



Thompson Center

For Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders

University of Missouri

Using Behavior Skills Training to Train Paraprofessionals

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*Why do we utilize
paraprofessionals?*

Short-Sighted Problem Solving

- Culture of hiring paraprofessionals as a “quick fix”

Giangreco, Breor, & Suter, 2011

- Paraprofessionals are often left on their own to make decisions while remaining inadequately trained and supervised

Downing, Ryndak, & Clark, 2000; French, 2001; Giangreco, Broer, & Edelman, 2002; Giangreco, Edelman, et al., 2001; Marks, Schrader, & Levine, 1999; Riggs & Mueller, 2001

Keep A Focus on
The Future

*The focus of adult support is to teach the use of tools and strategies to foster independence.
Adult support should not be the tool.*

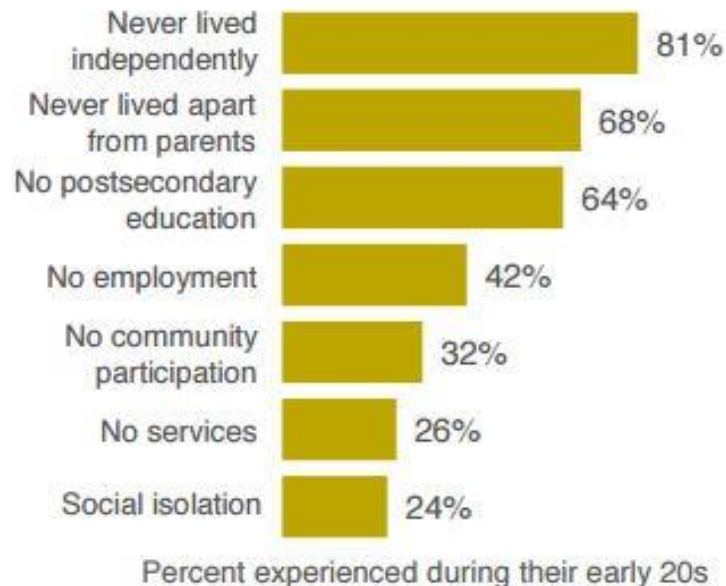


Adults with Autism



- Overall, adults with autism have poorer outcomes than other groups of adults with disabilities
- Following school, many adults fall off the “Services Cliff”

Which outcomes were difficult for young adults with autism to achieve between high school and their early 20s?



Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

Growing number of paraprofessionals in U.S. schools

- Paraprofessional support can allow access to less restrictive environments
- Having paraprofessional support is often perceived by teachers and parents as positive even though it may not be beneficial to students
- Despite frequent use, little research on effectiveness and impact on student outcomes

(Giangreco, Suter, Doyle, 2010)

*Prior to training, paraprofessionals
were either uninvolved or
hover over the students with ASD*

(Feldman & Matos, 2013)

Promoting Independence

Finding the Balance

Refrain from hovering...	Not enough engagement...
Increased or prolonged dependence	Lack of engagement with others
Decreased peer interactions	Inappropriate engagement
Decreased attention from others	Increased self-stim behaviors
Feeling embarrassed/stigmatized	Decreased skill acquisition
Loss of personal control	Loss or regression of skills
Increased behavior problems	Increased behavioral problems

Developing a Plan for Paraprofessional Support

Is Everyone on the Same Page?

- Often discrepancies over the expected role of the paraprofessional (by administration), perceived role (by teacher) and role taken (by paraprofessional)
- Mismatch between expected types of support
 - How to support students across activities and settings
 - Primary instruction v. supplementary instruction
 - Planning and adapting educational activities
 - Role in assessment
 - Communication with parents
 - Clerical duties

Is Paraprofessional Support Necessary?

- School teams need to systematically plan how to use paraprofessional support
- Need to identify:
 - Areas of student need
 - Environments that the student needs support in
 - The skills the student will need to develop in order to be more successful and independent in that environment
 - Put plans in place to teach the student to access resources in the environment or request assistance when needed

Once Support Needs are Identified, Our Job Does Not Stop There...

