Autism Leadership Team
Let us start by thanking you for helping us disseminate information as it pertains to working with students with autism. We understand that the disability of autism can provide some unique challenges. The Special Education Services, Autism Leadership Team was formed to address the unique challenges of autism. Through this monthly newsletter, we will offer video links and articles that you can use to provide training and support to your staff to increase knowledge and awareness.

Educational Definition of Autism

Autism is a developmental disability that significantly affects verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction generally evident before age three (3) that adversely affects educational performance. This includes other pervasive developmental disorders. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or changes in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. Autism does not apply if a child’s educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disability, as defined in these rules. A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three (3) could be identified as having autism if the criteria herein are satisfied. AAC 290-8-9.03(1)(a); 34 CFR, §300.8(c)(1)(i).

In This Issue:
- Definition of Autism
- Survey Results
- Characteristics of Autism
- ABA Observation Sites
- Video Links of a Classroom featuring Sasha Long from the Autism Helper

In respect for people with disabilities, always remember to use people first language. Instead of an “autistic student” it is a “student with autism.”

A disability does not define the person.

Honor the person.

Disclaimer: This monthly newsletter is not intended to endorse people, products or methodologies. Its sole intent is to be a source of awareness for teachers working with students with autism.
Survey Results: Where Are We?

We have learned that a majority of those who participated through our Autism survey have less than five years of experience working with students with autism. The most common forms of training have come from lectures, coupled with state and district trainings. Topics covered during training included the use of first-then boards, social stories, Applied Behavior Analysis, sensory integration, use of communication notebooks, augmentative and alternative communication, visual schedules, token systems, behavior management, PECS and the use of choice boards. Three of the most identified barriers to training were cost, time and scheduling.

So what’s available from the ALSDE?

Special Education Services provides many supports to students with autism.

Each month Autism News will highlight resources that are available to help support students with autism.

This month’s highlight is an avenue of support to LEA through training at The Learning Tree.

**Training options include:**

**Consultation for Individual Students Board Certified Behavior Analysis**
This service should be determined by the IEP team for students with critical behavioral needs after all other local efforts have been tried and documented to be ineffective by the IEP team. Individual student consultation services may be requested for behavior reduction or skill acquisition issues that are outside of the area of expertise of the LEA. Services may include a specific functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention program for a student based on his or her individual needs. Services will be provided by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst from The Learning Tree.

**Applied Behavior Analysis and Technical Assistance**
Training will be provided by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst for small groups of teachers in individual LEAs in classroom management techniques using various behavior analytic techniques. Training in the use of a data driven model of assessment and program development will also be offered. These trainings will be conducted on site and will allow the trainee to perform the tasks in his/her classroom environment.

**Preschool Best Practices for Students with ASD**
In order to build capacity for providing evidence based practices for preschool students with ASD, on-site individual preschool program assessments for LEAs will be conducted by The Learning Tree staff. Five days of follow up training in the identified areas of the assessment will be provided at a preschool program site operated by The Learning Tree. LEA preschool teachers will be paired with a Learning Tree teacher to have specific behaviors modeled and will then be demonstrating the behaviors with feedback provided by Learning Tree staff. A one to two day follow up at the LEA preschool will be conducted by The Learning Tree staff within three weeks after training to monitor progress.
Helpful links for Classroom Organization

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QOfDu38Fbs  Video Tutorial of a Direct Instruction Area in an Autism Classroom

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SciVB8jY_U  Video Tutorial for a One on One Student Work Area

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_i2hd6rt8A  Video Tour of an Autism Classroom

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=upDgSujppI8  Centers Setup For Children with Autism Video Tutorial for Higher Functioning Students

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5B78tolRWv1  Math Center Video Tutorial for Early Childhood and Special Education

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65hHLMoJde  Writing Center in an Autism Classroom Video Tutorial

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6py77hNLQ  Video Tutorial for an Independent Work Task

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vQr7NeI2TU  Independent Morning Routine Video Tutorial

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1eT-wDUJQm8  Leveled Daily Curriculum: Setup & Curriculum

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fOoIXWqFU  Organizing Student Binders in an Autism Room - Low Level Binders

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=er7I4ejeGXX  Video Tutorial - Fluency Station

Visit us at https://www.alsde.edu/sec/for upcoming events, training, and additional resources!