

ASES e-NEWS

DATE: FEBRUARY 2012

“People take time. Dealing with discipline takes time. Children are not fax machines or credit cards. When they misbehave, they tell us that they need help learning a better way. They are telling us that there are basic needs not being met which are motivating the behavior.” —Allen N. Mendler



WORKSHOPS TERM 1, 2012

Warragul Country Club	9.30am -3.30pm	Regional	FEB 28 Tuesday	Wholeday	Intro to ASD, Positive and Practical strategies to support Behaviour & Learning
The Brook on Sneydes, Point Cook	9.30am -3.30pm	WEST	March 7 Friday	Wholeday	Intro to ASD, Positive and Practical strategies to support Behaviour & Learning
Rossdale Golf Club Aspendale	9.30am- 3.30pm	SOUTH	March 8 Thursday	Wholeday	Intro to ASD, Positive and Practical strategies to support Behaviour & Learning
Box Hill RSL	9.30 am -3.30pm	EAST	August 27 Thurs	Wholeday	Intro to ASD, Positive and Practical strategies to support Behaviour & Learning
Casa D'Abruzzo Club EPPING	9.30 am -3.30pm	NORTH	Sept 5 Monday	Wholeday	Intro to ASD, Positive and Practical strategies to support Behaviour & Learning

[Cristina is available for Professional learning sessions at your school.](#)

YouTube launches a section just for schools

<http://www.youtube.com/schools>

Many schools block access to YouTube from their networks. To solve this problem, YouTube has created a special section for schools, filled with age-appropriate educational content. **YouTube for Schools** gives users access to the hundreds of thousands of educational videos on YouTube EDU. This includes short lessons from top teachers around the world, full courses from the world's best universities, professional development from fellow educators, and inspiring videos from thought leaders. School teachers and administrators can log in and watch any video, but students cannot log in and can only watch YouTube EDU videos and videos their school has added. All comments and related videos are disabled, and search is limited to YouTube EDU videos. YouTube also has created a page for teachers, YouTube.com/Teachers, to help them learn to use the site as a powerful educational tool.



Strategies for Returning to School after a Break

<http://www.sandbox-learning.com>

The transition from a break back to school can be difficult for children. Professionals and parents can make the return easier with a few simple strategies.

1. Review Classroom Rules and School Policies - One of the first things to do when children return to school is to review all of the classroom and school rules. Time spent focusing on classroom structure and schedules can reduce problems later. Remind children of expectations for how to treat classmates, complete work, and follow schedules. Remind children of any reward system and let them know where rules are posted and who to ask if there are questions about the rules.

2. Introduce Any Changes – Clearly explain any changes that have happened since the break. Examples are staff changes, schedule changes, or even room arrangements that may surprise children. Be sure to indicate how the change affects them. Introducing changes helps prepare children and reduce stress related to new situations.

3. Let Children Play a Role – Children can help review the rules by participating in activities. For example, they can help create a new rules poster by writing or drawing examples of how to follow the rules. Another activity is to assign a rule or school policy to small groups of students and have them write and perform a short play about it. By participating in the process children are reviewing and taking ownership in the rules.

4. Review and Reinforce Repeatedly – Children can be very excited to see friends and be back in school. Be sure to set time aside to review rules repeatedly the first few days back after a break. Children may need extra reminders in written or picture format if they have a hard time remembering specific rules. When children are doing a good job completing work, following a schedule, or acting appropriately, reinforce their behaviour. Clearly indicate what they did correctly so they can continue the behaviour. For example, “James, I like the way you remembered to raise your hand to get my attention.”

5. Keep Everyone Informed – Parents and professionals should make each other aware of changes in settings so children have consistent support and understanding across environments. Professionals should send a set of classroom and school rules home for parents to review with children and prepare them for returning from break. Parents also should be aware of any significant school policy changes or classroom changes. Parents should keep professionals informed of any significant changes at home such as health issues, sleeping changes, or family difficulties that may affect how the child performs in school. Information sharing can ensure children have the understanding and support they need between environments.

Early childhood: Managing Self-injurious Behaviour

<http://autismhelp.info>

"I find it really distressing when I see Patrick banging his head."

Types of self injurious behaviour Children and adults with autism may engage in self-injurious behaviors, also known as self-harm. Self-injurious behaviors are actions that the child performs that result in physical injury to the child's own body. Typical forms of self-injurious behaviour include:

- hitting oneself with hands or other body parts
- Head-banging
- biting oneself
- picking at skin or sores
- scratching or rubbing oneself repeatedly.

Why does this happen?

