensory processing to the class.
 - Ask the students if they have ever experienced a situation where they felt overwhelmed by their senses (e.g. loud noises, bright lights, etc.)
 - Explain that sometimes our senses can feel too strong or overwhelming, and that it's important to know what to do when this happens.
- Discussion (10 minutes):
 - Ask the students to share situations that cause them sensory overload.
 - Write down their responses on chart paper.
 - Discuss with the students different coping strategies they can use in these situations (e.g. taking a break in a quiet space, using sensory toys, wearing noise-cancelling headphones, etc.)
 - Write down the coping strategies on chart paper.
- Activity (30 minutes):
 - Divide the students into small groups.
 - Each group will be given a sensory toy and asked to simulate a situation where they feel sensory overload (e.g. a group of students making loud noises).
 - Encourage the students to use the coping strategies they learned in the discussion to manage their sensory overload.
 - After the simulation, have the students share which coping strategies they used and how they felt afterwards.
- Wrap-up (10 minutes):@@
 - Bring the class back together and ask each student to share one coping strategy they learned today.
 - Encourage the students to practice using these coping strategies whenever they feel sensory overload.



Differentiated Instruction

Tier 1 (children with advanced skills):

- **Spark Curiosity:** Instead of a traditional lecture, ignite student interest by presenting the topic as a springboard for exploration. Allow students to choose areas that pique their curiosity within the theme (e.g., researching how the human ear works and creating a model, delving into the fascinating world of taste buds and designing a taste test experiment, or investigating different textures and their applications in everyday life). This fosters student ownership and engagement in their learning.
- **Tiered Activities:** Accommodate different learning styles and understanding levels by offering a variety of activities within the lesson. Advanced learners can delve deeper into complex topics (e.g., researching specific sensory processing disorders and their characteristics), create elaborate coping mechanisms (e.g., designing a weighted vest or noise-canceling headphones prototype), or research specific disorders. For students who need additional support, provide tiered activities that break down complex concepts into smaller, more manageable steps (e.g., matching pictures of senses to their functions or creating a simple sensory collage).
- **Sensory Detectives:** Challenge students to become sensory detectives! Conduct a "sensory audit" of their environment (classroom, cafeteria, playground). They can identify potential triggers for themselves and others (e.g., bright fluorescent lights, loud noises, strong smells) and suggest solutions for creating a more sensory-friendly space (e.g., dimming lights, adding sound-absorbing materials, incorporating calming scents). This activity encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills.
- **Bringing Theory to Life:** Make the topic relatable through case studies. Present case studies of individuals with different sensory processing disorders (e.g., dyslexia, autism spectrum disorder). Students can analyze the challenges faced (e.g., difficulty processing sounds, feeling overwhelmed in crowded spaces) and brainstorm effective coping strategies tailored to each case (e.g., using noise-canceling headphones, fidget tools, or taking short breaks). This fosters empathy and understanding for diverse sensory experiences.
- **Design Thinking Challenge:** Spark creativity with a design challenge! Pose a real-world problem: create a sensory toolkit for a specific environment (e.g., classroom, library, waiting room) considering the needs of diverse learners. Students can use art supplies or digital tools to design their toolkit prototypes (e.g., including fidget tools, noise-canceling headphones, calming scents, weighted lap pads). This activity integrates design thinking principles and allows students to apply their knowledge in a practical way.



- **Coping Strategy Showcase:** Encourage students to develop their own unique coping strategies beyond basic techniques (e.g., deep breathing, counting). Students can create short presentations or infographics showcasing their strategies (e.g., drawing a comic strip depicting a calming routine or creating a video demonstrating a pressure point massage technique) and share them with the class. This fosters a sense of community, allows students to learn from each other (e.g., discovering new calming techniques), and celebrates the diversity of coping mechanisms.

Tier 2 (children with developmentally appropriate skills):

- **Scaffolding for Success:** Provide additional support to students who require it. This could include:
 - **Clear Communication:** Use simple and concise language throughout the lesson. Break down complex directions into smaller steps (e.g., "First, gather your materials. Then, listen carefully to the instructions.>").
 - **Visual Aids and Demonstrations:** Incorporate visual aids (e.g., charts, diagrams, pictures) and demonstrations whenever possible to enhance understanding and retention.
 - **Wait Time and Positive Reinforcement:** Allow students extra time to process information and respond. Offer positive reinforcement and praise students for their participation (e.g., "Great job listening!" or "I see you're focusing really hard.") to build confidence.
 - **Physical Prompts and Encouragement:** Use positive body language (e.g., smiles, nods) and be patient. Celebrate small successes (e.g., "You completed that step perfectly!") and offer encouragement throughout the lesson. Collaborate with parents or therapists to identify any specific physical prompts that may be helpful for individual students (e.g., a gentle touch on the shoulder or a hand squeeze).
 - **Personalized Coping Strategies:** Suggest specific coping strategies based on their sensory needs (e.g., fidget tools for students who seek tactile input, noise-canceling headphones for students who are sensitive to sounds). Collaborate with parents or occupational therapists to personalize suggestions throughout the lesson. Create a sensory corner in the classroom as a safe space for students who feel overwhelmed (e.g., stocked with calming activities and sensory tools readily available).
- **Fidget Tools:** Allow students to access chosen fidget tools

Tier 3 (children needing additional support):

Tier 3 strategies provide intensive support for students who require additional structure and individualized approaches to manage their sensory processing needs.



