

Supporting Peer Relationships for Autistic Preschoolers: Practical Evidence-Based Strategies for Inclusive Classrooms

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The National Professional
Development Center on Autism

FRANK PORTER GRAHAM CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE



Introductions

- ▶ What is your current position?
- ▶ How long have you worked in your current position?
- ▶ How many years of experience do you have working with young children with autism?

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WELCOME
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добро пожаловать
ترحيب BEM-VINDO



Acknowledgements

▶ **AFIRM:**

NEW!

- DOE OPE and UNC FPG #P116J250647 (AFIRM-AI; 2026-2029)
- California Autism Professional Training and Information Network contract and UNC FPG (CAPTAIN; 2021–2022),
- DOE IES and UNC FPG #R324B160038 (Post-Doctoral Training; 2016-2022)
- DOE IES and UNC FPG #R324A150047 (TESELA; 2015-2019)
- DOE IES #H325E12002 (IRIS Center and UNC FPG; 2014-2016)

▶ **AFIRM for Toddlers:**

- Foundation for Child Development's Promising Scholars Program (2023–2025)
- UNC Autism Research Center, Kelley Altman Greer Family Research Fund Pilot Award (2024)
- DOE OSEP and UNC FPG #H326P170001 (ECTA Center; 2017-2022)

▶ **AFIRM for Paraeducators:**

- DOE IES and UNC FPG #R324A230140 (2023-2026)
- DOE IES and UNC FPG #R324A170028 (2023–2025)



Video and Photographs

Please do not photograph, download or share any videos or pictures that will be used to demonstrate concepts throughout this training.



Objectives

- ▶ **Describe social engagement and importance of social engagement for young children with autism**
- ▶ **Identify evidence-based practices (EBPs) that can support social engagement and play of young children with autism**
- ▶ **Review EBPs to support peer relationships in inclusive settings**
- ▶ **Develop a plan for next steps to use EBPs in your setting and share resources with colleagues**



Autism Overview

01

Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across contexts

02

Restrictive, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities

03

Symptoms must be present in early childhood

04

Symptoms cause clinically significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of current functioning



Overview of Social Engagement



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Developmentally Appropriate Participation

▶ **Preschool**

- Listening to a book as it is read and interacting with the reader
- Playing cars with a peer during free play

▶ **Older Preschool/Elementary**

- Asking a question during a class activity
- Playing a game of tag at recess



Active Engagement



Academic Engagement



Cognitive Engagement



Social Engagement

What is linked to engagement?

Student Factors

- Age and developmental level
- Type of disability
- Student interests

Partner Factors

- Interaction behaviors
- Frequency of interaction

Environmental Factors

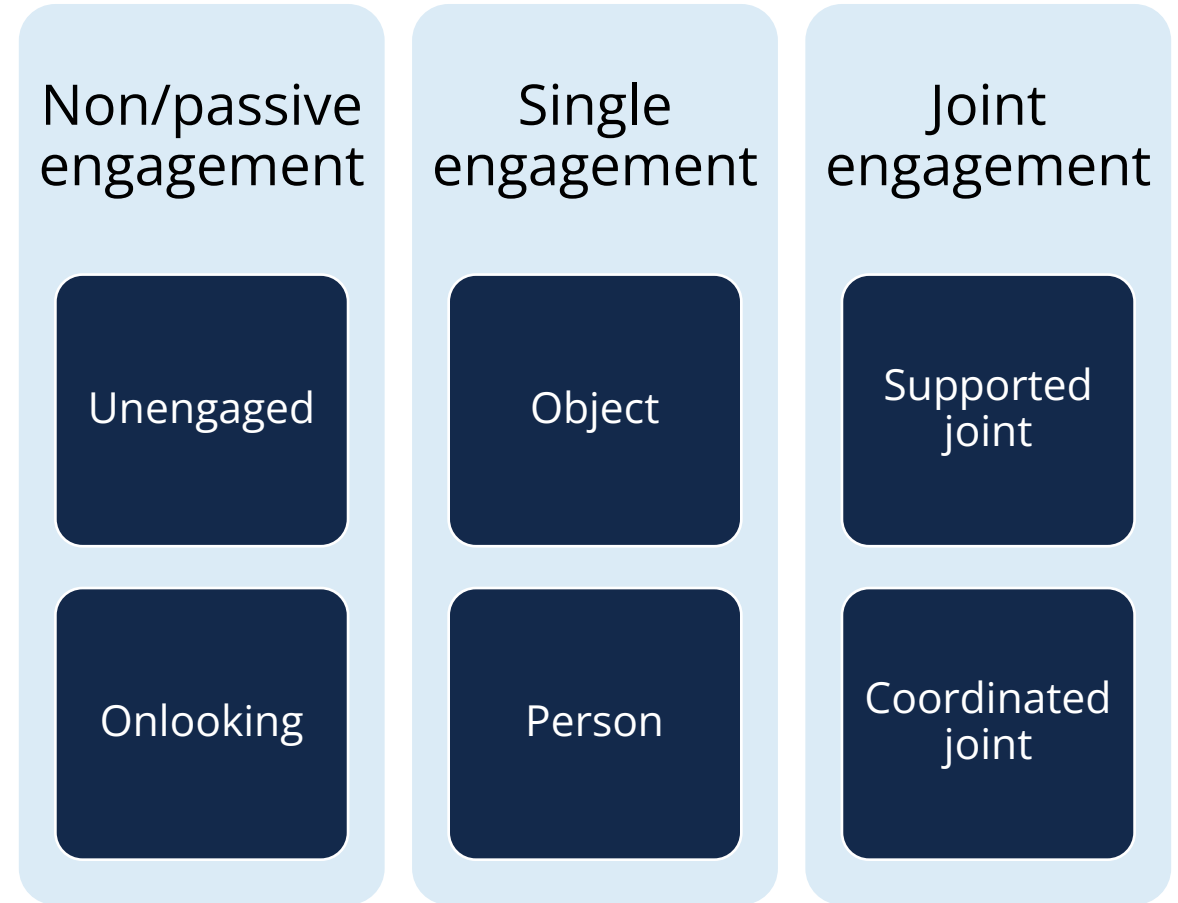
- Student groupings
- Activity types
- Instructional strategies (EBPs)

Adamson et al., 2009, 2010, 2024; deKruif & McWilliams, 1999; Kamps et al., 1991; Marks, 2000; McDonnell et al., 2003; McWilliam et al., 2003



What is social engagement?

- ▶ **Participation with others**
- ▶ **Development of joint engagement**
- ▶ **Beyond joint engagement**



Impact of Social Engagement

In school settings:

- ▶ **Intervention outcomes**
- ▶ **Academic success**
- ▶ **Friendships and peer relationships**

On the child:

- ▶ **Language skills**
- ▶ **Problem solving skills in social situations**
- ▶ **Self-esteem and self-confidence**
- ▶ **Flexibility and adaptability**

Adamson et al., 2009; National Research Council, 2001; Ruble & Robson, 2007; Wong & Kasari, 2012



How does social engagement impact your students?

“If you have met one person with autism,
you’ve met one person with autism”
-Dr. Stephen Shore



Preschool Years

Characteristics and Behaviors:

- ▶ **Wide range of receptive and expressive language, but likely delayed**
- ▶ **Fewer back and forth interactions**
- ▶ **May have emerging requesting skills, but likely limited joint attention skills**
- ▶ **Limited range of play skills (often perseverative and lower levels of play than expected)**
- ▶ **Stereotyped behaviors are no longer developmentally appropriate**

Contextual considerations:

- ▶ **Entering school programs – may be first time in group and/or more structured setting**
- ▶ **Communication partners are family, teachers, and peers**
- ▶ **May still have a “developmental disability” label for educational purposes**