- The behaviour may be a form of communication. This may be seen in a child who is profoundly intellectually disabled and has little or no verbal skills.
- The child may be experiencing extreme anxiety.
- The child may be in pain and unable to communicate. Ear and urinary tract infections can often cause a dramatic increase in self injurious behaviour.
- The behaviour may be caused by frustration if the child is unable to complete a task or does not get what he wants.

What you can do Observe the behaviour, when and where it occurs, who is present at the time and any other factors that may contribute. i.e. does the child bite their hand when they hear a certain noise.

Don't ignore the behaviour but attend to the child with a minimum of attention. Reactions of surprise or anger may result in the behaviour being reinforced. Give a clear and firm verbal message, e.g. "Patrick Stop!" "Hands down" Try to redirect him toward a more appropriate activity that you know the child will enjoy. Do not use the word "No" as it can make the situation worse. Give the child lots of praise, attention and rewards for appropriate behaviour and when the child uses words or gesture to communicate.

Consult with a speech therapist to assist in the development of speech and picture exchange programs or signing if required. Developing the child's functional communication is of utmost importance to encourage the child to communicate their needs rather than engaging in self injurious behaviour.

Distraction may be used to prevent self-injury. Give the child a favourite toy or other distraction to play with in situations where the child is likely to hurt them self.

If the behaviour is out of character, it may have a medical cause such as an ear infection, urinary tract infection or stomach pain. A consultation with a paediatrician may be required if the behaviour is frequent, severe and ongoing, to determine if medication is required as part of a behaviour management strategy.

Sensory Meltdowns vs Behaviour Meltdowns

Do you know the difference?

www.suelarkey.com

Understanding the difference between a sensory meltdown and a behaviour meltdown is VITAL as the strategies to resolve are very different. You will need two very different plans. Let's take two situations and compare.

Situation One - Joshua arrives at school and he has a relief teacher for the day and his desk has been moved. These unscheduled changes are likely to cause a behaviour meltdown as they heighten anxiety. The solutions to this situation could include showing a visual that his teacher is away, moving his desk back or preventative break strategies.

Situation Two - Joshua leaves home happy, walks into school and children are playing recorder in the classroom. He covers his ears, screams and runs away. This is a sensory meltdown. It is usually '0-100 fight or flight' and you will rarely see it coming. I only wish that sensory meltdowns were always so obvious. Often it can be a change of perfume, chair scrapping on floor and many other subtle sensory issues that we are unaware of. This is why an understanding the child's sensory needs is so important. There are some great books that you can use to workout sensory triggers so you can successfully address these.

Fear of Failure

Points to note

- Many children with autism are very particular about certain aspects of their work. They may insist on getting things right, starting an activity, making a mistake, then starting over again. The child may have great difficulty completing a task.
- Some children become frustrated by their mistakes; scribbling over them or furiously rubbing them out until they make a hole in their paper. This causes even greater distress!
- Children with autism may be very reluctant to take part in any unfamiliar activity. They like to stick with preferred activities that they know they can do well.

What you can do

- Don't comment on failure, just show the child the correct way.
- Avoid negative comments, like saying 'no' or 'that's not right'.
- Show the child that you make mistakes too and show the child how you deal with them, i.e. if you make a spelling mistake, you can simply put a line through the word.
- Build success into activities - ensuring that tasks are not too difficult.
- Children with autism might receive a lot of negative comments about their behaviour, so counter this with praise at every opportunity. Children with autism need a lot of encouragement. See also Self esteem and depression.

Everyone Makes Mistakes:

Helping the Child with Autism Cope with Frustration

<http://imaginationsoup.net/2011/12/everyone-makes-mistakes-helping-the-child-with-autism-cope-with-frustration/>

by Ellen Notbohm, author of Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew, and Veronica Zysk former Managing Editor of Autism Asperger's Digest.

Children with autism love absolutes, and one of life's absolutes is that everyone makes mistakes. It's the degree, the nuance, the scale, the gradation of these mistakes that confounds the child with autism. But autism is often characterized by the ability to generalize. To this child's concrete, black-and-white thinking, each mistake or failing stands as his and his alone, and comes in only one size: enormous. Imagine the monumental anxiety this creates for him. We all make dozens of little mistakes and boo-boos throughout our day, so many that we likely are not even conscious of the smaller ones, or we correct them without thinking and move on to the next one. Take a moment and think of all the little oops moments that can happen before you even leave the house in the morning: dribble coffee on the counter, let the shower curtain drip on the floor, smudge lipstick, can't find your keys, accidentally tear the sports page, step on the cat's tail. Most of the time you take all this in stride and don't miss a beat—while the child with autism is upstairs melting down because he squeezed the toothpaste too hard and it's all over his hand or shirt or sink now.