- Evaluate ongoing support needs to refine amount and level of support provided by paraprofessional
 - Temporary or ongoing support
 - Inclusion considerations
 - Use of natural supports and tools for independence
- Paraprofessional Use Data Collection Tool
 - Data collected on when support provided is necessary

STUDENT INITIALS:
 PARAPROFESSIONAL:
 SETTING:
 DATE:

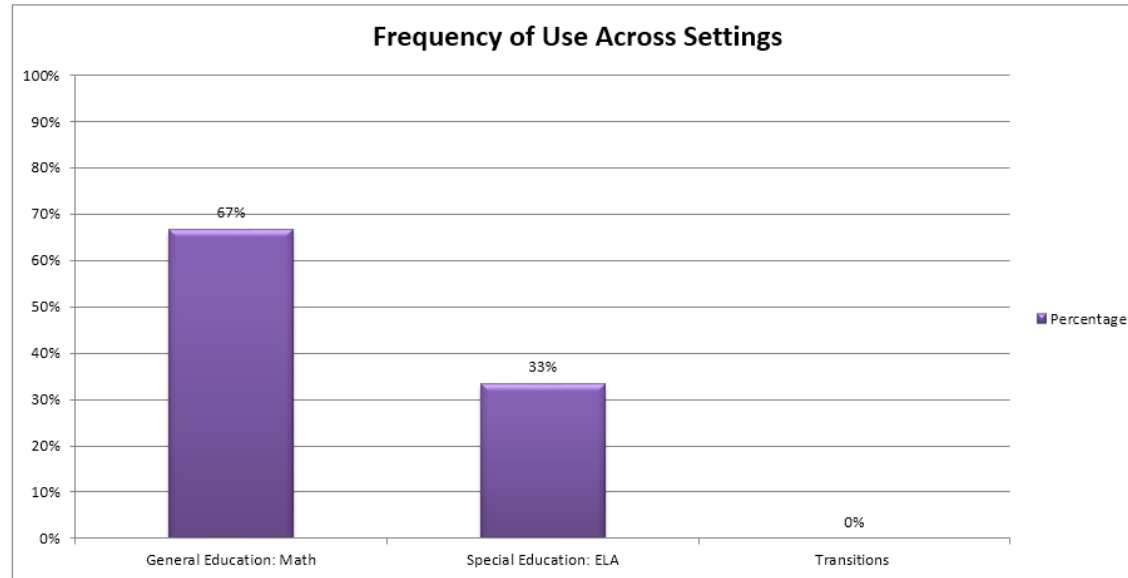
		Time													
ACTIVITY	Unstructured Activity														
	Structured Activity														
	Transition														
	Academic - independent work														
	Academic - group work														
	Academic - teacher led discussion/lecture														
	Down time / wait time														
TASK	Difficult task														
	Easy Task														
	Reading														
	Writing														
	Listening														
	Creating (art, industrial tech)														
TIME	Statement of redirection/reminder														
	less than 5 minutes (but more than 1 statement or prompt)														
	more than 5 minutes *write how long sustained engagement was necessary														
TYPE OF SUPPORT	wrote for the student														
	organized the task for the student														
	broke the task down step by step														
	helped the student understand content														
	engaged to prevent behavioral/emotional breakdown														
	prompted to maintain engagement in task														
	clarified task														
	Other: *please specify below														

If the paraprofessional is completing the form, only document **necessary** support **NOT** pro-active support