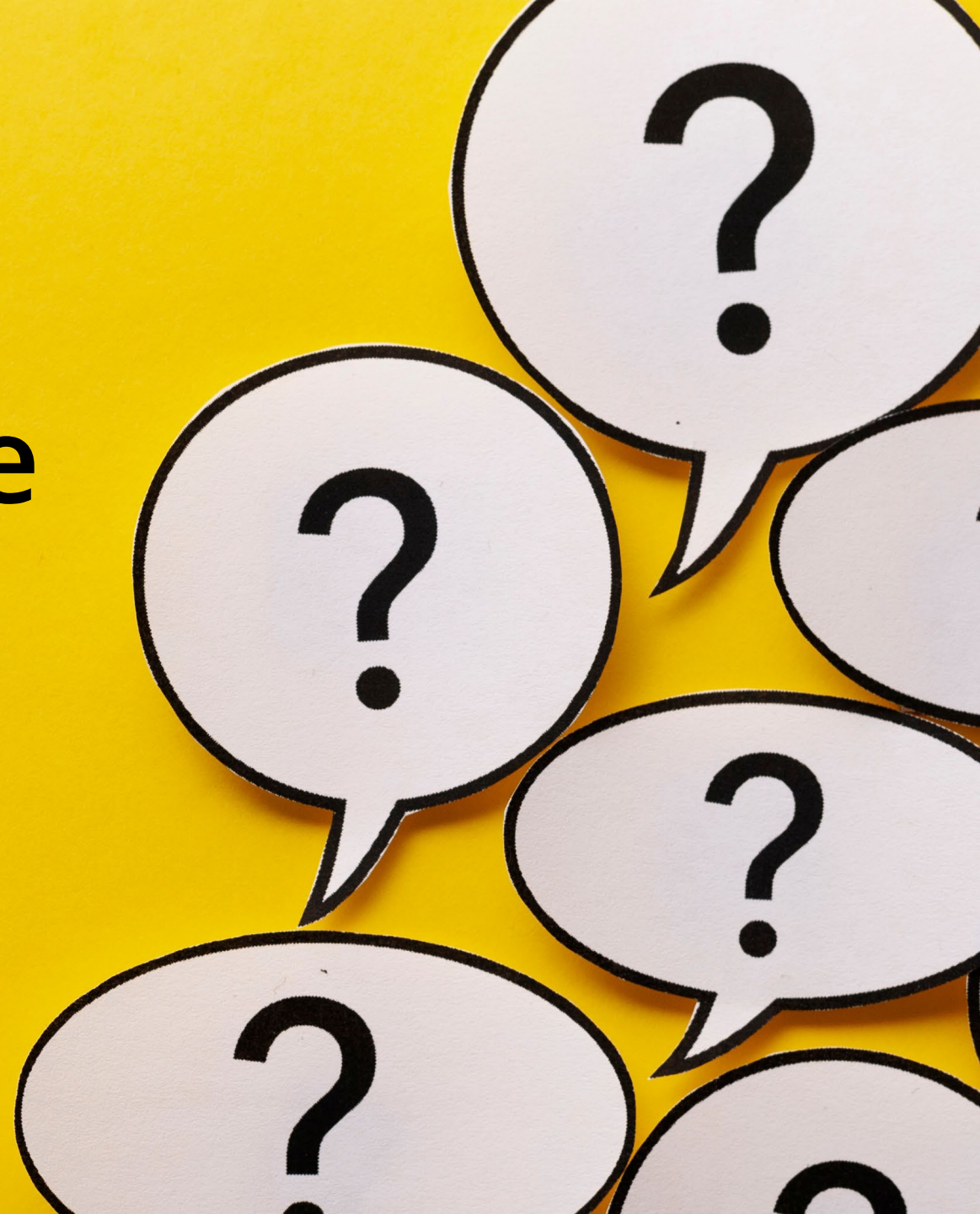
Identifying Evidence-Based Practices



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**How do you define
evidence-based
practices?**



How do we define EBPs?

- ▶ **Focused interventions that:**
 - Produce specific behavioral and developmental outcomes for a child
 - Have been demonstrated as effective in applied research literature
 - Can be successfully implemented in educational settings

Odom, Colett-Klingenberg, Rogers, & Hatton, 2010



Current Review of EBPs

- ▶ Reviewed literature from 1990-2017
- ▶ 972 acceptable articles
- ▶ 28 EBPs

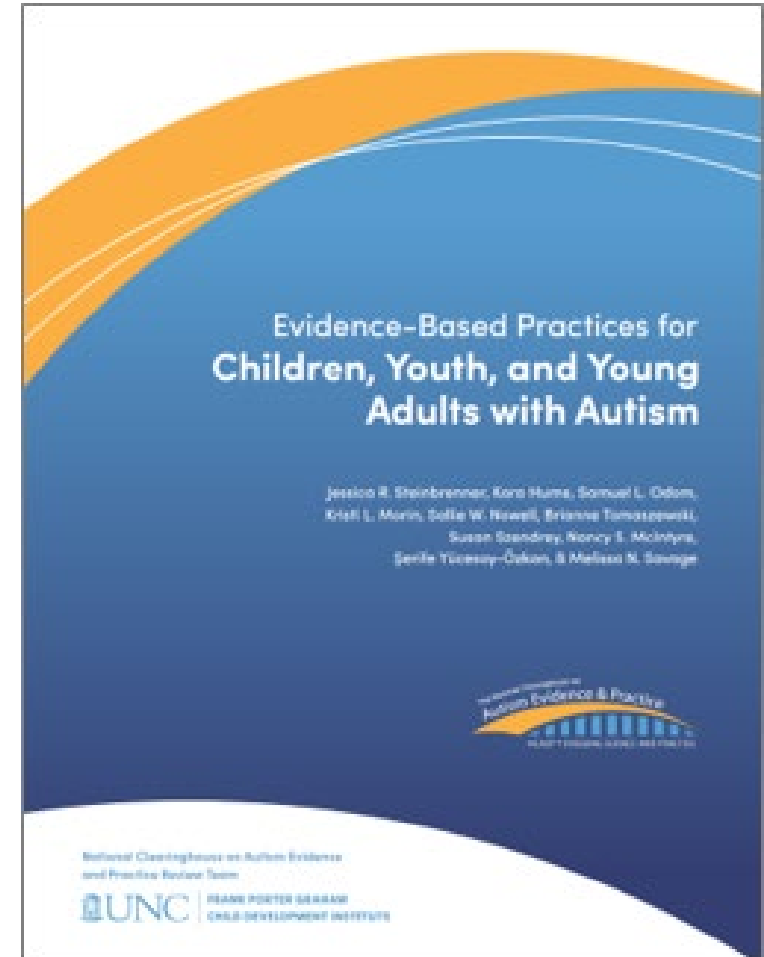
Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders (2021) 51:4013–4032
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-020-04844-2>

ORIGINAL PAPER



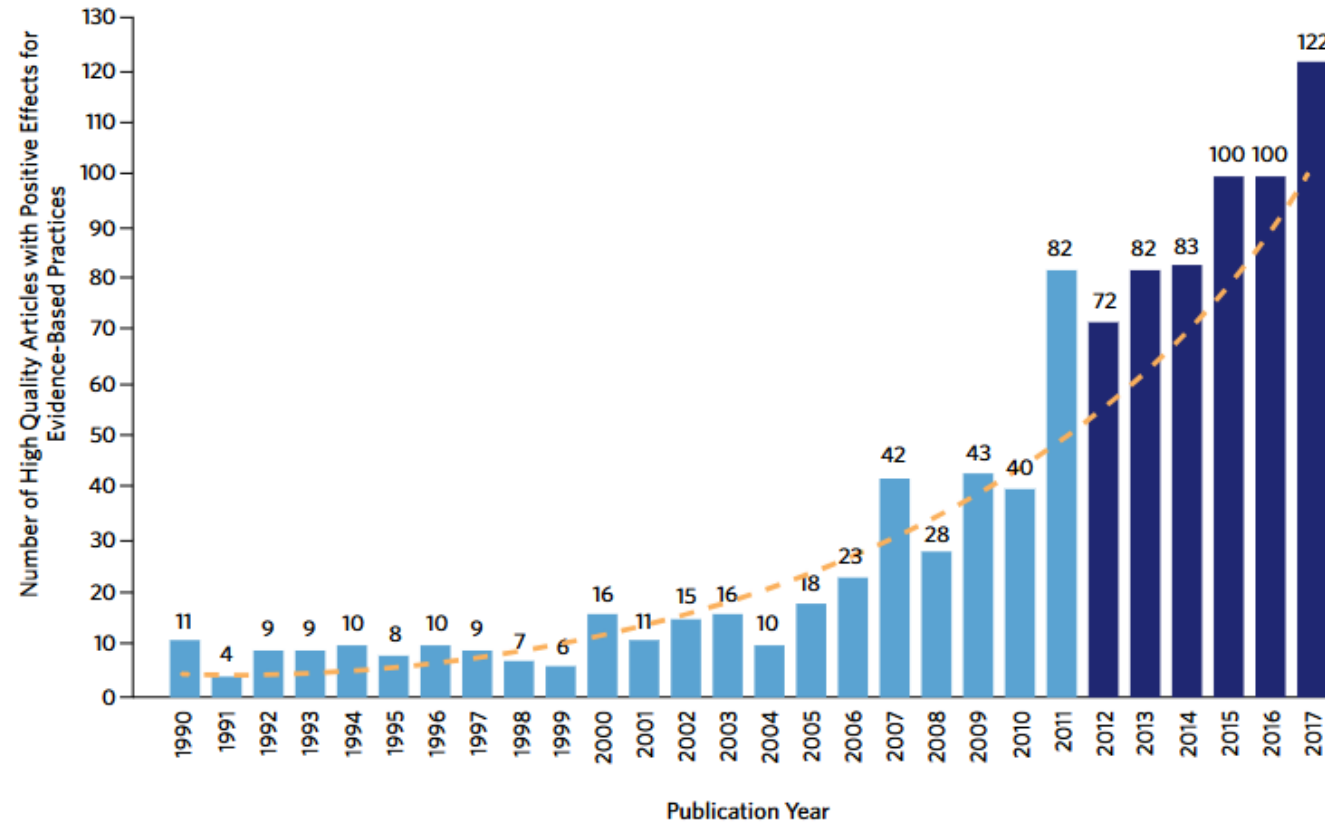
Evidence-Based Practices for Children, Youth, and Young Adults with Autism: Third Generation Review

Kara Hume^{1,2} · Jessica R. Steinbrenner² · Samuel L. Odom² · Kristi L. Morin^{2,3} · Sallie W. Nowell² ·
Brianna Tomaszewski² · Susan Szendrey⁴ · Nancy S. McIntyre^{2,5} · Serife Yücesoy-Özkan^{2,6} · Melissa N. Savage^{2,7}



Identifying EBPs

Figure 1.2 Trends in autism intervention research



Identifying EBPs

Table 3.1 Evidence-based practices, definitions, and number of articles across review periods

Evidence-Based Practice	Definition	Empirical Support		
		1990-2011 (n)	2012-2017 (n)	1990-2017 (n)
Antecedent-Based Interventions (ABI)	Arrangement of events or circumstances that precede an activity or demand in order to increase the occurrence of a behavior or lead to the reduction of the challenging/interfering behaviors.	29	20	49
Ayres Sensory Integration® (ASI®)	Interventions that target a person’s ability to integrate sensory information (visual, auditory, tactile, proprioceptive, and vestibular) from their body and environment in order to respond using organized and adaptive behavior.	1	2	3
Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)	Interventions using and/or teaching the use of a system of communication that is not verbal/vocal which can be aided (e.g., device, communication book) or unaided (e.g., sign language)	9	35	44
Behavioral Momentum Intervention (BMI)	The organization of behavior expectations in a sequence in which low probability, or more difficult, responses are embedded in a series of high probability, or less effortful, responses to increase persistence and the occurrence of the low probability responses.	8	4	12
Cognitive Behavioral/ Instructional Strategies (CBIS)	Instruction on management or control of cognitive processes that lead to changes in behavioral, social, or academic behavior.	7	43	50