Fear of failure can paralyze your child or student with autism. Take a two-pronged approach to drawing him out: **instill the understanding that everyone makes mistakes, and that everyone needs help.** Modeling both of these behaviors makes it real for him.

1. Everyone makes mistakes.

Most of our mistakes are small, correctable and have few lasting consequences. Point out your small mistakes to your child or student and label them as No Big Deal. We wipe the counter, we change our shirt, we pet the cat, we move on.

At school, there's another word for mistake when we misspell a word or get the math problem wrong. It's called practice. Practice is a very important part of the learning process, and missed spelling words and math problems are No Big Deal, they simply mean we are learning.

Sometimes another word for mistake is accident. We can't always control how things happen, and most accidents are No Big Deal. If we have an accident that affects someone else, it's usually easy to make amends. "I'm sorry I bumped you and spilled your juice. I will clean it up and pour you some more."

2. Everyone needs help.

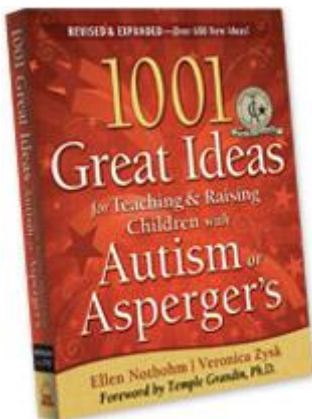
Asking for help is a life skill that needs to be taught starting long before a child reaches school age. Make it a point to ask your child or student for help throughout daily life. You can also:

- Ask other adults to ask him for help; enlist siblings and peers as well.
- Point out the many instances during his day where adults and kids ask each other for help. When did Dad need help? When did Joey or Katie or Henry need help? When did the teacher need help?
- Help your child think of people he trusts whom he can ask for help when he needs it—parent, teacher, sibling, friend.
- Help your child think of different ways to ask for help, either with his words, or with pictures or cue cards. Have him practice “I need help, please” or “I don’t get it” or “Can you say that again, please?”

Set up a help exchange, in the classroom and at home. Students or family members write down something (non-immediate) with which they need help. All the ideas go into a box. Either randomly or at set times, a slip gets pulled from the box and read aloud. Class or family discusses ways in which they can help their classmate or family member. The help exchange can be anonymous or not, as appropriate.

A classroom visual depicting different ways to ask for and receive help benefits all students, not just the ones with autism. A peer buddy system in the classroom encourages classmates to ask each other for help in a relatively private way.

Your child or student may initially have difficulty asking for help. Many students don’t know how, and many don’t want to, fearing they will “look dumb.” Teaching them to ask for help is a self-advocacy skill that will become increasingly necessary as they grow into high school, college, the workplace, and interpersonal relationships throughout life. With encouragement and practice, they can come to understand that asking for help is not a sign of weakness, but just the opposite. It’s a sign of strength that when we have enough confidence in ourselves to seek out people who can help us be and do better.



Adapted from *1001 Great Ideas for Teaching and Raising Children with Autism or Asperger's* by Ellen Notbohm and Veronica Zysk (2010, Future Horizons). Silver Medal winner, 2010 Independent Book Publishers Awards.

Primary years: Transfer of Learned Skills

<http://www.autismhelp.info/primary/cognitive-skills>

Points to note

- Children with autism are very rigid thinkers. They have great difficulty transferring skills learnt in one setting to another.
- the child may be unable to display certain skills at school yet can perform them independently at home, or vice versa.
- Problems with memory recall lead to difficulty searching the memory for useful information. Unless specifically cued, a child with autism may lack the ability to spontaneously search the memory for knowledge that can be transferred to a new situation.
- This inability to generalise skills can be a big problem if the child's teacher is unaware of just how rigid the child can be.

What you can do

- It is important to always generalise what is being taught with a range of examples and situations. Children with autism need to be given the opportunity to learn the same thing in different situations.
- For example if you are discussing the types of houses that people live in, you would show pictures of detached houses, old and modern houses, high rise apartments, flats, huts and even igloos. In money math's, show how 50 cents can be made up from a number of coins of different amounts.
- If the child learns to add using blocks, they will need to practice this skill with a range of practical examples in different settings before being taught more complex ideas.
- There needs to be good communication between home and school. Keep a record of skill development in a Communication Book and send it home with the child each day. Newly acquired skills can then be practiced at home.
- When a new skill has been learnt, reflect on the learning experience by talking about what has been learnt and how this skill might be used in the future.
- The child needs to be given the opportunity to enjoy what he has learnt. Reflect on the child's achievement, pointing out that he is happy, proud etc.