- Visual Roadmaps: Develop individualized visual schedules using pictures, symbols, or even real objects to represent daily activities and potential sensory triggers. Include visuals for coping strategies students can use during transitions or challenging situations (e.g., picture of noise-canceling headphones for loud activities, image of a squeeze ball for students seeking tactile input). This provides a predictable structure and a clear reference point for students throughout the day, helping them navigate the school environment more effectively.
- First/Then Boards with Action Pictures: Utilize first/then boards with visuals to communicate expectations. For example, a first/then board might depict a picture of a student sitting quietly followed by a picture of a desired activity (playing with blocks). This helps students understand the expectation of using a coping strategy (sitting quietly) before engaging in a preferred activity (playing).
- Movement Breaks with Choice: Integrate short movement breaks with calming activities tailored to student preferences. Offer a variety of choices to cater to different sensory needs. Some students might benefit from energetic activities like jumping jacks, while others might prefer quieter options like deep pressure massage or yoga stretches. This allows students to release energy in a way that feels calming and refocuses them for continued learning.
- Hands-on Exploration of Sensory Tools: Create a sensory bin filled with various textured objects, calming scents, and noise-cancelling headphones. Allow students to explore the bin throughout the day and experiment with what feels calming and helpful for them. This self-directed exploration empowers students to discover their own sensory preferences and identify tools that can support their regulation.
- Guiding Self-Regulation: Provide clear and concise verbal prompts to guide students in identifying triggers and choosing coping strategies. For example, if a student seems overwhelmed by noise, you could ask, "Are you feeling overwhelmed by the noise? Would you like to try using your noise-canceling headphones?" This helps students develop self-awareness and the skills to manage their sensory needs independently.
- Alternative Communication Methods: For students with limited verbal communication, utilize Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) or other alternative communication methods to allow them to express their sensory needs and request specific coping strategies. For instance, a student could use a PECS card with a picture of headphones to indicate they need a noise break. This ensures all students have a voice in communicating their sensory experiences and requesting the support they need.
- Teaching Self-Regulation Techniques: Teach students simple self-regulation techniques like deep breathing exercises, counting (e.g., counting to 10 slowly), and progressive muscle relaxation. Practice these techniques regularly so students can utilize them independently to manage their sensory input and emotions.



- Social Stories with Personalized Scenarios: Create social stories with pictures or visuals that depict students identifying their triggers, communicating their needs using PECS or their chosen communication method, and practicing coping strategies. Personalize the scenarios to reflect real-life situations students might encounter (e.g., going to the cafeteria, participating in group activities). This helps students develop social-emotional skills and practice self-advocacy in different settings.

Tier 4 (children needing a lot of help and with limited communication skills):

Tier 4 provides the most intensive level of support for students who require significant assistance in managing their sensory processing needs.

- Decoding Non-Verbal Cues: Train yourself to focus on non-verbal communication. Observe and respond to students' facial expressions, body language, and vocalizations (e.g., fidgeting, whimpering) to identify potential sensory triggers and signs of distress before they escalate. This proactive approach allows you to intervene early and provide appropriate support.
- Individualized Sensory Exploration: Provide opportunities for individual exploration of sensory bins, catering to each student's comfort level and preferences. Some students might only tolerate certain textures or sounds initially. Respect their boundaries and gradually introduce new sensory experiences as they become more comfortable.
- Physical Prompts and Assistance: Offer physical prompts and assistance as needed to guide students towards calming activities or preferred coping strategies. For example, you might gently guide a student feeling overwhelmed to the sensory corner or help them put on their noise-canceling headphones. It's important to use positive reinforcement and explain your actions throughout the process.
- Sensory Mapping: In collaboration with therapists, create a sensory map for each student. This map visually identifies sensory triggers (e.g., bright lights, loud noises) in different environments (classroom, cafeteria, playground) and suggests coping mechanisms for each trigger. This empowers students to navigate their surroundings proactively.
- Predictable Routines: Establish predictable routines and schedules throughout the day. Provide visual cues (e.g., picture cards, timers) to signal transitions between activities, which can be especially challenging for students with sensory processing difficulties.
- Desensitization Techniques: For some students, gradual exposure to tolerated levels of sensory triggers can be helpful. This should be done under the guidance of an occupational therapist to ensure a safe and controlled environment.
- Weighted Tools: Offer weighted vests, lap pads, or blankets for students who benefit from deep pressure input. The gentle pressure can have a calming effect and improve focus.