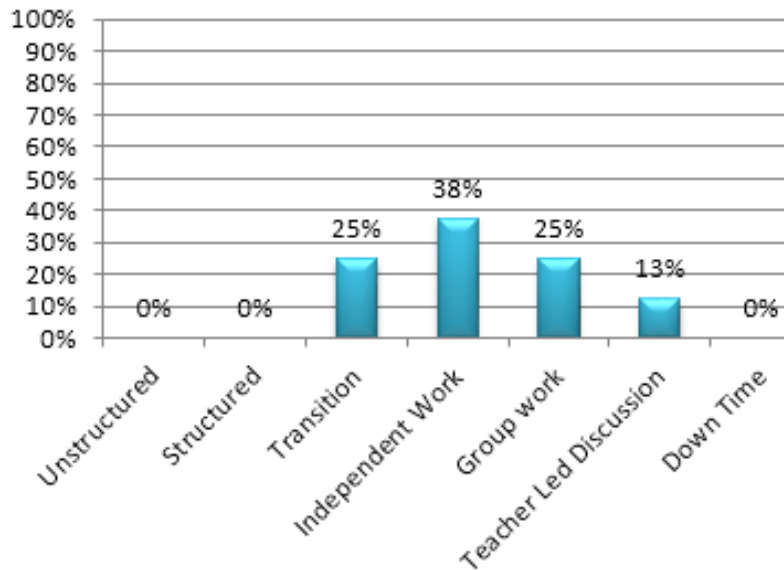
PARAPROFESSIONAL: **Kim**
 CLASS: **Math**
 DATE: **11-15-15**
 STUDENT: **Brian**

		Time / Location (if not in the classroom)							
		10:10	10:14	10:22	10:26	10:40	10: 42	10:45	10:50 Hall
SETTING	Unstructured Activity								
	Structured Activity								
	Transition	X						X	
	Academic - independent work			X	X	X			
	Academic - group work						X	X	
	Academic - teacher led discussion/lecture		X						
	Down time / wait time								
	Difficult task								
	Easy Task								
TASK	Reading								
	Writing			X	X	X	X	X	
	Listening	X	X						X
	Creating (art, industrial tech)								
TIME	Statement of redirection/reminder	X	X					X	X
	less than 5 minutes (but more than 1 statement or prompt)			X		X	X		
	more than 5 minutes *write how long sustained engagement was necessary				X 10 min				
TYPE OF SUPPORT	wrote for the student								
	organized the task for the student							X	
	broke the task down step by step			X					
	helped the student understand content								
	engaged to prevent behavioral/emotional breakdown								
	prompted to maintain engagement in task	X	X		X		X	X	
	clarified task					X			
Other: *please specify below									

