

Welcome to Supporting ASD in Middle School!



This Presentation
Will Probably
Suck...



1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. High Support Needs
4. Education Impact
5. Building Interventions & Delivery
6. In the Classroom
7. Supporting Self-Stimulatory Behaviors
8. Next Steps

Overview

Anna Feller M.Ed., BCBA., LBA

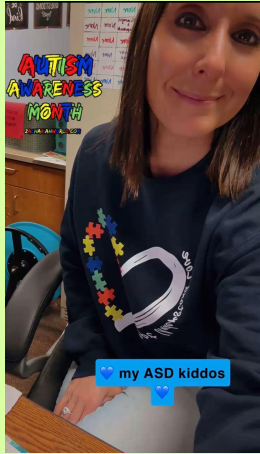


- Master of Special Education with focus in Applied Behavior Analysis
- Board Certified Behavior Analyst, Licensed Behavior Analyst

Working as a school based behavior analyst

- 31N C4S Provider at Legg Middle School 2022-2026
- Branch ISD BCBA, Implementation Coach 2026 -current

Abbie Jent - B.A., M.A.T.



Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, Masters in Special Education Teaching

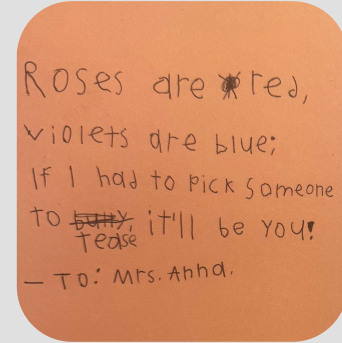
Working as a Special Education Teacher at Legg Middle School- 2018-Present
-Currently working on ASD certification



Reflect on our experiences to strengthen student-centered intervention practices



Increase understanding of self-stimulatory behaviors and explore ways to support regulation and engagement



Explore student-centered approaches that honor individual strengths and needs

Student Information

8th grade male
6-8th middle school
Autism Spectrum Disorder, IEP



Disinterest in Peer Relationships

Dislike of peers, adults. Not interested in building relationships, being “nice” is disgusting and fake

High sensory response

Describes hearing specific sounds as causing physical discomfort leading to dysregulation

Self Injurious behavior

Low intensity to moderate intensity leading to breaking the skin and building caluouses

Depression/Suicide Ideation

Verbal expression of risk, received counseling services

Dark/Sarcastic/Rude communication style

Interpreted as disrespectful, rude, inappropriate

High Behavior Support Needs

Regular Unstructured Social Times

Bus, breakfast, hallway/passing periods, multiple classrooms and

Environment

Many aversive sounds were displayed by peers or expected materials in the classroom

Unsafe Coping Mechanism

Dysregulation, hand biting/hair pulling as a response to aversive situations with varying function

Mental Health Concerns

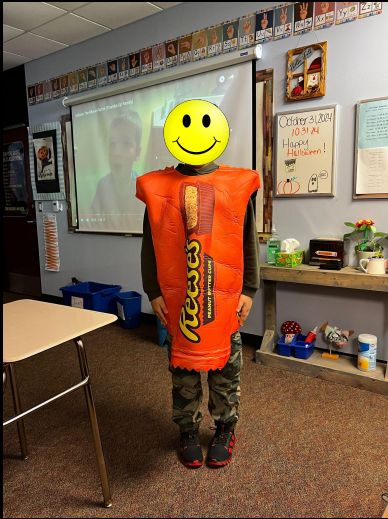
Transitioning into middle school this was a primary objective of intervention,

Classroom and Building Expectations

Socially inappropriate behavior leading to violating building rules

Middle School

IEP Goal (6th Grade): By February 2026, the student will independently use calming strategies when feeling frustrated or upset in order to regulate emotions and remain in or return to class, with 75% accuracy as measured by staff observation and data collection.



Things to remember:

- Autism looks different in every student
- Behavior is communication
- Sensory needs matter
- Structure is important
- Emotional regulation can be difficult
- Stimming will happen in the classroom
- Always collaborate with special education teacher to help problem solve



Accommodations: Frequent/scheduled breaks; **Adult support;** visual supports (calendars/communication); provide seating arrangement to meet his needs; alternate work area; allow recorded/dictated/typed; accommodated assignments; alternate test area; read test to student; extended time on tests

Collaborating with general education teachers:

