WORKSHOP B-7

A Planful Reintegration Process for Students on the Spectrum

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Tracks: Educators/Clinicians, Family

ABSTRACT:

In this session, learners will become familiar with the planning, preparation and implementation of reintegrating a student on the spectrum—whether it's from a separate facility setting to a less restrictive school setting or a self-contained classroom to an inclusion setting. We will discuss supports, real modifications and accommodations that may need to be in place to assist in the transition, services that can facilitate a smooth process both before and during in the new setting and the process by which students move from a more restrictive to a less restrictive placement.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Participants will be able to become familiar with the steps of reintegration from a separate facility.
2. Participants will be able to become familiar with the process and procedures of reintegration.
3. Participants will be able to list services that can be available during reintegration.

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is a consultant/trainer with the Positive Education Program in Cleveland and a master trainer of Life Space Crisis Intervention, a highly effective method of talking with students in crisis. As a consultant in the public schools, she provides functional behavior assessments and behavior intervention plans and works with school staff involved with students with disabilities ranging from severe autism to severe emotional disturbances from preschool to high school. She is currently working primarily with the Shaker Heights and South Euclid/Lyndhurst school districts, but continues to provide consultation and presentations locally, nationally, and internationally with a special focus on students with autism, Asperger's Syndrome, and developmental trauma.
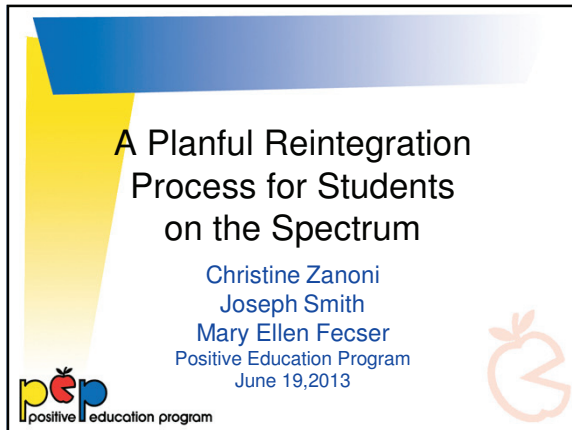
Christine Zanoni, MEd

is an Assistant Program Coordinator with Positive Education Program's Phoenix Day Treatment Center. She has worked with students on the spectrum in the capacity of teacher, case manager and assistant program coordinator for 18 of the last 22 years in education. As an assistant program coordinator, she works with case managers, teachers, occupational therapists and speech-language pathologists to help students function to the best of their abilities in their schools, homes and communities.

Joseph Smith, MS

received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Bowling Green State University and a Master's of Science in Educational Psychology from Capella University. He has been working with children on the autism spectrum for the past eight years. Joseph is currently employed by the Positive Education Program/Prentiss Autism Center as a Case Manager.

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Mary Ellen Fecser
Positive Education Program
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Reintegration Preparation

Making the Decision

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Steps from Within

- Making the decision
- Teaching team and supportive personnel
- Case management
- Parents
- District/receiving school

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Collection of Data and Anecdotal Information

- Decrease in behavior
- Increase in academic progress
- Improvement in social skills
- Improvement in areas of independence
- Acquired new skills

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Academic Skills

- Time on task
- Independence level
- Ability to wait
- Ability to ask for help
- New skills acquired