Identifying EBPs

Differential Reinforcement of Alternative, Incompatible, or Other Behavior (DR)	A systematic process that increases desirable behavior or the absence of an undesirable behavior by providing positive consequences for demonstration/non-demonstration of such behavior. These consequences may be provided when the learner is: a) engaging in a specific desired behavior other than the undesirable behavior (DRA), b) engaging in a behavior that is physically impossible to do while exhibiting the undesirable behavior (DRI), or c) not engaging in the undesirable behavior (DRO).	27	31	58
Direct Instruction (DI)	A systematic approach to teaching using a sequenced instructional package with scripted protocols or lessons. It emphasizes teacher and student dialogue through choral and independent student responses and employs systematic and explicit error corrections to promote mastery and generalization.	2	6	8
Discrete Trial Training (DTT)	Instructional approach with massed or repeated trials with each trial consisting of the teacher's instruction/presentation, the child's response, a carefully planned consequence, and a pause prior to presenting the next instruction.	16	22	38
Exercise and Movement (EXM)	Interventions that use physical exertion, specific motor skills/ techniques, or mindful movement to target a variety of skills and behaviors.	6	11	17
Extinction (EXT)	The removal of reinforcing consequences of a challenging behavior in order to reduce the future occurrence of that behavior.	13	12	25

Identifying EBPs

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)	A systematic way of determining the underlying function or purpose of a behavior so that an effective intervention plan can be developed.	11	10	21
Functional Communication Training (FCT)	A set of practices that replace a challenging behavior that has a communication function with more appropriate and effective communication behaviors or skills.	12	19	31
Modeling (MD)	Demonstration of a desired target behavior that results in use of the behavior by the learner and that leads to the acquisition of the target behavior.	10	18	28
Music-Mediated Intervention (MMI)	Intervention that incorporates songs, melodic intonation, and/or rhythm to support learning or performance of skills/behaviors. It includes music therapy, as well as other interventions that incorporate music to address target skills.	3	4	7
Naturalistic Intervention (NI)	A collection of techniques and strategies that are embedded in typical activities and/or routines in which the learner participates to naturally promote, support, and encourage target skills/behaviors.	26	49	75
Parent-Implemented Intervention (PII)	Parent delivery of an intervention to their child that promotes their social communication or other skills or decreases their challenging behavior.	13	42	55

Identifying EBPs

Peer-Based Instruction and Intervention (PBII)	Intervention in which peers directly promote autistic children’s social interactions and/or other individual learning goals, or the teacher/ other adult organizes the social context (e.g. play groups, social network groups, recess) and when necessary provides support (e.g., prompts, reinforcement) to the autistic children and their peer to engage in social interactions.	19	25	44
Prompting (PP)	Verbal, gestural, or physical assistance given to learners to support them in acquiring or engaging in a targeted behavior or skill.	55	85	140
Reinforcement (R)	The application of a consequence following a learner’s use of a response or skills that increases the likelihood that the learner will use the response/skills in the future.	53	53	106
Response Interruption/ Redirection (RIR)	The introduction of a prompt, comment, or other distractors when an interfering behavior is occurring that is designed to divert the learner’s attention away from the interfering behavior and results in its reduction.	13	16	29
Self-Management (SM)	Instruction focusing on learners discriminating between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, accurately monitoring and recording their own behaviors, and rewarding themselves for behaving appropriately.	14	12	26
Social Narratives (SN)	Interventions that describe social situations in order to highlight relevant features of a target behavior or skill and offer examples of appropriate responding.	15	6	21

Identifying EBPs

Social Skills Training (SST)	Group or individual instruction designed to teach learners ways to appropriately and successfully participate in their interactions with others.	18	56	74
Task Analysis (TA)	A process in which an activity or behavior is divided into small, manageable steps in order to assess and teach the skill. Other practices, such as reinforcement, video modeling, or time delay, are often used to facilitate acquisition of the smaller steps.	9	4	13
Technology-Aided Instruction and Intervention (TAII)	Instruction or intervention in which technology is the central feature and the technology is specifically designed or employed to support the learning or performance of a behavior or skill for the learner.	10	30	40
Time Delay (TD)	A practice used to systematically fade the use of prompts during instructional activities by using a brief delay between the initial instruction and any additional instructions or prompts.	16	15	31
Video Modeling (VM)	A video-recorded demonstration of the targeted behavior or skill shown to the learner to assist learning in or engaging in a desired behavior or skill.	35	62	97
Visual Supports (VS)	A visual display that supports the learner engaging in a desired behavior or skills independent of additional prompts.	34	31	65



Why use EBPs?

- ▶ **We know they work-empirically based evidence**
- ▶ **We know we can implement them effectively**
- ▶ **We can see if child is making progress and shift if needed**



Updating EBPs

▶ AFIRM - AI

- New systematic review and meta-analysis to identify EBPs
- Development of new IEP2EBP tool
- Please contact Ann Sam if you would like to receive updates



Autism Focused Intervention
Resources & Modules-AI

EBPs to Support Social Engagement and Play

VM: VIDEO MODELING
SN: SOCIAL NARRATIVES



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Video Modeling



SOCIAL/COMMUNICATION EBP

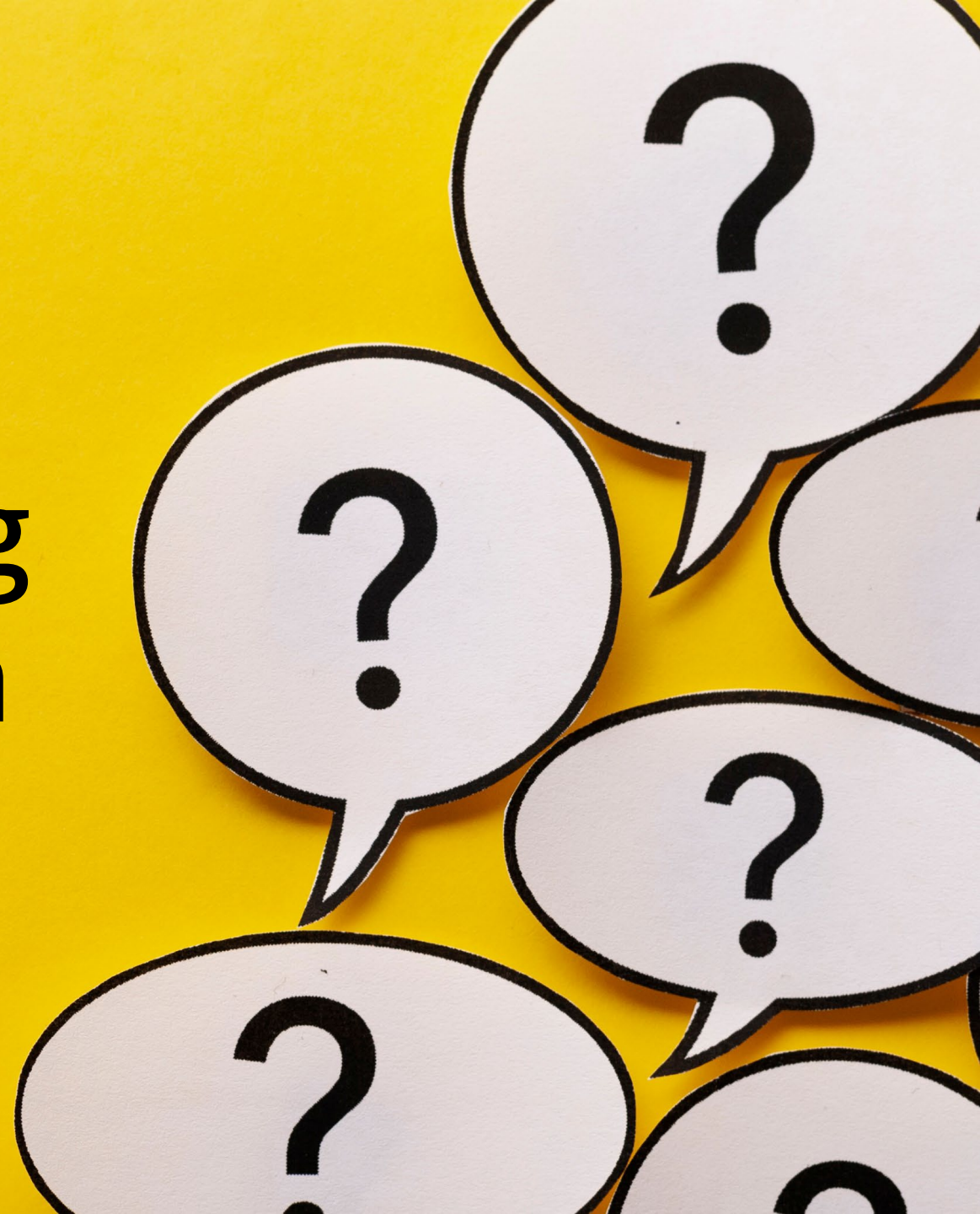


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**How comfortable
are you with using
video modeling in
your classroom?**



Video Modeling: The Basics

▶ Purpose:

- Use a video recording to provide a visual model of a target skill or behavior (for teaching or for priming)



Types of Video Modeling

Type of VM	Role of student	Role of model
Basic A model is recorded completing target skill	View video made by model	Serves as model performing the target skill
Self-modeling Video taken of learner performing skill	Learner is recorded displaying skill; video reviewed later	Learner is the model
Point-of-view Skill recorded from perspective of a learner	View video of skill performed, then demonstrate skill	Serves as point of view model for the skill
Video prompting Skill broken into steps and recorded with pauses	Can serve as the model for recording, Learner attempts each step before viewing other steps	Serves as model for recording