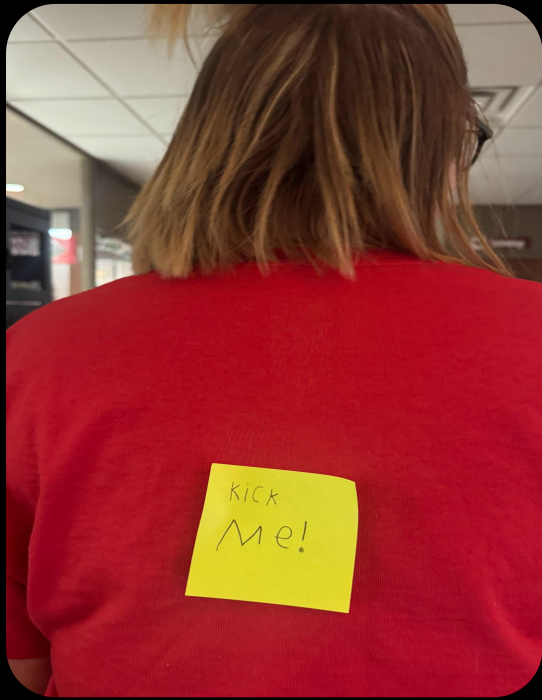
- Making sure that all teachers know accommodations
- Checking in when it comes to assignments and how we can accommodate them
- Providing teachers with any visual communication boards
- Make sure they understand that he may stim during class time

Accessing the Curriculum:

- Collaborating with gen ed teachers to figure out the best way to demonstrate that the skills are mastered but showing mastery may look different
- Accommodating assignments (typing/dictate/shortening)

Service Model & Coordination

- 31N 30 minute sessions 1x per week
 - 6th grade, 7th grade, 8th grade (new model)
- Collaboration with Case Manager & Teaching Team
- Drop -in support available
- Resource Time: Co-taught, Supplemental hour, Para Support, and Advisory



Intervention Development -Tips-

1.

Describe High
Behavior Support
Needs

2.

Identify areas of impact
*-guide our
intervention focus*

3.

Build materials and
plan
-AI Utilization

4.

Provide skill building
opportunities through
student led interests

5.

Continued Team Collaboration &
Implementation



Student
Centered

1. Transitioning from counseling services into ABA
 - a. Building therapeutic rapport/pairing
 - b. Self-Awareness/Emotion recognition
 - c. Daily Check-in
 - d. Vent Sessions
2. Expected/Unexpected
 - a. Social norms
 - b. Practicing flexibility in rigid thinking
 - c. Reviewing social situations
 - d. Reframing & shaping inappropriate comments
3. Classroom Collaboration
 - a. Stimming-disruption, disengagement
 - b. High sensory response leading to disruptive behavior and SIB
 - c. Dress Code - hood up
 - d. Socially inappropriate behavior - teacher/adult interactions

Daily Check-In

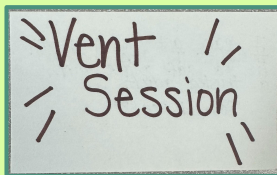
-Each morning student will complete Daily Check in Form

-Student will complete a Gratitude & I can Statement

-Student will review Relaxation Kit & strategies

Preventative Work

Vent Session



I can ask to vent my thoughts I am having in a safe place with a trusted adult.

Intervention

Expected - Unexpected

(Social Norms)

-6 minute skills

-Scenarios

-Role play

-Recall and debriefing

Intervention

Replacement behaviors

Sensory- earplugs, headphones

Coping Skills - SIB, Regulation

Appropriate communication

Intervention

Skill Building

What about in the classroom?

Education/Collaboration

Social Appropriateness

- Rude/negative communication
- Demonstrating respect to staff
- Dress code
- Negative or mean peer interactions
- Past peer interactions= continued perseveration

Skill building & Team Collaboration

Engagement

- Refusal
- Non-participation
- Not attending (sitting outside classroom)

Quality of life, Student Centered approach, Team Collaboration

High Sensory Response

- Common peer noises
 - Common classroom materials
 - papers, binders, etc
- Leading to dysregulation; self injurious behavior, verbal protest

Team Collaboration, Regulation & coping strategies

In The Classroom

Stereotypes or Stimming

- Humming
- Rocking
- Hair twirling
- Self-Regulation

Team Collaboration, Regulation & coping strategies

What is Stimming?

"Stimming," also known as **self-stimulatory behaviors** or **stereotypy**, are *repetitive body movements or repetitive movements of objects*.

Different theories as to *why* individuals engage in self-stimulatory behavior:

- Provides sensory reinforcement or sensory stimulation
- Regulate sensory input
 - Increasing stimulation
 - Decreasing sensory overload
- Brain dysfunction in the areas controlling these behaviors or that the behaviors produce endorphins in the nervous system.

***Likely that the reasons are different for each individual**



Characteristics of stimming include:

- **Sensory Regulation:** Stimming is believed to provide **sensory input**, either to **self-soothe** or to **seek stimulation**. It helps individuals cope with overwhelming sensory environments.
- **Emotional Regulation:** People may use stimming as a way to **manage emotions** such as excitement, frustration, or anxiety.
- **Variety:** Stimming behaviors can vary greatly depending on the individual. While some people may engage in one type of stimming behavior, others may display a range of different actions.

*Stimming is often a **response to sensory overload** or an **attempt to focus attention**.

*Stimming can serve as an important tool to help manage overwhelming stimuli or feelings.

*It can provide **comfort** and allow individuals to **regain a sense of control** over their environment.