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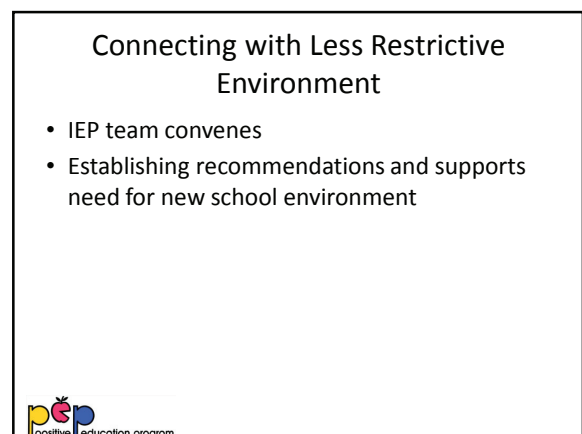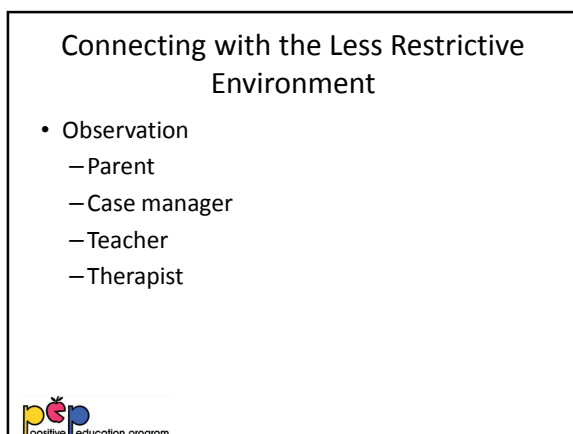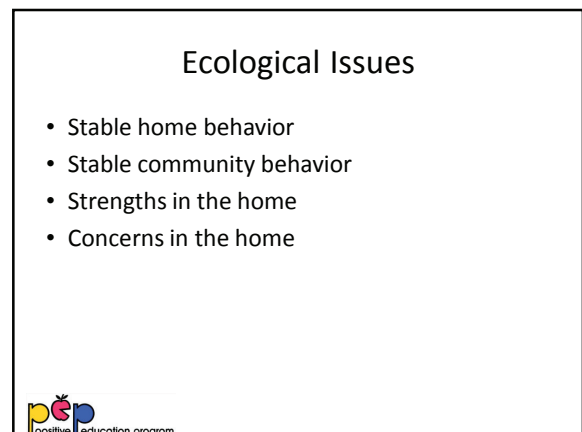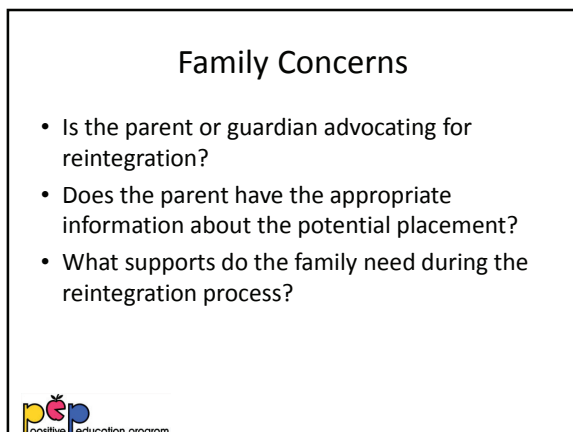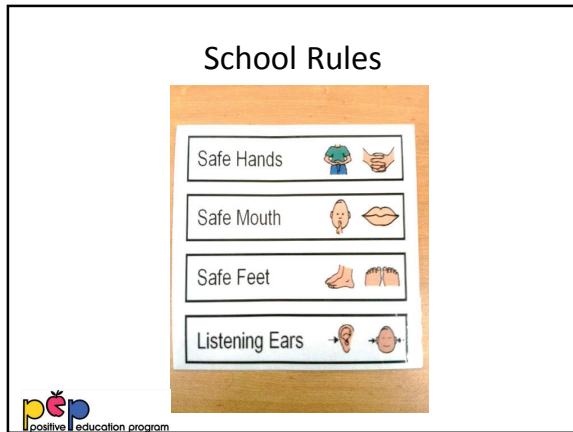
Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Skills

- How long has behavior been stable?
- Ability to follow safety plan
- Demonstration of internal control with level of external supports available in new school setting
- Reduction in referral behaviors

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School Rules

Safety Plan

Family Concerns

- Is the parent or guardian advocating for reintegration?
- Does the parent have the appropriate information about the potential placement?
- What supports do the family need during the reintegration process?

Ecological Issues

- Stable home behavior
- Stable community behavior
- Strengths in the home
- Concerns in the home

Connecting with the Less Restrictive Environment

- Observation
  - Parent
  - Case manager
  - Teacher
  - Therapist

Connecting with Less Restrictive Environment

- IEP team convenes
- Establishing recommendations and supports need for new school environment

Reintegration

Preparation and Planning

Meeting with the Student

- When appropriate, meet with the student to determine readiness.
  - Petition for reintegration (for higher functioning students)
  - Evaluation of former referral behaviors and current progress and use of coping strategies
  - Preparation for fading supports

- Preparing the student for the academic, social, emotional and behavioral demands of the reintegration
  - Educational progress assessments
  - Visits (when appropriate)
    - Preferred staff
  - Preparing receiving school's staff
    - Communication
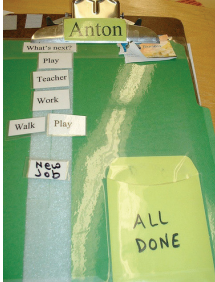   - Support materials