Video Modeling

PLAN

- Select type of VM
- Break down task
- Create VM
- Introduce viewing equipment

USE

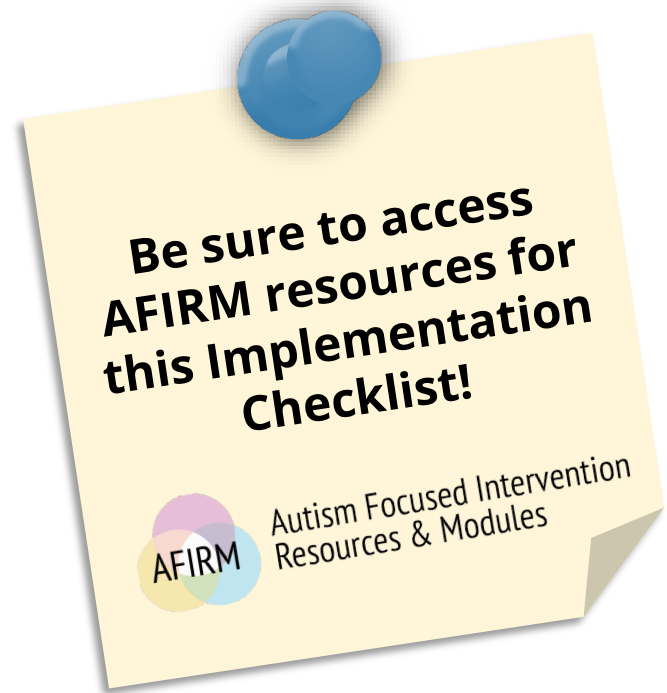
- Arrange environment
- Choose time to show video
- Show video
- Implement activity to elicit behavior

MONITOR

- Collect and analyze data for target behavior
- Fade video model
- Determine next steps

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT & PLAY EBP: VIDEO MODELING

Implementation Checklist



IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

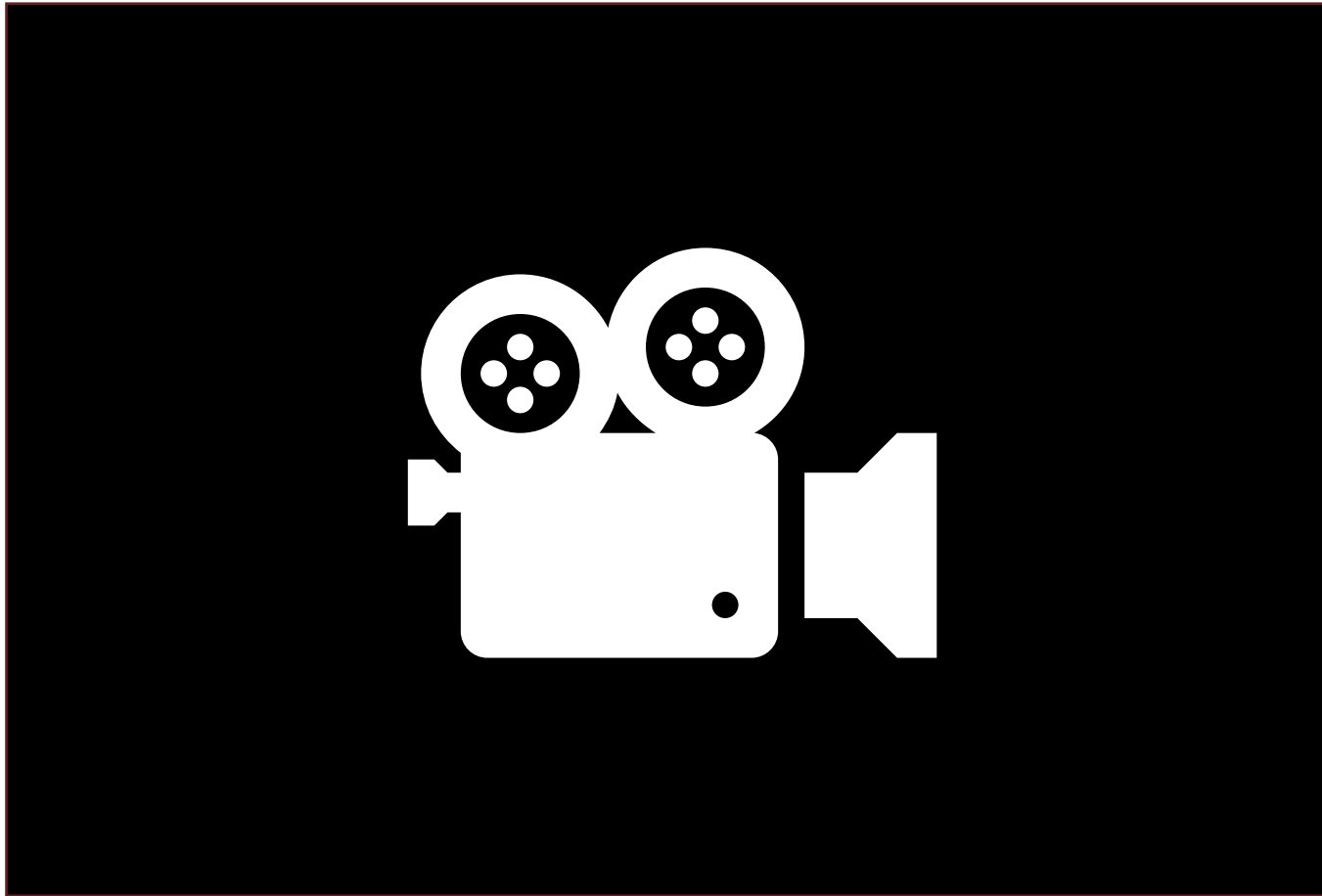
BEFORE YOU START, HAVE YOU...?

- Identifying the target goal/behavior/skill...?
- Collecting baseline data through direct observation...?
- Establishing a target goal or outcome that clearly states when the behavior will occur, what the target goal or outcome is, and how team members and/or observers will know when the skill is mastered...?

If the answer to any of the above questions is 'No,' review the process of how to select an appropriate EBP (<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/selecting-EBP>).

		Observation:	1	2	3	4	5
		Date:					
		Observer's Initials:					
STEP 1: PLANNING							
1.1	Assess learner's current abilities						
1.2	Determine Video Modeling procedure						
1.3	Simplify the task into smaller tasks, if needed						
1.4	Select reinforcers to pair with the target skill or behavior						
1.5	Choose the video equipment						
1.6	Identify and prepare the model, Arrange the environment for recording the video, Record the video, Edit the video, and Transfer the video to a viewing device						
1.7	Introduce the viewing equipment to the learner, as needed						
1.8	Train team members to implement the VM with fidelity						
STEP 2: USING							
2.1	Arrange the environment for the video modeling intervention						
2.2	Choose a time to show the video to the learner						
2.3	Show the video (as often as needed)						
2.4	Prompt the learner to perform the skill or behavior						
2.5	Reinforce performance of all or part of the skill or behavior						
2.6	Correct errors (if needed)						
2.7	Fade the video model						
STEP 3: MONITORING							
3.1	Collect data on target behaviors						
3.2	Determine next steps based on learner progress						

Meet Eli

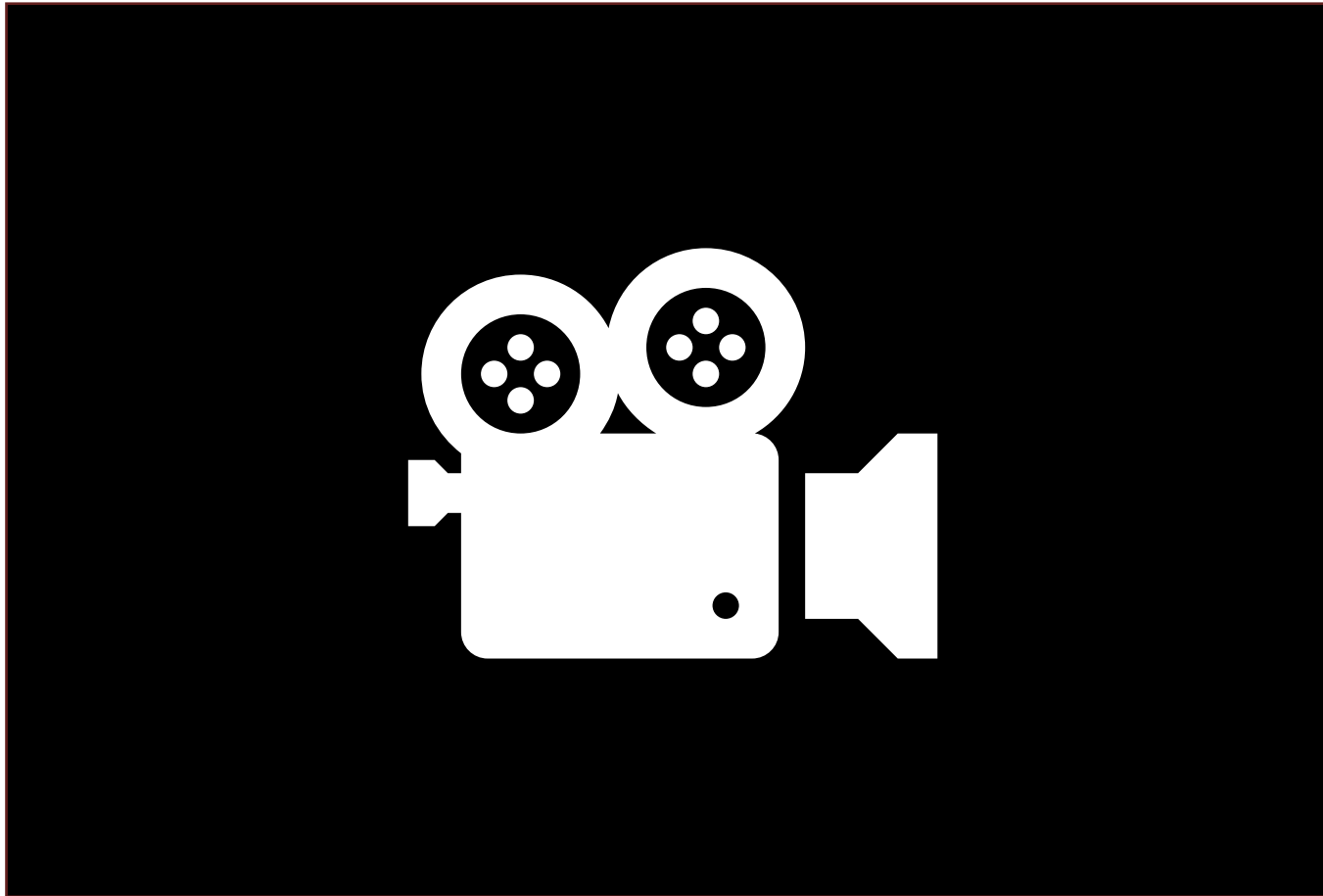


Target Behaviors

Environment	Number of Initiations	Notes
Comments to Peers	0	Solitary Play
Greet Peers	0	Off Task
Initiate to Peers at Lunch	0	Self Talk