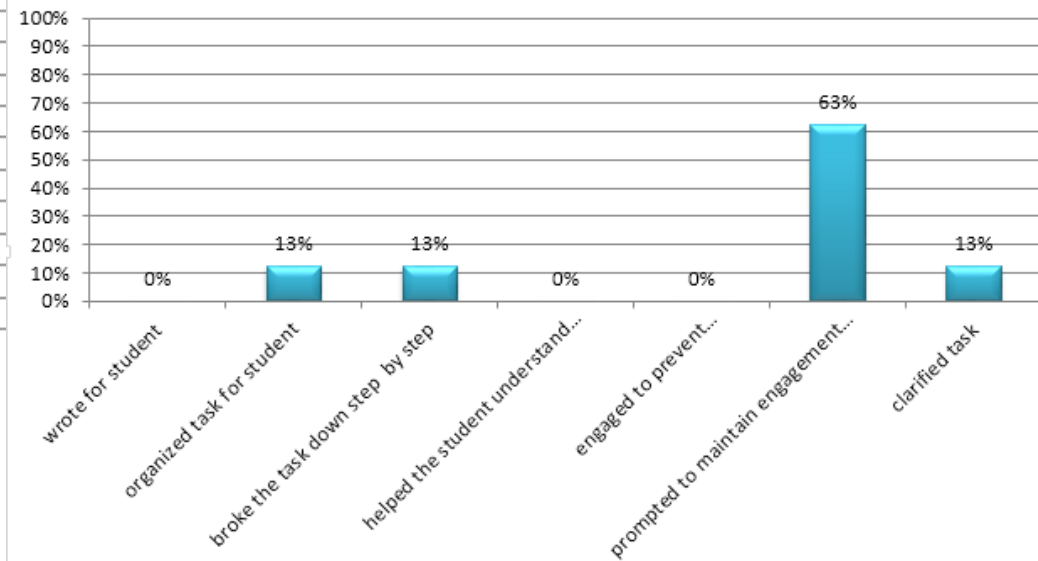
Graphs of Paraprofessional Use



Activity

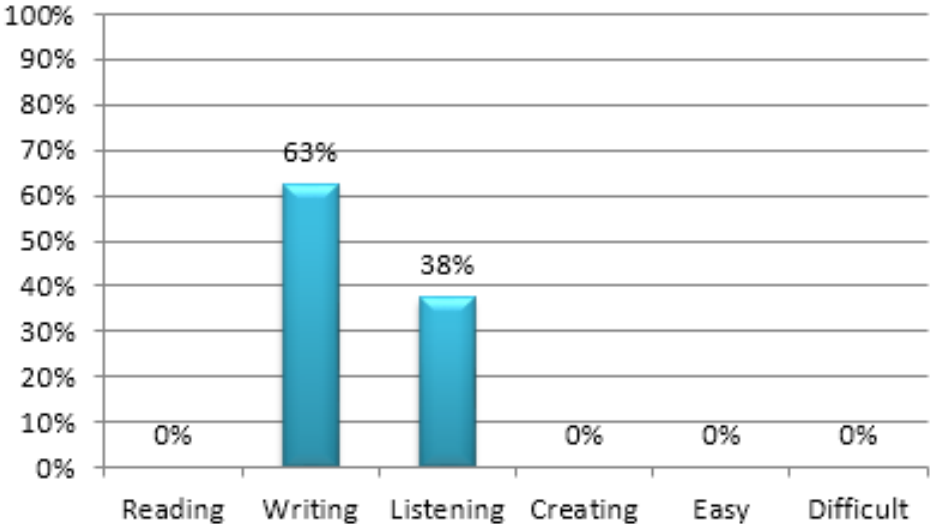


Type of Support Provided

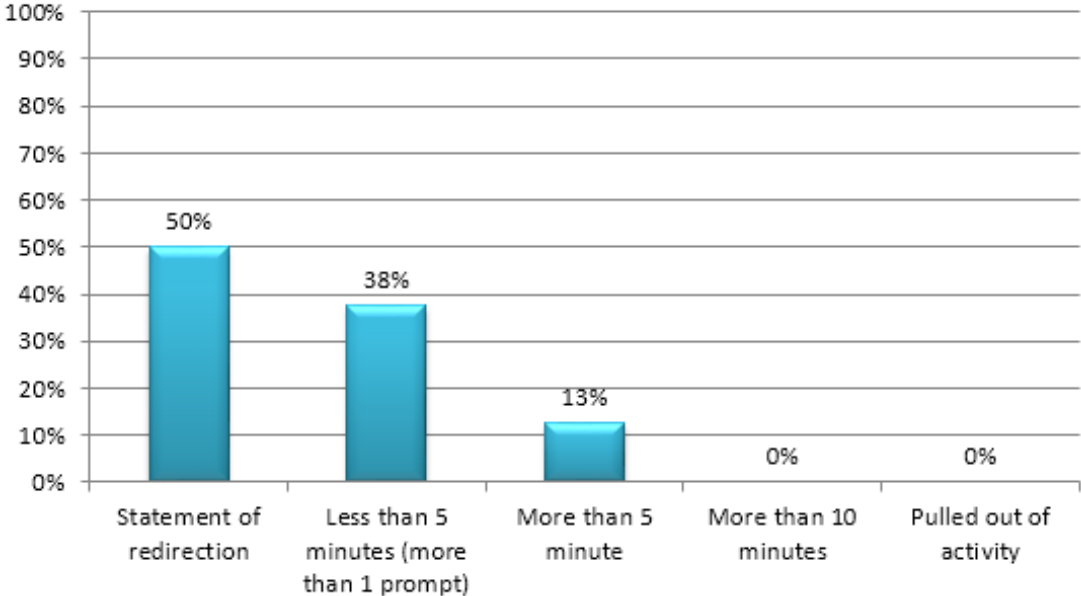


Graphs of Paraprofessional Use

Task



Duration of Support



Implementing a Plan for Paraprofessional Support

Training and Support is Essential

- Paraprofessionals report dissatisfaction with their job
 - Lack of respect
 - Unclear roles
 - Insufficient training