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Visual Schedules
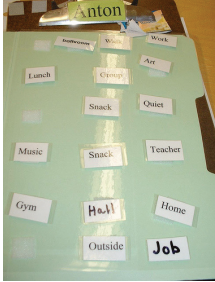
Adapting and Changing for
Self-Reliance by Fading Supports

Visual Supports at a "Home Base"

Folder schedule (front)

Folder schedule (choices on back)
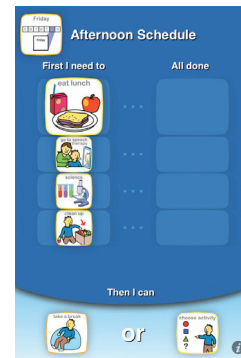
First-Then Menu for Desk

Timed Schedule

Apps for Schedule

*Choiceworks on iPhone


Social Skills

- Perform a needs-assessment of current social skill strengths, needs and supports in place
  - Creating social stories for the changes that will occur
  - Creating social stories for possible scenarios
  - Preparing and practicing, including "bumps in the road," for social situations
  - Planning for emotion management for public school

Have Plans and Visuals in Place
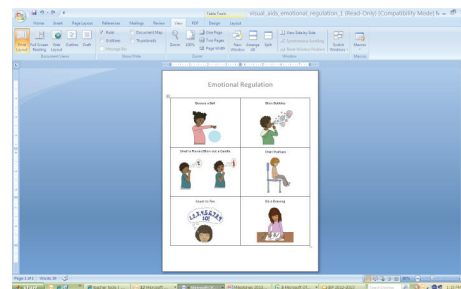
Safety Plans

Angel's Safety Plan

✓ Take a deep breath
✓ Talk to friends
✓ Talk to staff
✓ Run in the gym

Direct Instruction of Social Skills
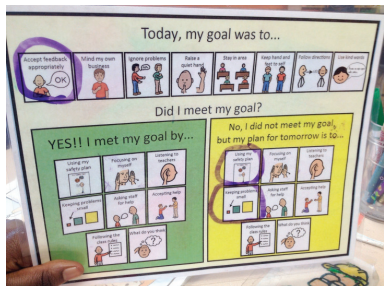
Personal Goal Sheet

- Visiting the Setting
  - Communication with receiving staff
  - Checklists of services and supports
  - Take photos for social story review
  - Preferred staff and family

Providing Supports in the Less Restrictive School Setting
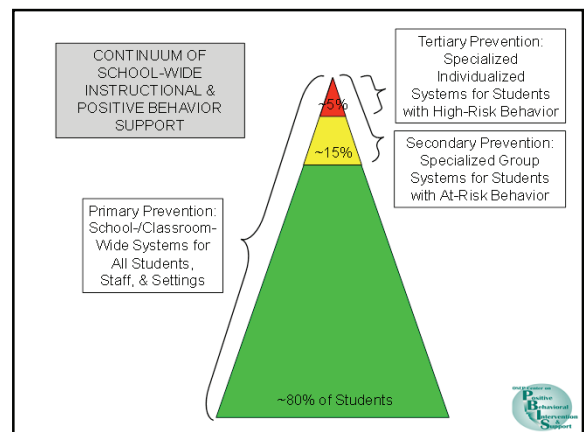
Common Programs in Public Schools

RTI (Response to Intervention)

PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention & Support)

FBA's and BIP's (Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans)
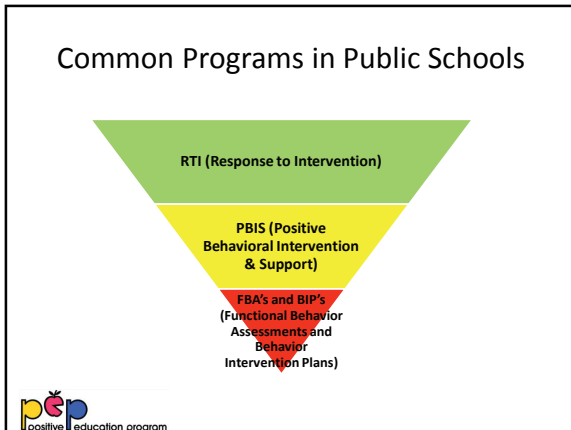
Behavior Intervention Plans

- Should focus on proactive strategies and environmental supports.
- Reinforcement and reactive strategies should be included, but should not be the main part of the BIP.
- May be completed by an intervention specialist, school psychologist, PEP Assist, CCBDD.