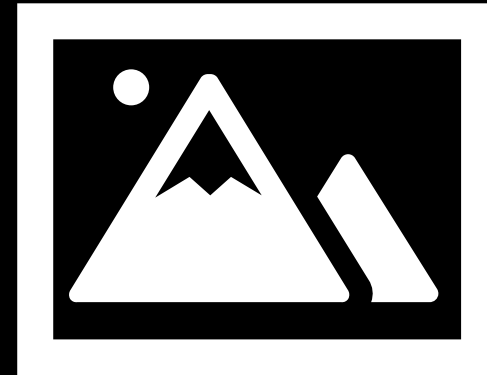


Create Video Model

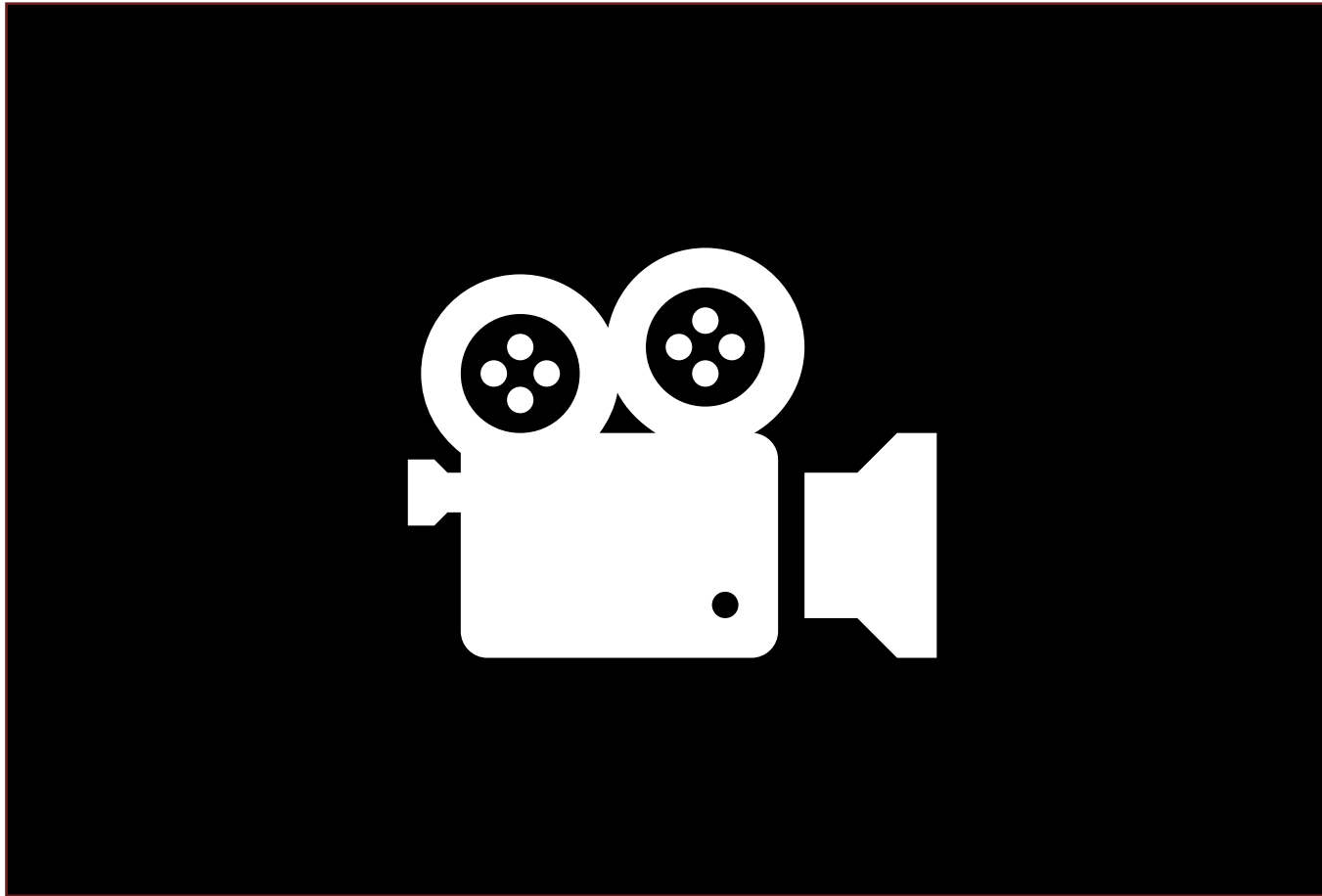


Use: Video Modeling

- Arrange environment
- Choose a time to show video
- Show video
- Implement activity to engage skill or behavior