Teen Years: Creating a Home Base or Safe Space

<http://www.autismhelp.info/teen/behaviour>

Students with ASD benefit from having a home base room at secondary school for a number of reasons:

- Students with ASD may become stressed and disturbed in a classroom due to the amount of noise, movement and/or visual stimuli. If the student needs time out of the classroom, or is requested by a teacher to leave due to disruptive behaviour the student needs a safe place to go.

- Students with ASD are vulnerable to being bullied and teased due to their unusual behaviour and lack of assertiveness. They are an easy target because they stand out.
- If the student has no friends, he may have no-one to talk to about troubles or anxieties. A student with ASD may not know who to turn to when needing help or feeling anxious.
- The social environment at school is demanding and stressful for students with ASD.
- The student may feel threatened by the close proximity of others and feel stressed in a large group. This is a sensory processing issue.
- When the student is stressed, the ability to communicate may be significantly reduced and the student may not be able to indicate or realise that some time out is needed.

What you can do

- A little forethought at the beginning of the year can have enormous benefits and will increase the student's ability to cope throughout the year.
- Where space permits, allocate a resource room as a home base for all students with ASD and/or learning disorders. A small classroom with couches, work space and computer access is appropriate.

This space can be multipurpose, where integration aides or speech pathologists can work with students on a 1:1 basis, and be a place for the student to go if they are exited from their class. This room can be a retreat for students before school and during breaks.

- A quiet space in the library may be appropriate if a room is not available.

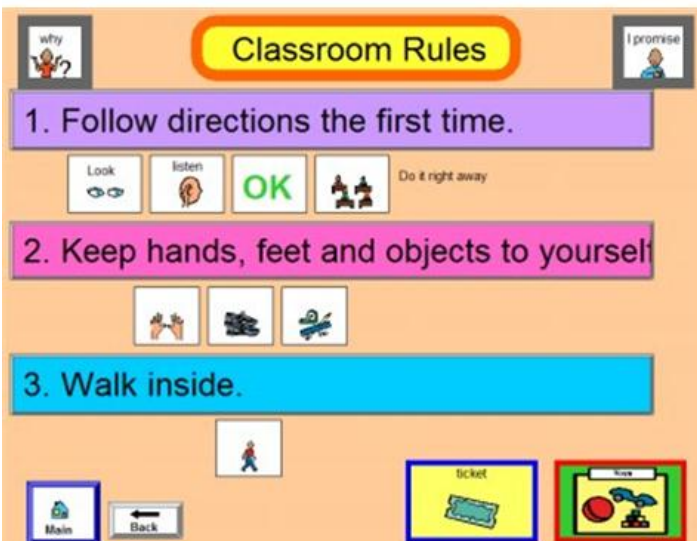
If it is not possible to set aside a home base...

- Set up a comfortable corner in the classroom where the student can listen to music through headphones. Incorporate a period of computer time into each lesson – young people with ASD find using computers far less stressful than group learning and completing work by hand.
- Teach the student how to signal or verbally communicate distress. For example, a signal that means 'I need a break' can be agreed on or a laminated pass card can be handed to the teacher when the student is feeling overloaded and needs to leave the classroom.
- If possible, arrange access to the library or computer room at recess and lunchtime. This can be a safe place for the student if being bullied or teased, or feeling anxious.
- Consider also the physical setup of the classroom and sit the student in a position that will maximise the ability to learn. See Physical setup of the classroom.
- If the student needs a break from school due to stress or behavioural issues it is important that the young person keeps up with school work. Send work home or, if possible, send it via email.
- **The break should not be treated as a punishment.**

Boardmaker Share

<http://www.boardmakershare.com/>

BoardmakerShare is the perfect community for finding thousands of Boardmaker activities on hundreds of topics. The visuals are produced by educators posted online to share for free. If you have a visual to make and need some ideas Boardmakershare is a good place to start.



Classroom Rules

1. Follow directions the first time.

Look Listen OK Do it right away

2. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself

3. Walk inside.

Main Back Ticket



Gunnells'

Classroom Rules

Come to class prepared!

Always do your best!

Keep hands and feet to yourself!

No interfering with the teaching or learning of others!

Be nice, share, help others!