Bell-Shaped Curve
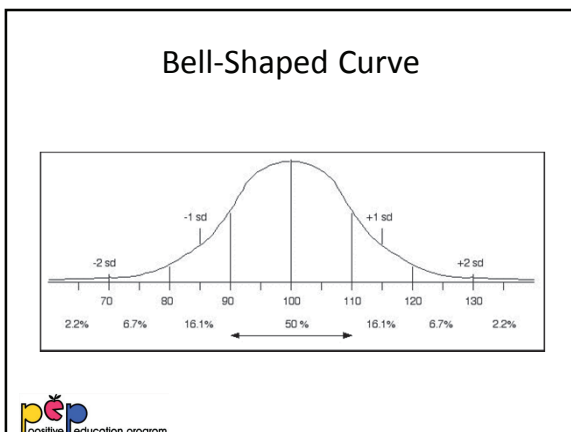
School Implications

- Academically
  - Slow auditory processing
  - Difficulties with written assignments
  - Organization and planning issues
  - Need for perfection and fear of making mistakes
  - Difficulties with abstract language and concepts
    - Literal interpretation
    - Implied directions
  - Homework

School Implications

- Socially
  - Misinterpretation of peers' behaviors
  - Difficulty (or no interest) in making friends
  - May become class policeman
  - Sensory issues
  - Subject of bullying

Wyatt

Mistaken Assumptions

- His verbal skills are so advanced he must be able to comprehend language at a high level.
- She is in all advanced classes so she should be able to handle the extra homework.
- He has no problem writing about things that interest him, therefore, he should be able to handle long writing assignments.
- He's rude and doesn't care about others' feelings.

- She's spoiled.
- He knows what he's supposed to do/the schedule.
- If he didn't act that way no one would pick on him.
- He needs to change.

Result from:

- Inability to read/misinterpretation of social cues
- Difficulty making predictions throughout day (Often expect one thing to happen and something else does)
- Sensory issues
- Difficulty with abstract concepts, such as time
- Auditory processing (including figure/ground filtering)

- Difficulty with sequencing
- Problems with executive function
- Slow processing
  - Auditory
  - Visual
  - Working memory
- Communication difficulties

- "People tell me I look mournful. They say, "Cheer up, Dan, it's not that bad!" Sometimes I just look into space, which freaks people out."
- "I've never been one of the cool people at school, but then again, I don't get the people who are cool. It's not that I don't like them, it's just that they don't interest me."
- "Too many little numbers on one page!" - about math
- "When I get into trouble at school I'd like to take an invisibility cloak, drape it over me and sneak out the door. Or I'd like to have a 3-headed-dog because then no one would argue with me."

- "I wasn't very good in school at all. I was kind of useless. I found the work really, really difficult."
- "I'm not saying that I'm a brazenly confident person. But I'm kind of sure of myself intellectually. And I know I wouldn't have been if I had stayed in school because, before I did *Potter*, my confidence had been more or less destroyed by a couple of teachers. So I had it all restored by the people who taught me on the films."

(Daniel Radcliffe, 2009)

First Step

- Prevent fight or flight response.
- When the brain is in survival mode it is not in learning mode.
- Provide safety and security through predictability and structure.

Canaries in the Coal Mine

Structure is like the guardrails on a high-level bridge.
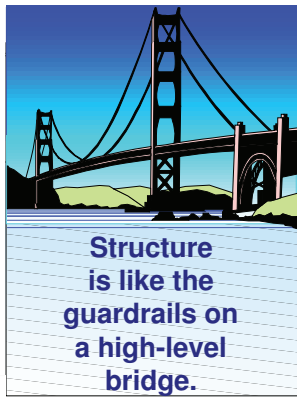
Provide Consistent Daily Routine and Visual Schedule

- Leads to independence.
  - Teaches that there is order to the day.
  - Provides predictability and therefore security.
  - Makes use of visual memory.
- Refer to schedule at each transition.
- Resist the temptation to stop using a visual schedule once behavior improves.
- Lifelong skill.
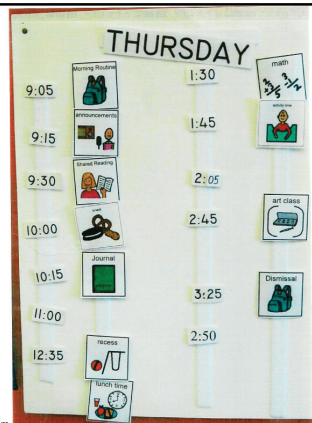
Creating Success: Large Group Instruction

- Call on students in a predictable manner.
- Seat student near the front of the presentation.
- Actively involve the student whenever possible.
- Use visuals. Write down instructions.
- Provide a hard copy to highlight or skeletal notes for the student who has difficulty taking notes.
- Use graphic organizers.