Show Video

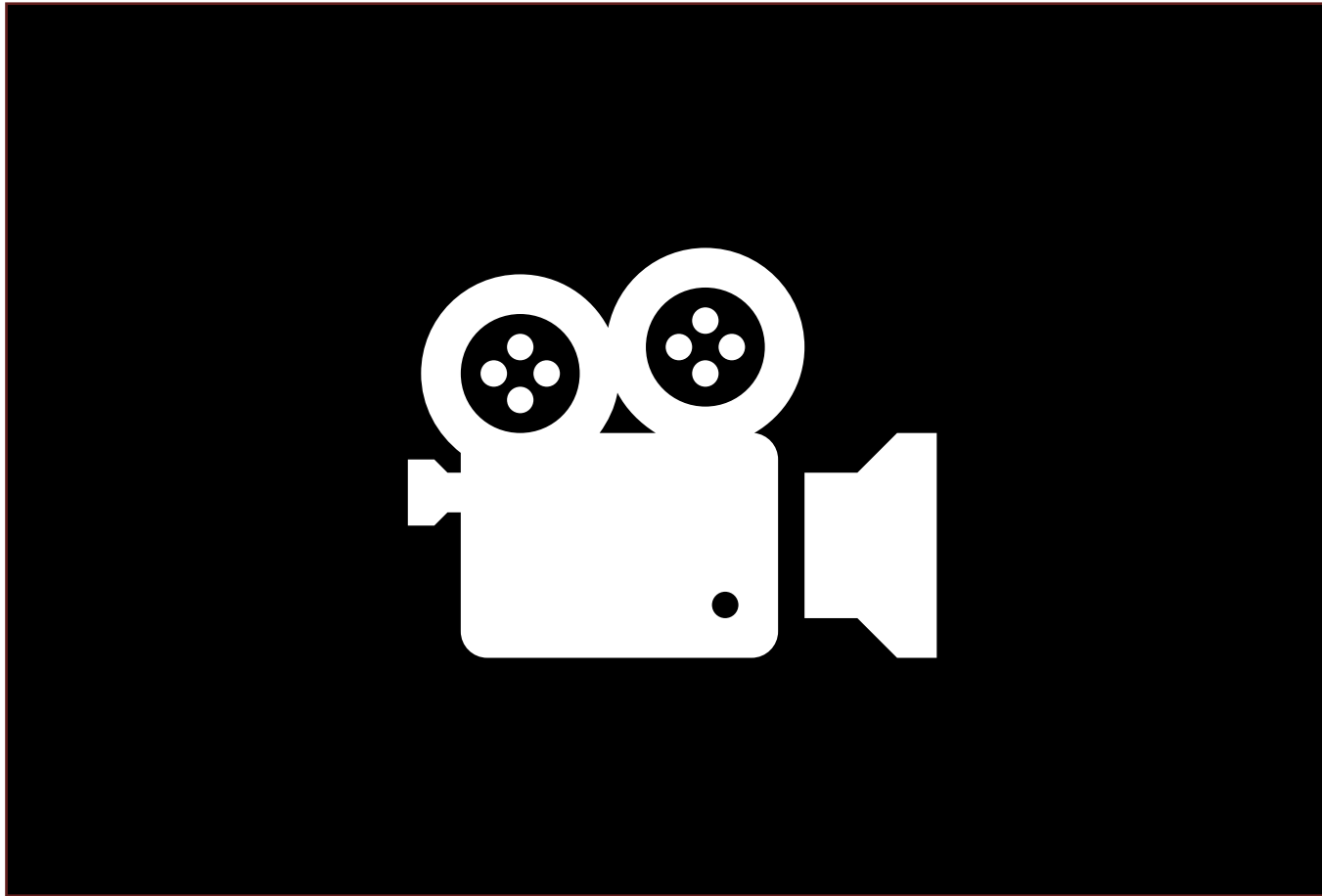


Monitor: Video Modeling

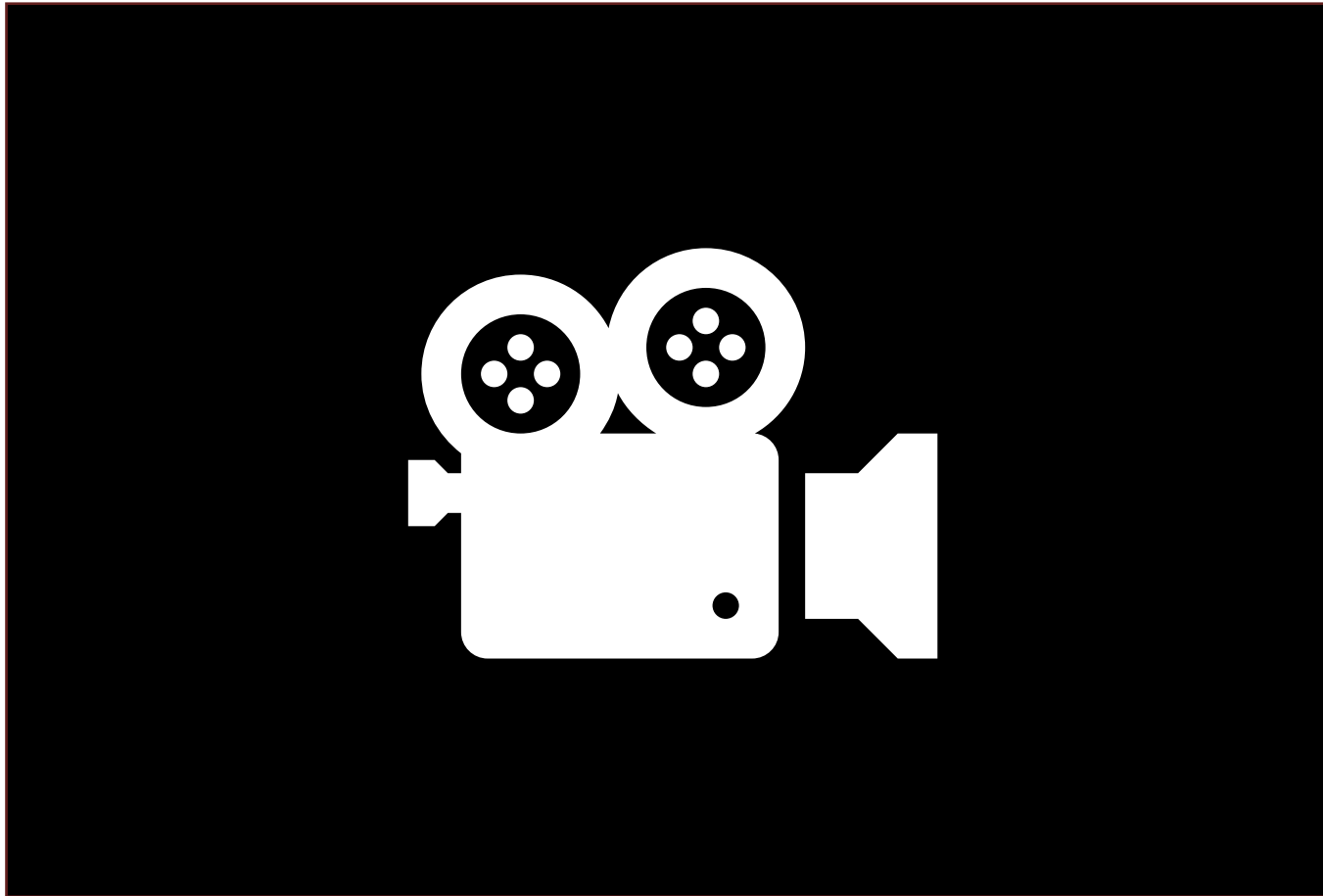
- ❑ Collect and analyze data for target behavior
- ❑ Fade video model
- ❑ Determine next steps based on learner progress



Collect and Analyze Data



Independently Playing with Peer



Social Narratives



SOCIAL/COMMUNICATION EBP



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Social Narratives: The Basics

- Describe social situations and socially appropriate responses or behaviors for learners on the spectrum
- Individualized based upon the needs of the learner
- Provide relevant cues/explanations of the feelings and thoughts of others (i.e., perspective-taking)



Social Narratives

PLAN

- Identify social situation
- Select type of SN
- Write SN using criteria
- Design appropriate display
- Identify times and activities to use

USE

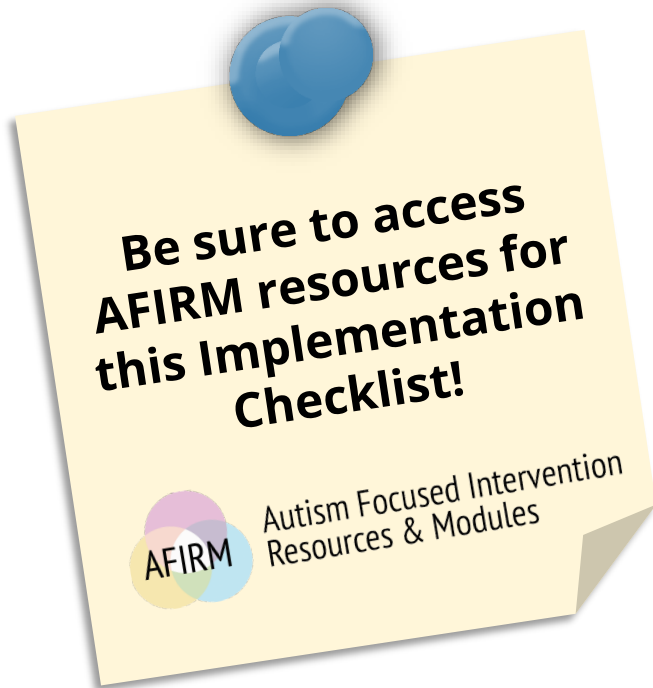
- Introduce SN to student
- Read SN (student or adult)
- Review key concepts
- Participate in social situation
- Discuss (as needed)

MONITOR

- Collect and analyze data for target behavior
- Determine next steps



Implementation Checklist



IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

BEFORE YOU START, HAVE YOU...?

- Identifying the target goal/behavior/skill...?
- Collecting baseline data through direct observation...?
- Establishing a target goal or outcome that clearly states when the behavior will occur, what the target goal or outcome is, and how team members and/or observers will know when the skill is mastered...?

If the answer to any of the above questions is 'No,' review the process of how to select an appropriate EBP (<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/selecting-EBP>).

		Observation:	1	2	3	4	5
		Date:					
		Observer's Initials:					
STEP 1: PLANNING							
1.1	Identify the social situation for the intervention						
1.2	Select type of social narrative						
1.3	Write social narrative following criteria for selected type						
1.4	Design the appropriate display for the social narrative (pictures, number of sentences per page)						
1.5	Identify times or activities to use social narratives						
STEP 2: USING							
2.1	Introduce the social narrative to learner						
2.2	Learner or adult reads social narrative						
2.3	Review key concepts with learner						
2.4	Learner participates in identified social situation						
2.5	Provide prompts and reinforcement as needed						
STEP 3: MONITORING							
3.1	Collect and analyze data						
3.3	Determine next steps based on learner progress						

Types of Social Narratives

- ▶ **Social Stories™** - Social Stories are the most well-known and frequently used social narrative. Developed by Carol Gray, Social Stories describe a social situation and appropriate behavior by using sentences that describe or direct the learner.
- ▶ **Social Articles™** - Like Social Stories, Social Articles are tailored for adults.
- ▶ **Cartooning** - Useful when a learner does not know what someone else is thinking, cartooning uses stick figures and thought bubbles to depict what another person is thinking.
- ▶ **Comic Strip Conversations™** - Developed by Carol Gray, Comic Strip Conversations use simple drawings to show what people say, do, and think.
- ▶ **Power Cards** - Using a learner's special interest, Power Cards provide a short scenario and rules on a small card that helps a learner understand social situations.
- ▶ **Social Autopsies** - Social autopsies are used after a social error occurred to help the learner understand the mistake.

Plan - Draft Social Narrative

- ❑ Learner's point of view
- ❑ Learner's comprehension level
- ❑ Story length appropriate
- ❑ Language is developmentally appropriate
- ❑ If appropriate, have learner help with writing
- ❑ 2-5 descriptive sentences for every 1 directive sentence



Types of Sentences

Sentences that Direct

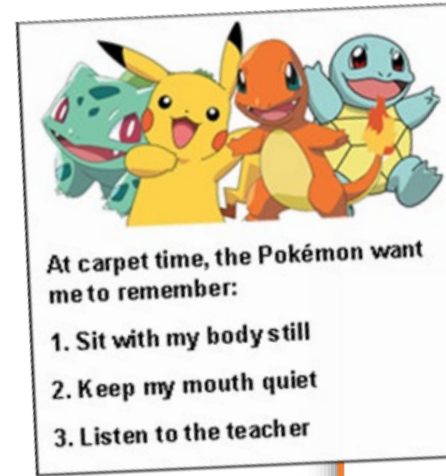
- ▶ **Directive Sentences** – tell learner what to do

Sentences that Describe

- ▶ **Descriptive Sentences** – answer basic “wh” questions
- ▶ **Perspective Sentences** – describe reactions & feelings
- ▶ **Cooperative Sentences** – describe how others may help
- ▶ **Affirmative Sentences** – confirm actions are positive

Power Cards

- Include a scenario and a checklist
- Present rules and behavioral expectations
- Special interest used as a reinforcer
- Useful when a problematic behavior needs to be addressed





The Pokémon like to run and play, but when it is time to listen to the teacher, they always follow the carpet time rules. They know how important it is to calm down so they can hear what their teacher has to say. The next time I have to calm down to listen to my teacher at carpet time, I can do what the Pokémon do.

The Pokémon always follow carpet time rules.

- They sit with their bodies still.
- Their mouths are quiet.
- Their ears are listening to the teacher.

Power Card Planning

- ❑ Select social situation
- ❑ Baseline data
- ❑ Gather information about social situation
- ❑ Possible reasons for behavior (FBA & baseline data)

 Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules Social Narratives 
For more information, please visit: <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/>

PLANNING CHECKLIST: POWER CARD

Learner's Name: _____ Date/Time: _____
Observer(s): _____
Target Skill/Goal/Behavior: _____
Directions: Complete this checklist to determine if Power Card is ready to use with the learner on the spectrum.