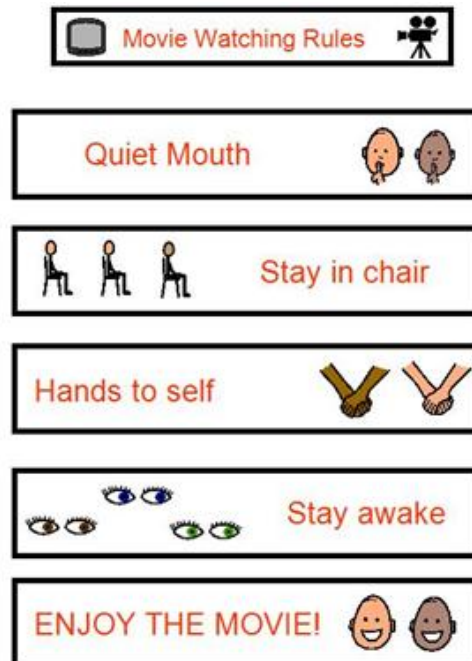
Class Rules

Keep room neat and clean

Follow directions of all teachers!

Be polite and respectful

Finish assignments! Neatly!



Movie Watching Rules

Quiet Mouth

Stay in chair

Hands to self

Stay awake

ENJOY THE MOVIE!

APPS for LEARNING



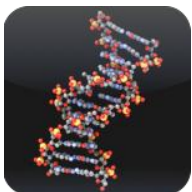
Name: Word Lens

Best for: Language Classes

Cost: Free

Features: Instantly translates signage from one language to another through the camera application

How to Use: Language teachers can use this program for scavenger hunts



Name: Molecules

Best for: Science Classes

Cost: Free

Features: Allows users to view and manipulate three-dimensional models of different molecules

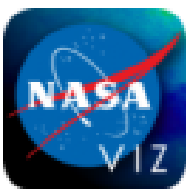
How to Use: Visual learners can see how protein molecules are composed and can download new molecules from the RCSB



Hidden Curriculum for Adolescents and Adults

Best for: Improving social skills

On a daily basis, we are surrounded by unstated rules and customs that can make the world a confusing place for people with autism spectrum disorders. Learn how to deal with this ever-elusive "hidden curriculum" through real-life examples and suggestions by Judy Endow, an adult on the spectrum. Items cover topics such as social relationships, community, money matters, workplace, and many others.



NASA Visualization Explorer

NASA SCIENCE: REVEALED! This is the NASA Visualization Explorer, the coolest way to get stories about advanced space-based research delivered right to your iPad. A direct connection to NASA's extraordinary fleet of research spacecraft, this app presents cutting edge research stories in an engaging and exciting format. See the Earth as you've never seen it before; travel to places otherwise unavailable to even the most intrepid explorers! **Cost free.**



Picture Card Maker is an ideal tool for parents and educators. It is a simple-to-use program that allows you to create Picture Cards or Visuals for the classroom or home which can be printed off and used for many educational purposes. **Cost free**



Smile at Me

Is smiling an issue for your child? "Smile at Me" is an engaging way to practice this social skill in a safe setting – with fun rewards!

RESEARCH NEWS

Different Forms of Autism Share Striking Brain Similarities



Atypical patterns of brain gene expression appear to be shared by those across the autism spectrum

Genes abnormally expressed in brains affected by autism (red circles) cluster into networks that control similar brain functions.

As its name suggests, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is known for its broad range, or spectrum, of outcomes—from profoundly disabled to highly but “differently” functional. Recent years have likewise revealed a diversity of genes that predispose to the development of ASD.

But this year, scientists discovered a remarkable consistency in the molecular changes occurring in the brains of those with ASD, across a range of autism subtypes. The study found two interconnected gene networks abnormally expressed in the brains of affected persons. The results suggest that diverse types of autism may share a similar biological basis.

Published in *Nature*, the study analyzed postmortem brain tissue donated to Autism Speaks Autism Tissue Program and was led by neurologist-geneticist Daniel Geschwind, M.D., Ph.D., of the University of California, Los Angeles, and Irina Voineagu, now at the Riken Brain Science Institute in Japan.

The team discovered that, within brains affected by autism, genes involved in cell function tended to be expressed at abnormally low levels, while genes associated with the generation of certain immune cells were expressed at higher than normal levels. Many of these genes are first turned on during embryonic development, they noted, suggesting that the abnormal development of brains affected by autism may begin very early.

In addition, the researchers looked closely at gene expression in the frontal cortex, the part of the brain that controls higher-level thinking, and in the temporal cortex, which controls sensory integration. In brains not affected by autism, the researchers found stark difference in gene expression between the two regions—as would be expected by their different functions. By contrast, these differences in frontal versus temporal lobe gene expression all but disappeared in those affected by autism. The results suggest a blurring of key differences during prenatal brain development. Such findings offer clues to both the causes of autism and guidance for developing medicines that might target autism’s disabling symptoms.