(Chopra, et al., 2004)

Activity

- Get into pairs
 - Person A: Paraprofessional
 - Person B: Student
- I'm the teacher

Behavior Skills Training

Behavior Skills Training

- A skill acquisition procedure that incorporates the following components:
 - Instructions
 - Modeling
 - Rehearsal
 - Feedback

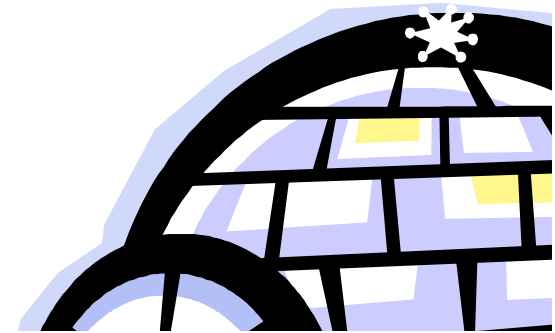
Remember the 4 steps!

Igloos

Must

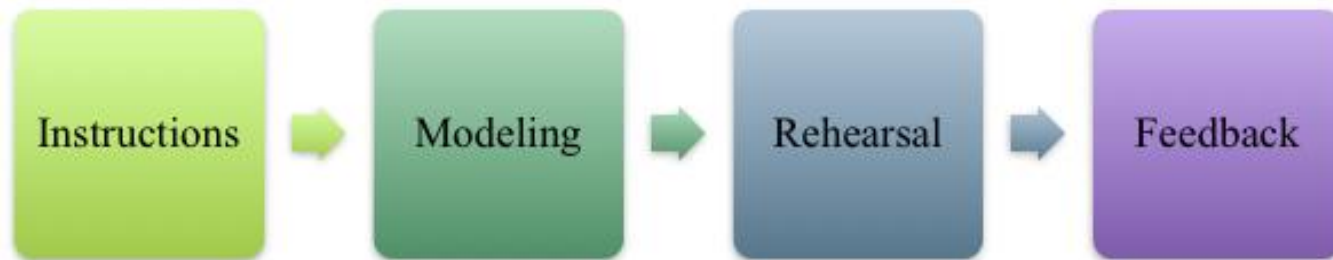
Remain

Frozen



Behavior Skills Training

- Teaches people what **TO** do
- Allows for practice so a person can become fluent with a skills/s
- Effective train-the-trainer procedure
- Individualized to each person



Finding the Time

- Special educators only spent **2%** of their time for each paraprofessional they supported (Giangreco & Broer, 1997)
- Remember what the goal is



Communication Log

Daily Paraprofessional Communication Log

Paraprofessional: _____

Supervising Teacher: _____

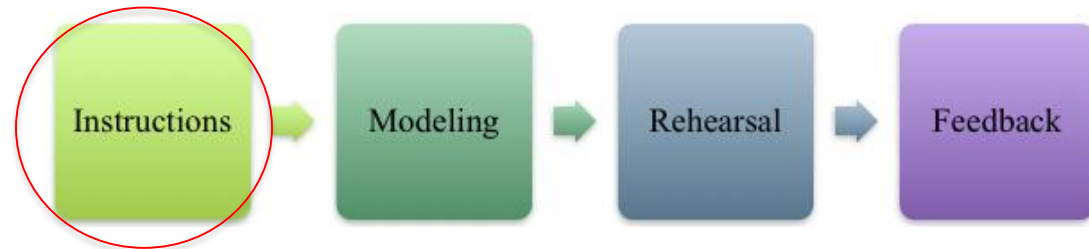
Date: _____

Time	Student(s) worked with	Location	Questions/Comments

Training Areas to Address:

- General duties
- Autism specific information
- Supporting student independence
- Promoting student communication
- Promoting social skills
- Supporting appropriate behavior
- Data collection

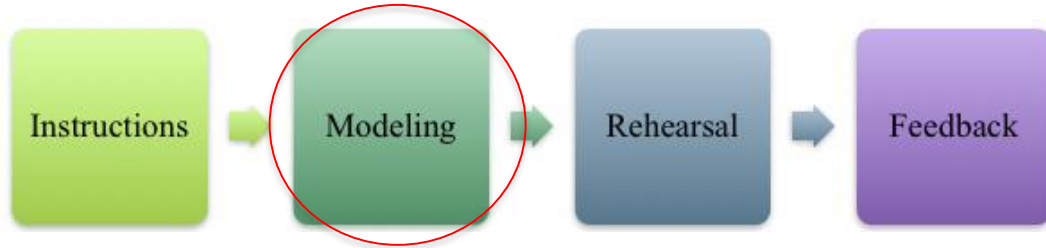
Behavior Skills Training



- Instruction

- Clear and explicit expectations and directions
 - May need verbal and written
- Importance and rationale
- When and when not to do something

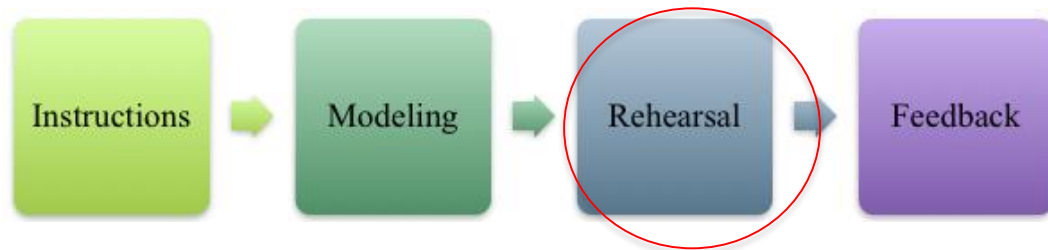
Behavior Skills Training



- Modeling

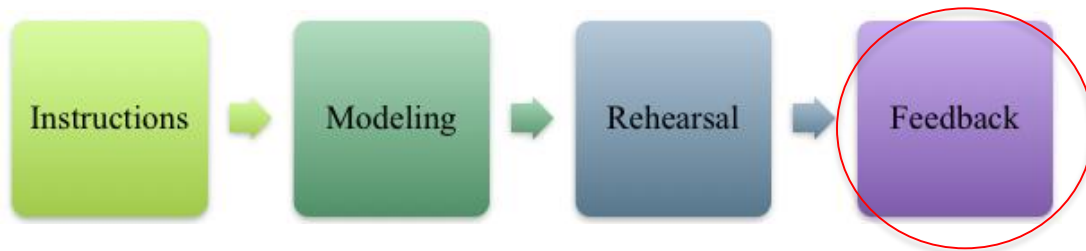
- Teacher shows the paraprofessional exactly what you want him/her to do
- Paraprofessional should be paying attention and asking questions if clarification is needed

Behavior Skills Training



- Rehearsal
 - PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE
 - Role playing + real-life situations
 - May need to include prompting
 - Record data if needed
 - Don't forget generalization

Behavior Skills Training



- Feedback

- Should be specific

- Be encouraging and include the positives

- No one likes to only hear the negative

- Feedback should be provided immediately

Behavior Skills Training

Teacher Responsibility	Teacher with Paraprofessional		Paraprofessional Responsibility
I DO IT	I DO IT	WE DO IT	YOU DO IT
Identifies goals and objectives, provides instruction	Teacher demonstration	Guided Practice	Independent Practice
Explains, provides reasons, defines terms	TEACHER: Models, explicitly identifies skills, suggests	PARA: Initiates, approximates, practices	Paraprofessional: Initiates, self-directs, evaluates