Classroom Assignments and Homework

- Provide a task schedule specifically listing exactly what needs to be completed in a given period.
- Shorten assignments and limit homework as needed.
- Reduce writing assignments. Teach keyboarding.
- Highlight important text.
- Break long assignments and projects into daily tasks.
- Consider writing instructions in numbered or bulleted lists, including implied directions.
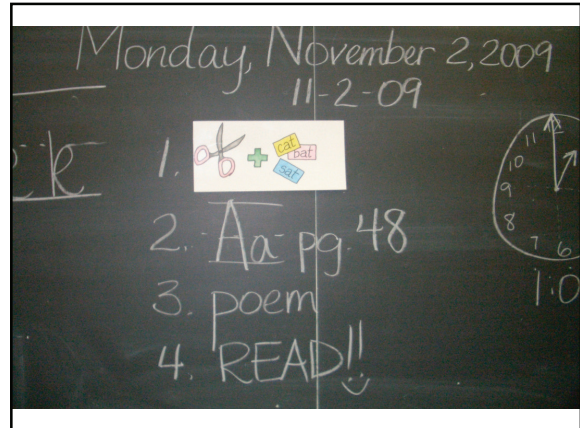
Tests and Worksheets

- May be modified to reduce anxiety.
  - Making essay questions extra credit
  - Breaking up directions into a bulleted or numbered list
  - Reducing visual clutter
  - Breaking up packets
  - Considering alternatives for demonstrating knowledge. (Spelling tests)

Teach Organization

- Allow 5 minutes at the end of each class specifically for teaching and encouraging organization.
  - Homework assignment written.
  - Papers in proper folders.
- Consider using a single (or no more than 2) binders or accordion files containing:
  - Paper and pocket folders for each class.
  - Place for pens, pencils, erasers,etc.
- Set of textbooks at home.

Social and Sensory Issues

- Social skills groups, lunch groups
- Regular teaching and reinforcing social interactions and managing anger and anxiety.
- Early class changes to avoid crowded hallways.
- Movement/sensory breaks (individual and whole class)

Teach and encourage social skills, remembering that social difficulties are usually unintentional.
- Point out specific positive behaviors and the results.
- Joining a group
  - Observe
  - Move closer
  - Ease in
- Social stories/articles

General Environmental Strategies

- Use fewer words.
- Use visuals, such as notes and hand signals.
- Use concrete language. Avoid or explain figures of speech and sarcasm and jokes.
- Allow student to showcase special interest in a positive light.
- Prevent bullying and teasing. Don't blame the victim.

Reinforcement Strategies

- Best:
  - Taking any opportunity to point out to the child specifically what he has done correctly and the positive result.
  - Reminding him of past successes.
- Reward plans
  - Should be used short term.
  - Should be positive (nothing is lost) and cumulative (she eventually earns the reward)

Reactive Strategies When the Student Becomes Angry or Anxious

- Maintain a calm demeanor.
- Talk less.
- Drain off emotions.
  - Acknowledge feelings.
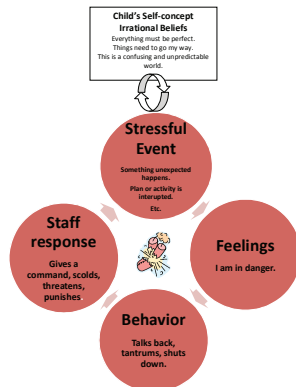 - Avoid lectures.
  - Encourage moving to a safe location.

What does **not** work?

- Too much talk
- Punishment or threats of consequences.
- Affection with some (hugs may be perceived as restraint)
- Emotion
- Raising your voice
- Confrontation
- Physical restraint
- Asking "What's the matter?"
- Ignoring

Conflict Cycle of Children with Autism/Asperger's

LSCI Institute, M.E. Fecser — 59

Once he is calm, process the situation with him.

- Ask and review, using pictures, if necessary:
  - His perception of the event. (What happened?)
  - His thoughts or what he said to himself.
  - How that made him feel.
  - What he did.
  - What the reactions of the teachers and peers were, pointing out their perceptions.
  - What the final consequence was.
  - What could be done differently next time.
- Return as soon as possible to schedule.