Voineagu I, Wang X, Johnston P, et al. [Transcriptomic analysis of autistic brain reveals convergent molecular pathology](#). *Nature*. 2011 May 25;474(7351):380-4.

INTERNET



- <http://www.icommunicatetherapy.com/>



- <http://www.iautism.info/en/> Welcome to iAutism

A blog devoted to the use of tablets and smartphones like the iPad or the iPhone (and devices based on other systems, such as Android) for people with autism or other special needs.

- <http://theautismnews.com/> The latest news, headlines & open discussions about the Autism Spectrum
- <http://momswithapps.com/>

Moms With Apps is a collaborative group of family-friendly developers seeking to promote quality apps for kids and families. Our app catalog is available for free on iTunes.

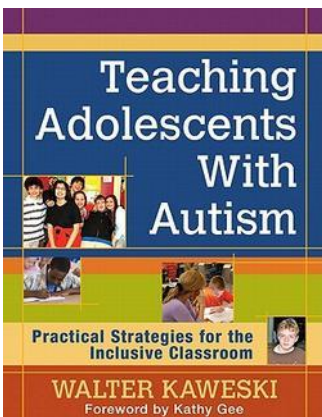
- <http://www.autism-help.org/index.htm>



BOOKS

Teaching Adolescents with Autism Practical Strategies for the Inclusive Classroom By [Walter G. Kaweski](#)

Award-winning educator Walter Kaweski offers secondary teachers practical strategies and heartfelt insights based on his extensive experience as an autism specialist, inclusion coordinator, and father of a son with Asperger syndrome. Students with special needs often require extra support as they adjust to middle and high school and the changes that accompany adolescence. Without support, this time can be overwhelming. *Teaching Adolescents With Autism* offers hundreds of valuable ideas to help teachers. Each chapter offers numerous personal stories that illustrate and reinforce strategies in a tangible way. Important concepts are augmented with bulleted lists, tables, figures, photographs, and cartoons drawn by a student with autism.



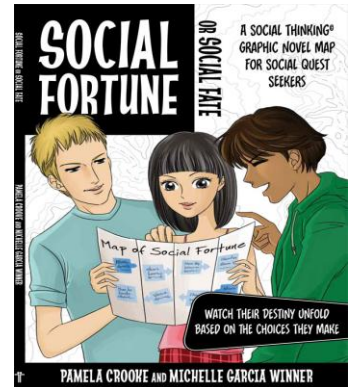
A Social Thinking Graphic Novel Map for Social Quest Seekers

By Pam Crooke and Michelle Garcia Winner.

Ages: 5th Grade -> High School -> young adults. For students to read on their own. 82 Pages

This book uses anime illustrations to capture the attention of teens and tweens and teach the core concepts presented in Michelle Garcia Winner's book [Social Behavior Mapping](#). The book will help foster an understanding of how our own behaviors, expected and unexpected, impact on how others feel about us and ultimately treat us, which in turn affects how we feel about ourselves.

The book consists of 10 social scenarios, each scenario is played out through the lens of Social Fortune or Social Fate by demonstrating visually how a situation can change quickly based on how someone reacts within it. Every scenario begins with a mini-story told through a four pictured comic strip, which then leads the protagonist to a decision making point. If the decision made leads to others feeling good and ultimately the character feeling good about him or herself, this will be represented as "social fortune."



Whole body Listening Larry

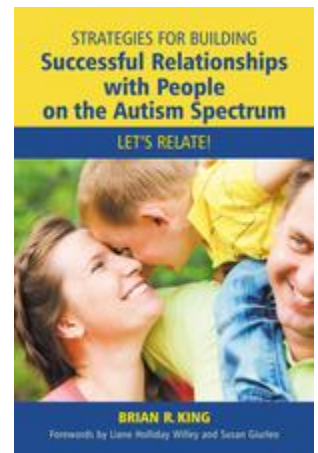
By Kristen Wilson, MS, CCC, Elizabeth Sautter, MA, CCC For parents and professionals to use with students 4-9yrs.

This colourfully illustrated teaching storybook provides fun ways to teach children an abstract but essential idea - that their eyes, hands, brains – their whole bodies! – communicate, engage with and affect the people around them. Parents, teachers and therapists use this book to teach this challenging concept through illustrated scenarios

at home, in the car, with friends, with grandparents – and a number of other very recognizable situations. If your young (primarily pre-K to third grade) student(s) is a bit (or a lot) wiggly, you might need this book! The book can be read with the child and the child then can read the book on his or her own, with siblings, friends, grandparents – it's sure to spark some great discussions!