IDENTIFY TARGET BEHAVIOR:

Summary of baseline data: _____

Selected social situation: _____

CONSIDERATIONS:




What does the learner like to interact with? (toys, games, hero, character, etc.) _____

What special interest do team members notice? _____

What special interest do family members notice? _____

If applicable, what special interest does the learner describe? _____

Possible reasons for behavioral issues based upon functional behavioral assessment and baseline data: _____

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Power Card - Scenario

► Scenario:

- Relates to a special interest
- Includes reason why special interest would use the strategy/behavior
- Special interest uses the strategy (3-4 steps)
- Special interest is successful with strategy
- Encourage learner to use strategy/behavior
- Includes picture of special interest

Spiderman Needs Help
Even a superhero like Spiderman needs help sometimes. Not even a superhero can do everything alone. At first, Spiderman was scared to ask for help. He didn't want people to think he was weak. He also didn't want people interrupting him when he didn't need help. Then Spiderman had a great idea. He could raise his hand to let people know when he needed help. This would keep them from interrupting, but also get him help when he needed it. When we need help, we can raise our hand just like Spiderman.



Power Card - Checklist

- ❑ Picture of the learner's special interest
- ❑ Written in 1st person
- ❑ Rules outline expected behavior
- ❑ Small (portable or place on the desk)



Spiderman wants me to remember:

1. It is okay to ask for help. Even Spiderman needs help sometimes.
2. Raise my hand to ask for help.
3. Wait for the teacher to call on me.
4. Say "I need help, please".



Dolphin wants you to remember:

- Share your toys
- Friends share their toys even if it is your favorite toy
- Friends share!

Just like Dora!



Dora wants me to remember these 3 things:



1. Keep my hands down
2. Use my words with a quiet voice
3. Keep working hard.

Using: Social Narratives

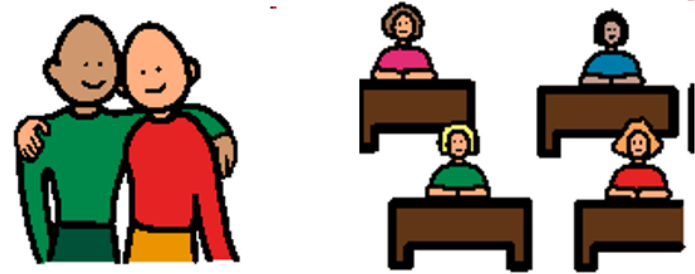
- ❑ Introduce the social narrative to the learner
- ❑ Learner or adult read social narrative
- ❑ Review key concepts
- ❑ Learner participates in identified social situation
- ❑ Provide prompts and reinforcements as needed



Social Narratives

Introduce peer in a class using a social narrative. Highlight activities that each student likes to show similarities, provide ideas for interactions, etc.

There are lots of friends in Room 8.



Meet Kobe.

Kobe is a boy.



(photo removed)

Kobe is 9 years old.

9

Kobe likes play-doh.



Kobe likes to play ball.



Social Narratives

Create a social story about responses to social situations.

When I go out, people may shake my hand.
I will be okay.

When I go out, people may bump into me,
or my communication systems.
I will be okay.

When I go out, people may want to give me
a hug.
I can tell them, “No”, and put my hand out
for a high five.

Being first, being last

In Room 7, there are many different activities during the day.

Sometimes, the students go first during the activity. Sometimes students are in the middle, and sometimes students go last. It is okay to be in all of these places during activities.

The friends in Room 7 take turns being first. The same person is not first for every line or every activity.

If I am not first during one activity, that is okay because I know I can be first some other time.

Sometimes it is fun to be in the middle. When I am in the middle of the line, I get to stand next to more of my friends.

It is also good to be last. When I am the last one to get my points, I am the only one who is sitting with my teacher at the table.

Every time we line up or do an activity, I might be first, last, or in the middle. No matter where I am in line or during activities, it will be okay.



Monitoring: Social Narratives

Collect Data:

- Frequency
- Anecdotal notes

Be sure to access
AFIRM resources
for these Data
Collection Forms
and Progress
Checklists!

AFIRM Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules

Social Narratives SN

For more information, please visit: <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/>

MONITORING PROGRESS CHECKLIST

Learner's Name: _____ Date/Time: _____
Observer(s): _____
Target Skill/Goal/Behavior: _____
Directions: Complete this checklist to determine if the learner is making progress with using Social Narratives.

MONITORING PROGRESS:

- Is the target skill or behavior well defined?
- Is the target skill or behavior measurable and observable?
- Can the learner understand the social narrative?
- Was the social narrative (Social Story™ or Power Card) developed following the criteria (for example, at least 2 sentences that describe for one sentence that directs)?
- Was the learner's development and age taken into consideration when developing the social narrative (for example, number of words on page)?
- Were pictures and images used to enhance the social narrative, if appropriate?
- Was the social narrative read prior to the identified social situation?
- Is there a decrease in inappropriate social and communication behaviors?
- Is there an increase in the use of target skills with new social partners in social settings?
- Has enough time been devoted to using SN?
- Is SN used with fidelity? (Use the SN Implementation Checklist to determine fidelity.)

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**How can you
use these EBPs in
your setting to
support social
engagement and
play?**



**What questions do
you have about
Video Modeling or
Social Narratives?**



Application Activity and Next Steps



Think about the use of EBPs in your setting. What are some areas for improvement in your context related to the use of EBPs?



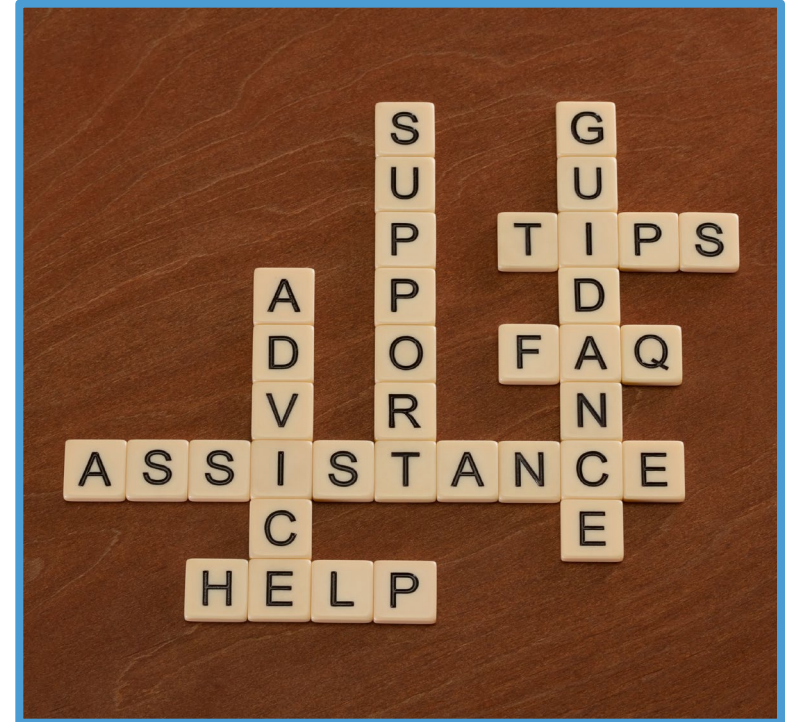
List at least one idea for using a foundational EBP to target social engagement that you would like to use next week or support a colleague in using.



Record at least one strategy that you would like to present about to your colleagues to improve social engagement in school settings.



Resources



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AFIRM

- ▶ **E-learning modules for 28 EBPs**
 - <http://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/>
- ▶ **Target audience**
 - Special and general educators
 - Related service personnel
 - Early interventionists
 - Paraprofessionals
- ▶ **Planning, Selecting, and Monitoring EBPs**



Autism Focused Intervention
Resources & Modules

AFIRM Certificates

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

? **Post-Assessment**

Welcome to the post-test for the AFIRM module. This test aims to assess your understanding and retention of the key concepts covered in the module.

To receive a **free AFIRM Certificate of Completion**, complete the post-assessment quiz to the right.

If you need CEUs for professional development or Type-II CEs if you are a BCBA, be sure to select the needed link at the end of the post-test.

QUIZ

AFIRM Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules

➔ **BEGIN**

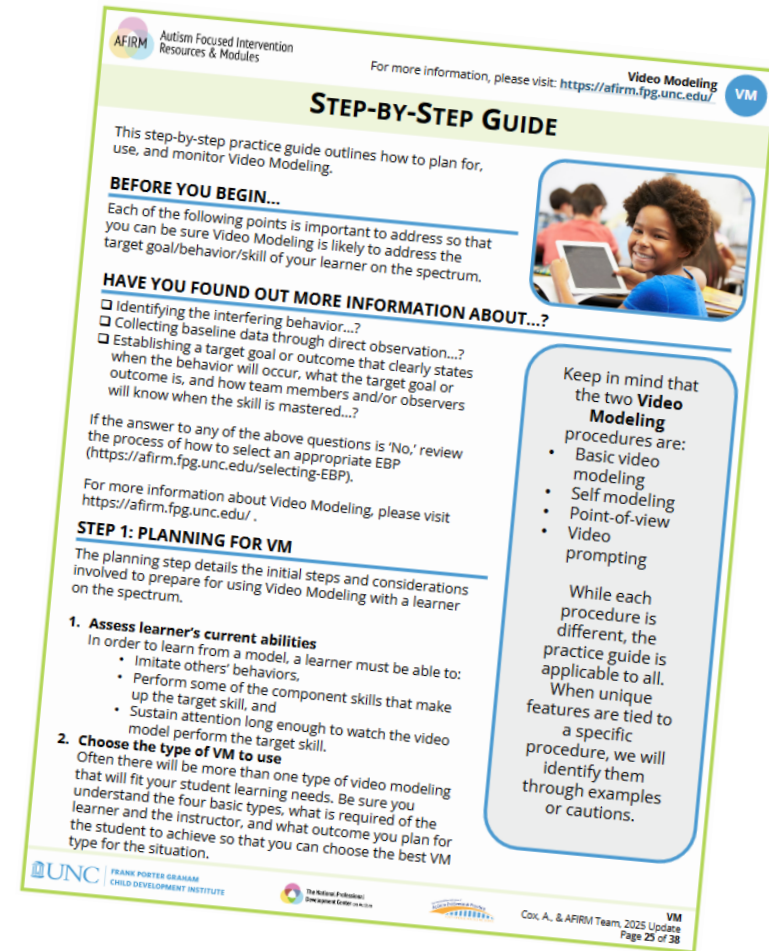


Supplemental Materials

- ▶ Implementation checklist
- ▶ Step-by-step practice guide
- ▶ Parent's guide
- ▶ Tip sheet for professionals
- ▶ Data sheets
- ▶ Evidence-base



Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules



Tip Sheet for Professionals




AFIRM Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules For more information, please visit: <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/> SN

TIP SHEET FOR PROFESSIONALS

SOCIAL NARRATIVES ...