- **Movement Breaks:** Integrate short movement breaks throughout the day specifically designed for the student's needs. Some students might benefit from activities in a designated movement space, while others might require quieter movement options like chair stretches or yoga poses.
- **Choice and Control:** Whenever possible, offer students choices related to their sensory needs. This could involve selecting a preferred fidget tool, choosing a calming activity during a break, or opting for a different noise-canceling headphone style. Empowering students with choices fosters a sense of control and self-regulation.
- **Social-Emotional Learning:** Integrate social-emotional learning (SEL) activities to help students identify their emotions, communicate their sensory needs effectively, and develop coping mechanisms. Role-playing scenarios can be a helpful tool for practicing self-advocacy skills.

Additional Behavioral Strategies

- **Anticipated Behavioral Challenges:**
 - Some students may struggle to identify when they are experiencing sensory overload.
 - Some students may struggle to use coping strategies independently.
- **Preventive Strategies:**
 - Use visual aids to help students identify when they are experiencing sensory overload.
 - Provide opportunities for students to practice using coping strategies in a safe and supportive environment.
- **Intervention Strategies for Challenging Behaviors:**
 - Provide one-on-one support for students who require more intensive support with self-regulation.
 - Use positive reinforcement to encourage students to use coping strategies independently.

Collaboration Strategies

- **Relevant Collaborators:**
 - Occupational therapist
 - Speech therapist
 - Sensory integration specialist
 - School counselor
- **Possibilities for Incorporation:**
 - Invite relevant collaborators to observe the lesson and provide feedback.
 - Collaborate with occupational and speech therapists and sensory integration specialists to develop individualized coping strategies for students with sensory processing disorders.



Technology Inclusion

There are a few ways you can incorporate technology into teaching coping strategies for challenging sensory situations:

- **use educational apps** that help students identify and manage sensory overload:
 - Sensory Speak Up: This app helps students with sensory processing issues to identify and communicate their sensory needs by providing them with a visual prompt to express how they are feeling.
 - Calm Counter: This app is designed to help students manage their emotions, including sensory overload, by providing them with a visual representation of their emotional state.
 - Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame: This app uses Sesame Street characters to teach young students coping strategies for managing challenging situations, including sensory overload.
- **virtual reality** experiences to simulate sensory overload situations.
 - Virtual reality can provide students with a safe and controlled environment to practice using coping strategies and develop self-regulation skills.
 - For example, students could use a virtual reality headset to simulate a noisy or crowded environment and practice using noise-canceling headphones or other coping strategies.
- **video and online resources**
 - There are several videos available online that help students understand sensory processing issues and provide coping strategies for managing sensory overload.
 - - "Sensory Processing Disorder: What It Is and How to Help" by Understood.org (<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/sensory-processing-issues/sensory-processing-disorder-what-it-is-and-how-to-help>)
 - - "Sensory Overload Explained" by The Asperger/Autism Network (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lr4_d0orQUc)
 - - "Sensory Processing Disorder: Coping Strategies" by The National Center for Learning Disabilities (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Mg5hPTnKuY>)
 - - "Sensory Processing Disorder: Information and Strategies for School" by STAR Institute for Sensory Processing Disorder (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mBtHIPvLAM>)
 - - "Sensory Processing Disorder: Strategies for Teachers" by Understood.org (<https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/partnering-with-childs-school/instructional-strategies/sensory-processing-disorder-strategies-for-teachers>)
 - You could also use online resources to create interactive activities or quizzes to help reinforce learning and check for student understanding.



- Kahoot: <https://kahoot.com/>
- Quizlet: <https://quizlet.com/>
- Quizizz: <https://quizizz.com/>
- Google Forms: <https://www.google.com/forms/about/>
- Edpuzzle: <https://edpuzzle.com/>
- Nearpod: <https://nearpod.com/>
- BrainPOP: <https://www.brainpop.com/>
- CommonLit: <https://www.commonlit.org/>
- Newsela: <https://newsela.com/>

Outcomes

Steps to check for student understanding:

1. Observe students during the activity to ensure they use coping strategies appropriately.
2. Ask students to explain a coping strategy they learned at the end of the lesson.

Additional Support Resources

Websites/links to other helpful resources on the targeted topic:

- The Out-of-Sync Child: Recognizing and Coping with Sensory Processing Disorder by Carol Stock Kranowitz
- Sensory Processing 101 by Dayna Abraham, Claire Heffron, and Pamela Braley
- <https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/sensory-processing-issues/10-sensory-processing-red-flags-to-watch-for-in-young-kids>
- <https://www.thesensoryspectrum.com/>
- <https://www.sensorysmarts.com/>
- <https://www.spdstar.org/>
- <https://www.spdclinic.com/>
- <https://theinspiredtreehouse.com/>
- <https://www.yourkidsot.com/>
- <https://www.theottoolbox.com/>
- <https://www.nspt4kids.com/>
- <https://childmind.org/>