↑
Para should ask questions and seek clarification

↑
Para should ask questions and seek clarification

↑
Teacher provides feedback; May take data

More Bang for Your Buck

*Tie your training to your
performance expectations outlined
in evaluations*

Example Paraprofessional Performance Expectations:
Example from Self-Contained Autism Specific Elementary Program

District Level Performance Criteria	Specific Performance Expectations: Instructional Duties
A. Observes/models methods used by teacher:	Consistently: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses --+p+ , assists student follow-through • Adheres to individual behavior plans • Actively engages with students during “downtimes” • Utilizes PRT components to encourages language and social interactions • Uses least prompt hierarchy to promote student independence • Uses Behavior prevention techniques, including an awareness of CPI behavior escalation levels and how to prevent them.
B. Reinforces previously taught material:	Consistently: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforces language and social ATTEMPTS • Utilizes downtimes and environment to build in skill maintenance opportunities.
C. Executes student learning contracts:	*To be considered meeting expectations, consistently gets through 10 discrete trial programs in a half hour work session. 7-10 programs is considered developing, 6 or less is not meeting expectations.
D. Demonstrates flexibility in meeting individual needs:	Consistently: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapts to schedule and routine changes with a positive attitude. • Utilizes individual language, play, behavior, and academic goals during all student interactions.
E. Encourages independent student performances:	Consistently: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses --+p+ , assists student follow-through • Uses least prompt hierarchy to promote student independence • Refrains from over-prompting • Encourages guided peer assistance in place of self in inclusive settings.
F. Follows-through on lessons:	Consistently: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silently assists other staff members when necessary. • Ends the --+p+ on a +
G. Promotes positive student self-esteem:	Uses a positive or neutral tone of voice in interactions & Utilizes reinforcement that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingent on behaviors • Natural • Conducive to encouraging social and language attempts through reinforcement and then expansion.