- Is an evidence-based practice for children and youth on the spectrum from 3-19 years old that is implemented in a variety of ways across multiple settings.
- Use text and images to highlight important aspects of social situations to increase a learner's ability to navigate a challenging situation.



WHY USE WITH LEARNERS ON THE SPECTRUM?

- Social narratives increase learners' understanding of a social situation and what is expected of them in the situation
- Social narratives prepare learners to use a target skill or behavior in an identified social situation

TIPS:

- Use the Planning Checklist to help you prepare the social narrative for the learner.
- Create a developmentally appropriate and appealing display for the social narrative by including pictures and special interest of the learner.
- Create opportunities for the learner to read the social narrative throughout the day.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTCOMES:

The evidence-base for Social Narratives supports its use to address the following outcomes, according to age range, in the table below:


Age	Academic	Adaptive	Behavior	Communication	Joint Attention	Play	School Readiness	Social
3-5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
6-11	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
12-14			Yes	Yes				Yes
15-18			Yes	Yes				Yes

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AFIRM Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules For more information, please visit: <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/> SN

STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTING:

- PLAN**
 - Identify the social situation for the intervention
 - Select type of social narrative
 - Write social narrative following criteria for selected type
 - Design the appropriate display for the social narrative
 - Identify times or activities to use social narrative
- USE**
 - Introduce the social narrative to learner
 - Learner or adult reads social narrative
 - Review key concepts with learner
 - Learner participates in identified social situation
 - If appropriate, discuss participation in social situation
- MONITOR**
 - Collect and analyze data
 - Determine next steps based on learner progress



Social Narratives SN

This sheet was designed as a supplemental resource to provide basic information about Social Narratives for professionals working with learners on the spectrum.

For more information about this selected evidence-based practice, please visit <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/>.

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Introduction to Autism

- ▶ **Module BUT, really an online, interactive learning experience**
- ▶ **Serious gaming or gamification**
- ▶ **Learning through ...**
 - Doing
 - Answering
 - Watching
 - Practicing



Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules

A screenshot of the AFIRM 'Introduction to Autism' module. On the left is a blue sidebar menu with a scroll bar, containing a hierarchical list of topics such as 'Introduction', 'Autism Fundamentals', 'Autism Characteristics', and 'Thinking & Learning'. The main content area has a yellow header with the title 'Introduction to Autism' and a 'Resources' link. Below the header, a white box contains the text 'Autism occurs in over 1% of the population.' Underneath this text is a photograph of a diverse group of children sitting around a table in a classroom, looking at papers and tablets. Below the photo are three buttons: 'FACT', 'OR', and 'MYTH'. At the bottom of the interface is a blue 'SUBMIT' button and a set of navigation icons (back, forward, refresh, etc.) and a progress bar.

Newest Modules



Autism Focused Intervention
Resources & Modules



Behavior Momentum
Intervention



Direct Instruction



Music-Mediated
Intervention



Ayres Sensory
Integration®



Augmentative and
Alternative
Communication

AFIRM for Toddlers



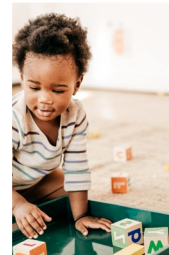
Parent-Implemented Intervention for the Home Setting



Naturalistic Intervention in Child Care Settings



Reinforcement



Visual Supports



Prompting



Behavior Supports

AFIRM for Paraeducators



Reinforcement



Prompting



Time Delay



Visual Supports



Supporting Peer Interactions



AFIRM for Paraeducators

▶ Guided Learning



Module 1: Reinforcement

Resources

Rule #1

Leon receives reinforcement for completing his reading assignment in his third grade general education setting. Leon's reinforcement is to play with Legos for five minutes after he completes the assignment. Leon's class is getting ready to go to lunch. What would you do?

- Let him play with the Legos for five minutes.
- Give Leon five minutes at the end of the day to play with his Legos.
- Skip the reinforcement for today. You need Leon to go to lunch so you can work with your next student.

SUBMIT

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

Reinforcement: Introduction & Practice
For more information, please visit: <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/>

General Planning:	
WHO:	Observer's Initials:
WHEN: DATE: TIME:	PLAN
WHERE:	1.1 Know what reinforcers to use with student
WHAT (TARGET SKILL):	1.2 Know the reinforcement schedule
HOW TO USE:	1.3 Know what data to collect
HOW TO MEASURE:	USE
	2.1 Have needed materials ready (reinforcers)
	2.2 Give direction to student to use target skill/behavior (if needed)
	2.3 Help student use target skill/behavior (if needed)
	2.4 Give student the reinforcer soon after doing the target skill/behavior
	2.5 Pair reinforcer with a description of the behavior (Note: This may not always be appropriate)
	2.6 Follow the reinforcement schedule
	2.7 Vary the reinforcers used with student
	2.8 Use reinforcers consistently across activities and/or settings
	MONITOR
	3.1 Collect data on target skill/behavior
	3.2 Check in with teacher about next steps at least weekly

COMPANION GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

Reinforcement: Introduction & Practice
For more information, please visit: <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/>

Reinforcement is used to increase a desired behavior or skill by giving a child a reward after the desired behavior or increase a desired skill or behavior.

Positive reinforcement: When rewards are used to increase a desired skill or behavior.

Token economy: A type of positive reinforcement system in which a child receives a token as a reward each time they use the target skill or behavior. After earning a certain number of tokens, the child earns a reward that they really like (e.g., time on iPad, a favorite show, time with Legos). Tokens can be anything – stickers, check marks, cards.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS FOR USING REINFORCEMENT?

1. **Identify the behavior or task**
 - Choose the behavior that you will focus on while using reinforcement with your child. Think about what you want the child to do, how you would like them to demonstrate the behavior, and when this behavior or task would be performed.

WHAT	HOW	WHEN
Completing chores	Choosing a chore from a list (washing dishes, putting toys away, making bed, laundry)	At least 1 time per day
Playing quietly	With several favorite activities in their room	While I am working at home
Finishing homework	At the table with help from family if needed	Late afternoons
Getting dressed	Pick clothes from closet	Each morning
Feeding a pet	Provide food and water to pet (may need a visual or list of steps)	Each morning
Exercise	Select an exercise activity from a list (walking outside, jumping on trampoline, playing tag, virtual workout)	Each afternoon

Timely Toolkits

Developed in response to real needs, these free, ready-to-use toolkits offer practical strategies for navigating challenging situations.

Available Toolkits:

- ▶ Supporting Individuals with Autism through Uncertain Times (Covid)
- ▶ Supporting Adults with Autism through Uncertain Times: Companion Guide (Covid)
- ▶ Supporting Online Learning for Students with Autism
- ▶ Resources for Autistic Individuals and Families Impacted by War and Displacement
- ▶ Talking About Gun Violence with Autistic Individuals



Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules

Daily Schedule Example

Task	Done
Wake Up	
Brush Teeth	
Get Dressed	
Eat Breakfast	
Read (30 minutes)	
Exercise (30 minutes)	

* Note: Icons from Microsoft Word Icons (1)

Countdown Example

5
↓
4
↓
3
↓
2
↓
1
↓
Over Off

Calming Routine

- Take 4 deep breaths
 1 2 3 4
- Clench fists 4 times
 → ✗ 4
- Count to 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Good job!

ASAP Intervention

- ▶ This intervention program is designed to help teachers, therapists and others foster the development of important communication and play skills in young autistic children, including joint attention and symbolic play skills.
- ▶ <https://www.med.unc.edu/healthsciences/asap/>



TEACCH for Toddlers (FITT Intervention)

A **parent coaching early intervention model** designed to help families better understand and engage with their toddlers on the autism spectrum.

Built on the research-based **Family Implemented TEACCH for Toddlers (FITT)** framework, this approach combines:

- ▶ TEACCH's Structured TEACCHing strategies
- ▶ Developmental and naturalistic strategies
- ▶ Hands-on parent coaching

<https://teacch.com/resources/teacch-for-toddlers-activity-photo-library/>

ELA-1



ELA-10



ELA-100



ELA-101



ELA-102



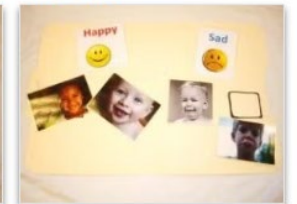
ELA-103



ELA-104



ELA-105



ELA-106



ELA-107



ELA-108



ELA-109





STEMIE



Designed and selected by experts to individualize and promote learning for each child in a flexible, growth-oriented format. STEMIE develops products and implements services to expand knowledge awareness, acquisition, and implementation of inclusive STEM evidence-informed practices for ALL young children.



Find STEM Learning Trajectories



Find learning progressions and activities related to science, technology, and engineering teaching and learning for each and every child (birth to five). Visit the [STEMIE Learning Trajectories website](https://stemielearningtrajectories.fpg.unc.edu/).



Find learning progressions and activities related to early math teaching and learning for each and every child (birth to eight). Visit [Learningtrajectories.org](https://learningtrajectories.org).

- <https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/>
- <https://stemielearningtrajectories.fpg.unc.edu/>

Supporting Peer Relationships for Autistic Preschoolers: Practical Evidence-Based Strategies for Inclusive Classrooms

Ann Sam, Ph.D.

Jessica Amsbary, Ph.D.



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