

Training Module

**Life Journey
Through Autism**

Presented by

Kaleidoscope Family Solutions, Inc

Transition to Adulthood

Autism 101 Overview

IDEA

Goals

Transition Planning

- Employment
- Post-secondary education
- Life Skills

Autism 101 Overview

Definition of Autism -a developmental disorder that appears by age three and that is variable in expression but is recognized and diagnosed by impairment of the ability to form normal social relationships, by impairment of the ability to communicate with others, and by stereotyped behavior patterns especially as exhibited by a preoccupation with repetitive activities of restricted focus rather than with flexible and imaginative ones

Characteristics - Social Interaction Impairments

A child may...

- Have difficulty making eye contact with others
- Show little body language or facial expressions when interacting
- Have difficulty developing relationships with peers
- Seem uninterested in sharing experiences
- Engage less in give-and-take social interaction with caregivers, siblings and other close relations

Characteristics: Speech, Language and Communication Impairments

A child may...

- Have difficulty communicating with speech or with gestures
- Have difficulty understanding what others are saying to him
- Have difficulty using the language he has to interact with others
- Have difficulty starting or continuing a conversation
- Have difficulty using his own sentences, and instead, may repeat what others say (referred to as echolalia)
- Lack make-believe or pretend-play skills

Characteristics - Stereotyped or Repetitive Behavior

A child may...

- Show interest in very few objects or activities and play with them in repetitive ways
- Perform repetitive routines and have difficulty with changes in these routines
- Spend time in repetitive movements (such as waving a hand in front of his face)

DSM Changes

- The DSM-IV currently identifies a set of Pervasive Developmental Disorders that are considered "autism spectrum disorders" (ASDs). These include Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS).
- One of the most significant changes in the DSM V is that the separate diagnostic labels of Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, and PDD-NOS will be replaced by one umbrella term "Autism Spectrum Disorder."
- Further distinctions will be made according to severity levels.
- The severity levels are based on the amount of support needed, due to challenges with social communication and restricted interests and repetitive behaviors. For example, a person might be diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3.
- The removal of the formal diagnoses of Asperger's Disorder and PDD-NOS is a major change.
- Revisions to the specific criteria needed for a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder have also been made. The new criteria are more thorough and strict compared to the old criteria. For example, more symptoms are needed to meet criteria within the area of fixated interests and repetitive behaviors.
- Currently, the domains for Autistic Disorder include impairments in Communication, Social Interaction, and Restricted Interests and Repetitive Behaviors.
- In the new edition, the Communication and Social Interaction domains will be combined into one, titled "Social/Communication Deficits."

Additional Information - Funding/Research

- In fiscal years 2007 and 2008, NIH began funding the 11 Autism Centers of Excellence (ACE), coordinated by the NIH/ACC.
- The ACEs are investigating early brain development and functioning, social interactions in infants, rare genetic variants and mutations, associations between autism-related genes and physical traits, possible environmental risk factors and biomarkers, and a potential new medication treatment.
- BRAIN
P.O. Box 5801 Bethesda, MD 20824 (800) 352-9424
<http://www.ninds.nih.gov>
- Information also is available from the following organizations:

IDEA

Integrated Disability Education and Awareness Program

Provides federal funding to state and local school systems to provide special education services to eligible students with disabilities

Goals

1. Ensure that all children with disabilities receive free, appropriate public education with special education and related services designed to meet their specific needs
2. Prepare them for employment and independent living
3. Protect the rights of children with disabilities and their parents
4. Assist states, federal agencies, and schools in providing an education to all children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of educating children with disabilities

IDEA protects your child from age 3-21, at age 16, the IEP needs to include outcome oriented, based on your child's strengths and areas of need and focused on instruction and services for education, employment, and other post-secondary living skills.

- IEP-commonly referred to as an IEP, is mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). An IEP defines the individualized objectives of a child who has been found with a disability, as defined by federal regulations. The IEP is intended to help children reach educational goals more easily than they otherwise would
- 2004 Revision of the IDEA
- Defines "transition services" as a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that is
 - Results oriented - focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child
 - Supportive - designed to facilitate the child's movement from school to post school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated or supported employment, continuing and adult educational, independent living or community participation
 - Student centered - based on the individual child needs, taking into account strengths, preferences and interests
 - Comprehensive - includes instruction and related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other skills of daily living

Questions

- Where will this individual be at the end of the process?
- What skills will the individual have?
- What contexts will be the best for him to apply these skills?

Activity-The big picture

Think about the big picture

- What do you want your child's life to look like in 5 years, 10 or 20?
- What do you not want your child's life to look like in 5 years, 10 or 20?
- What will he or she require to get to one and avoid the other?

Goals

- Writing overarching goals
 - Should build from the information you gathered in the assessment regarding quality of life, personal interests, strengths and challenges, and past experiences
- Examples - my child will...
 1. Be able to live independently
 2. Be comfortable and safe in a supportive living situation
 3. Have two or three close relationships
 4. Contribute to the community
 5. Find satisfaction in several of his daily activities

Transition planning

- Should be student centered
- Preparing for the transition planning meeting (appendix f) Foster self-determination skills (appendix g)
- Prepare in advance and be sensitive Educate your child about ASD Educate yourself
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Key topics to look at and review when doing a transition plan
 - EMPLOYMENT
 - POST SECONDARY EDUCATION
 - LIFE SKILLS

Employment

- Whether a job provides financial support, personal fulfillment, social opportunities, or some combination of these, it is a very important component of life. In fact, what one does for a living is a defining feature of that person and their role in society.

3 categories

- Competitive employment
- Supported employment
- Secured or segregated employment
- Looking at Strengths v. Weaknesses
- Marketing Characteristics as Employment Strengths
- Job matching - critical importance
- Allie, Ellie, Pete, Ryan Handouts - Appendix I
 - Job Ideas
 - When to disclose
 - List of reasonable and common job accommodations

VIDEO - employment

Post-secondary education

- Options - Appendix H
 - Vocational school
 - Community college
 - Technical institute
 - State school

- Small liberal arts school
- Disabilities Department at the school
- Supports at school/accommodations
- Funding

Post secondary education

Additional skills needed

- Organization and time management
- Independent living skills
 - Money management
 - Laundry
 - Cleaning
- Safety skills
- Problem solving

Life Skills

Living arrangement options

- Supervised group home living
- Adult foster care
- Supervised apartment living
- Supported living
- Independent living

Personal care

Time Management

- Break Day into chunks
- Individualized activity schedules (organizer)
- Electronic organizer/IPAD

Hobbies and recreation

- -Consider how these are useful in transition planning

Sexuality and relationships

- Safety is key!

Daily living skills

- Phone, cleaning, laundry, banking, budgeting, credit cards, public transportation, driving, etc.

Health and Wellness

- Exercise, nutrition, cooking



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Self Certification

I, _____, (Name) have read

Life Journey through Autism on _____ (Date) and fully understand

the document. I will receive one credit hour for reading this training module.

Signature: _____