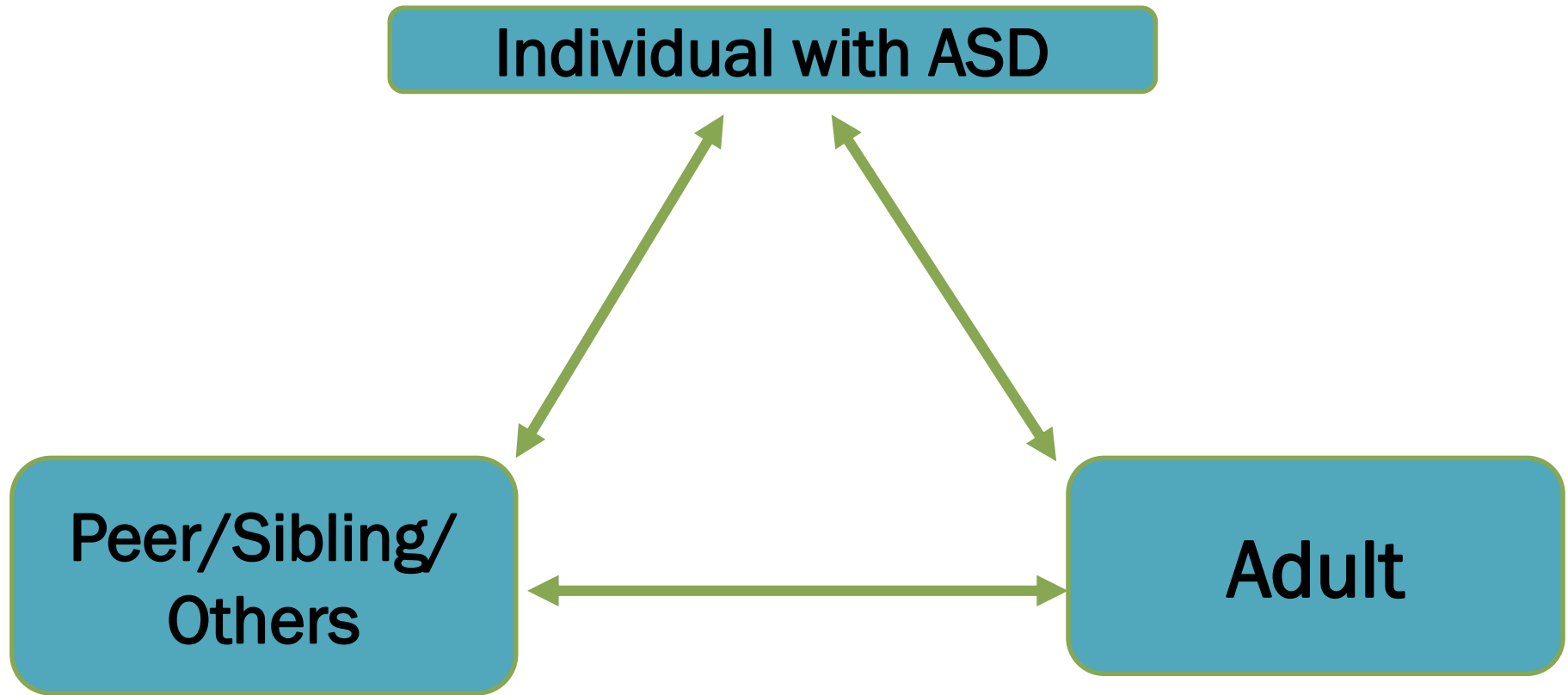
More Bang for Your Buck

*Paraprofessionals can use BST to
teach skills to students*

More Bang for Your Buck

*Students can use BST to teach
EACH OTHER!*

Shifting Adult Support



This increases the frequency and quality of social learning opportunities in the natural environment

A Note About Fidelity

- Fidelity
 - Accuracy and consistency of implementation
- Fidelity checklists are great tools to make sure BST is being implemented correctly
 - Can also be used as a visual form of feedback

Teacher Behavior	Most of the Time 3	Some of the Time 2	Rarely 1	Not at all 0
Intervention				
Teacher follows lesson outline or script as presented in teacher's edition.				
Teacher implements each component of the prescribed plan.				
Instruction				
Teacher maintains appropriate pacing to keep students actively engaged.				
Teacher provides corrective feedback immediately as needed.				
Teacher models new information for students.				

Intervention: Fidelity of Implementation Form

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____

Time: _____

Observer: _____ Individual Observed: _____

Activity Observed: _____

Goal Observed: _____

PTR Coaching/Fidelity Checklist Example

Interventions	Implemented	Impact (1 = no impact; 5 = great impact)
Environmental Support		1 2 3 4 5
1) Mini schedule of center & group available	Y N NA	
2) Mini schedule reviewed prior to start of centers	Y N NA	
3) Prompted Mike to cross off completed items	Y N NA	
Replacement Behavior—Functional		1 2 3 4 5
1) Reminded Mike prior to transition from preferred to non-preferred to use new behavior	Y N NA	
2) Prompted Mike to use new behavior at first sign of screaming (e.g., squeal)	Y N NA	
Reinforce Replacement Behavior		1 2 3 4 5
1) Immediately provided positive comment to Mike for using replacement behavior (within 15 s)	Y N NA	
2) Released Mike to calming choice for at least 1-minute	Y N NA	
3) Provided positive comment in warm tone to Mike immediately upon completing transition.	Y N NA	

Implementation Checklist

For each major objective or activity listed below, please check "yes" or "no" to indicate if it was completed correctly during the observation session. Check "NA" if the objective was not appropriate for the observation. Use the Notes column to comment on the step observed (e.g., positive as well as constructive remarks).

Objective / Activity	Yes	No	NA	Notes
1. Setting: Intervention takes place in the designated setting or during the designated activity/routine.				
2. Initiation: Intervention is initiated at appropriate time.				
3. Termination: Intervention is terminated after correct child response or after designated criteria is met.				
4. Preparation: Preparation steps are completed in a timely manner.				

developmental Disorders

Putting it all Together

- Activity
 - Get back into your A & B pairs
- What was different about this time?

Presentation Content

Link to handouts:

<https://missouri.box.com/v/MOCASEBST>

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Thank you!
Questions?