Strategies for Building Successful Relationships with People on the Autism Spectrum . Let's Relate! Brian R. King

The author has dedicated over 20 years to studying, observing and implementing communication strategies that help him, his wife, their three children and his clients experience positive relationships. His immediate family are all on the autism spectrum and they work together to understand one another, resolve misunderstandings, and help each other feel important, loved and respected. Sharing their inspirational personal experiences and interweaving every chapter with practical hints and tips, the book looks at how to get communication working for everyone and emphasizes the importance of laying down ground rules and building confidence.



Resources

What is a Social Detective?

<http://www.socialthinking.com/>



To become a Social Detective, students learn to use their social smarts to figure out that others are having thoughts about them and they should have thoughts about others. Using these social smarts will help students make smart guesses and understand someone else's social plan. They also learn that their own actions have consequences in how people think, feel and react to them.

Components of becoming a Social Detective include:

- ◆ Using **Social Detective Tools** (your eyes, ears and brain) to understand the feelings of others.
- ◆ Being a **Social Thinker** - aware of the people around us and understanding that they are having thoughts about each of our behaviors.
- ◆ People have different thoughts about us when we do **Expected or Unexpected Behaviors**. Expected Behaviors are things we do and say that give people good thoughts about us and make them feel good, too. Unexpected Behaviors can give people uncomfortable thoughts and make them feel icky, or mad or bad. This means that we didn't figure out how to act in that place with that person, and they don't feel good about us.
- ◆ **Thinking With Your Eyes** - look at a person to make them feel that you are thinking about what they are saying or doing.
- ◆ **Brain in the Group** - paying attention to what is happening in the group by thinking about others with your eyes and listening to what they are taking about.
- ◆ **Body in the Group** - make others feel that you are part of the group by keeping your body turned toward others in the group. Also make others feel comfortable by respecting their space and not crowding them.
- ◆ When you learn how your actions affect what others are thinking, saying or feeling, you are using **Social Smarts**, and you are learning to be a Social Detective!

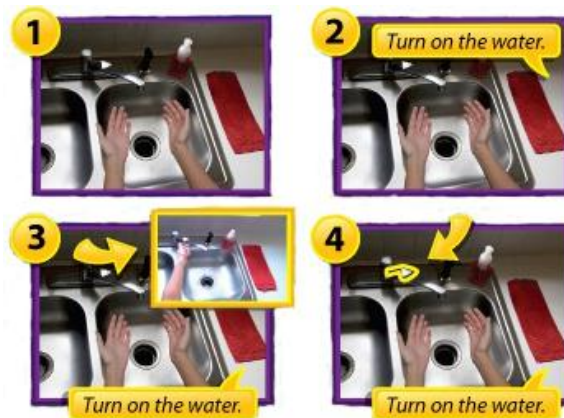
Small Steps Big Skills™ Video Game! <http://www.sandbox-learning.com/>

- Teaches 22 skills for independence
- Combines Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) methods of video modeling and least to most prompting by having players watch the skill being completed (video modeling) then they practice it in a game format (least to most prompting)

- Shows a variety of materials to promote generalization
- Is evidence-based. Results from a beta version of the game appeared in [Education and Training in Developmental Disabilities](#) (December, 2009) and [Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#) (June, 2010)
- Demonstrates skills from a first person perspective to realistically show how skills are completed and to remove showing age or gender
- Rewards kids with 8 fun game
- Customizable by adding your own videos
- Collects data at each step of the skill
- Compatible with PC or Mac

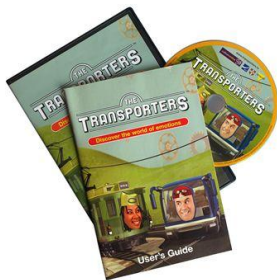
*Small Steps, Big Skills*TM video game teaches skills for independence by simulating actually doing the skills! Players watch a video of the skill being completed then practice with increasing prompt levels as necessary.

- Level 1 – Independent:** Players independently complete the step
- Level 2 – Verbal:** Players hear a voice over of the step
- Level 3 – Verbal + Video Model**
Players watch a screen in screen video of the step
- Level 4 – Verbal + Simulated Physical**
Players see the correct step highlighted



Skills Taught in *Small Steps, Big Skills*TM The game will cost \$89.95 US + shipping and handling.

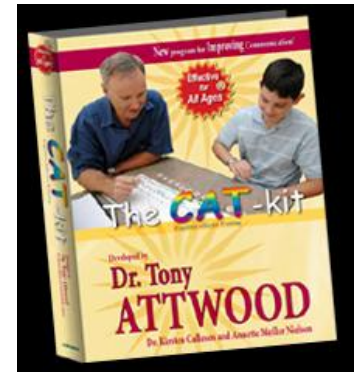
Teaching Facial expressions and Emotions



The Transporters was developed with the [Autism Research Centre](#) at Cambridge University. It uses animated vehicles with real human faces to help children transfer learning to real life. Episodes and quizzes are designed to be enjoyed repeatedly. Children love to watch them again and again - and this helps them learn.
<http://www.thetransporters.com>

The CAT-kit <http://www.catkit-us.com/>

The Cognitive Affective Training (CAT) kit is a program that consists of visual, interactive, and customizable communication elements for children and young adults. It is designed to help students become aware of how their thoughts, feelings and actions all interact and, in the process of using the various visual components, they share their insights with others. It is an easy and effective way to work with neurotypical children and young adults as well as with people with developmental disabilities.

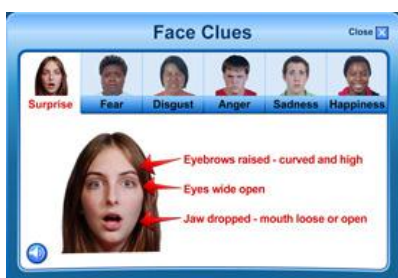


Most of us begin the complex process of learning to recognize facial expression of emotions in infancy. From the faces of parents, siblings, grandparents, or other caregivers, we develop a considerable amount of expertise in this aspect of socialization at an early age. For some children with Autism, Asperger's, or other developmental deficiencies, this is often not the case. Since skill in recognizing facial expression of emotions is important to functioning in a social environment, there is value in helping children develop this skill. But, what if it doesn't develop normally?

FACELAND uses an Amusement Park theme to engage and motivate. 6 "Schools" introduce concepts as "clues" and 11 game-like activities offer practice that is fun!

FACELAND "Schools" are based on the hypothesis that some children will build skill in facial recognition of emotion by:

- Breaking them down into smaller pieces (clues)
- Promoting clue acquisition via spaced repetition
- Checking for understanding of clues using new examples
- Combining clues for "part to whole" learning
- Utilizing instruction that incorporates photos, mirror mimic sessions, and varied interaction



FACELAND "Games" motivate practice and skill acquisition. The program uses a diverse range of subjects to aid generalization/transfer of recognition skills to real life situations

Surprise, Anger, Fear, Disgust, Sadness, and Happiness were the emotions selected because they are the most basic of human emotions. These emotions are expressed in cultures throughout the world. FACELAND is based on a portion of Paul Ekman's research, the leading psychologist in the study of facial expression of emotions.

<http://www.donjohnston.com/products/autism/faceland/>

Helping Children with Autism Parents & Carers: General Enquiries



1. Raising Children Network Autism website:

Provides impartial and evidence based information, online resources and interactive functions to support parents, families, carers and professionals.

- www.raisingchildren.net.au/autism

2. FaHCSIA website:

Provides an overview of the Helping Children with Autism package and information about FaHCSIA Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) policy.

- www.fahcsia.gov.au/autism

3. Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) – Medicare Enquiry:

The Department of Health and Ageing has made new Medicare items available for children aged under 13 years (for diagnosis and treatment planning) and under 15 years (for treatment).

- www.health.gov.au/autism
- epc.items@health.gov.au

DoHA helpline: (02) 6289 4297

Medicare Australia: 132 011

4. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR):

DEEWR is delivering initiatives to help improve the educational outcomes for school aged children with ASDs.

- www.deewr.gov.au

Australian Autism Education and Training Consortium (AAETC):

- www.autismtraining.com.au

5. Autism Associations

Following diagnosis, families are able to contact an **Autism Advisor** to access local information, advice and practical help. The Autism Advisors can be contacted through the lead agency associations. Contact your state Autism association.

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6. Play Connect Playgroups, provided by Playgroup Australia:

The Autism Spectrum Disorder Playgroup Program targets children aged zero to six with ASDs or ASD like symptoms. Children will not require a formal diagnosis of an ASD to attend a playgroup.

- www.playconnect.com.au
- info@playgroupaustralia.com.au
1800 790 335

7. Helping Children with Autism Enquiry Line:

For more information about the Helping Children with Autism package please contact the enquiry line or the ASD Inbox.

1800 289 177 (TTY 1800 260 402)

- asd@fahcsia.gov.au

8. Early Days Workshops:

The Early Days Workshops are aimed at equipping parents and carers of children with ASDs or ASD like symptoms to more effectively manage the pressures they face in raising their children at home.

- www.earlydays.net.au 1800 334 155

9. Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Centres

Six Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Centres are being established. They will provide early learning programs and specific support for children with ASDs.

- asdchildcare@fahcsia.gov.au