Types of Stimming

Key Terms to Know

Term	Definition	Example	Notes / Use
Motor Stimming	Repetitive body movements used for regulation or comfort	Hand flapping, rocking back and forth	Helps manage emotions, energy, or sensory overload
Vocal Stimming	Repetitive sounds or vocal patterns	Humming, repeating sounds, throat clicking	Can increase during excitement, stress, or sensory seeking
Visual Stimming	Seeking visual input through repetitive viewing	Watching spinning objects, flicking fingers in front of eyes	Often linked to sensory seeking or calming strategies
Tactile Stimming	Repetitive touching or rubbing of textures or objects	Rubbing fabrics, tapping fingers, squeezing stress balls	Supports grounding and sensory exploration
Auditory Stimming	Creating or seeking repetitive sound input	Tapping objects to hear the sound, repeating favorite noises	Helps with focus or emotional regulation
Olfactory Stimming	Repetitive smelling of objects, hands, or clothing	Smelling markers, food, or scented items repeatedly	Less common but can provide sensory comfort
Gustatory Stimming	Repetitive licking, chewing, or oral seeking	Chewing on sleeves, pencils, chewable jewelry	Often meets oral sensory or calming needs
Proprioceptive Stimming	Seeking deep pressure or body awareness input	Jumping, pushing into walls, squeezing hands tightly	Helps regulate body awareness and self-control
Vestibular Stimming	Seeking movement related to balance and motion	Spinning, swinging, rolling on the floor	Provides calming or alerting sensory input depending on the child
Object Stimming	Repetitively using or manipulating objects	Spinning toys, opening and closing lids, lining up items	Helps with predictability and emotional regulation



Real World Perspective

Support Regulation

The higher the sensory stimulation in the environment, the higher the self-stimulatory behavior and poor student success outcomes.

**from our student's experience*

Ability to escape:

Environment & aversive stimuli

What setting supports your students autonomy?

Teach Coping Strategies

Provide and Practice:

Various topographies of coping

Rigid thinking barriers:

Tolerance training for new coping strategies followed by preferred outcomes

Find what works for students

Replacement Behaviors

Following trying various coping strategies and reflecting on their success or lack thereof, explore and utilize strategies that are deemed effective.

Implement what works:

- Dark, quiet place
- swinging, rocking, humming

Find a way to honor what works for them, within means.

Supporting Self-Stimulatory Behavior



Made with KINEMASTER



nick HD

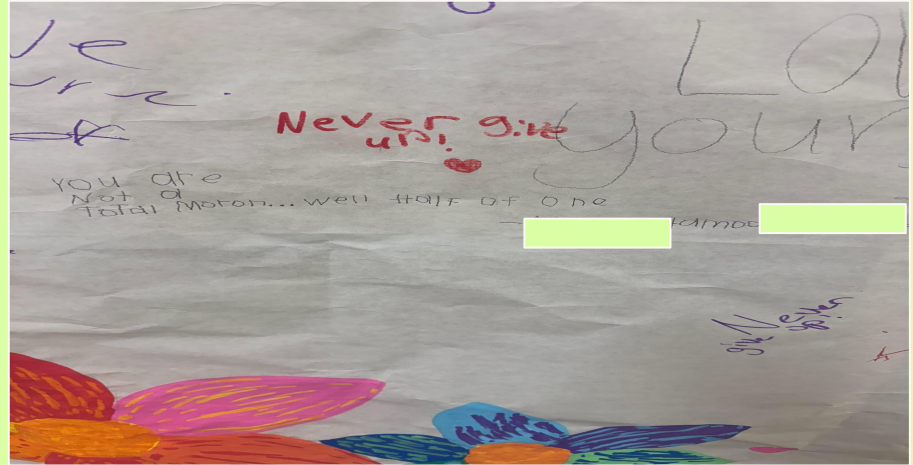
You don't have to have a good day, but I hope you find good in your day!

Have a day!

Have the worst day!

Today I am grateful for_____.

I can _____.



Review Relaxation Kit & Strategies

- Identify 1 strategy & engage in 1 prior to or on the way to class.
- Could use watching the Spongebob video “pep talk” clip

Honoring Individual's

Thank you for the fun we had, BFF. I'll... miss you.

-To: Mrs. ~~Ann~~ Anna

-From: #

Just to express

Thank

If talk is cheap,
THEN WHY IS THERAPY
so DAMN expensive?

Roses are ~~red~~ red,
violets are blue;
If I had to pick someone
to ~~stay~~ ^{tease} it'll be you!
-To: Mrs. Anna.

-From: #

I'M ALWAYS HERE FOR YOU.
(free of charge)

Strengths & Needs



Outcomes: HRE or RRE

Not focusing on only academic success...

H- Happy OR R- Regulated

Happy affect, desire to be in the moment

R- Relaxed

Calm, no anxiety, in the “green” zone

E- Engaged

Actual engagement and participation

Next Steps

Student 8th Grade / 2026-2027 School Year

Middle School Intensive Resource Room

The purpose of our middle school intensive resource room is to provide a safe and structured student centered learning environment that supports development of self-management, emotional regulation, social understanding, and functional independence by prioritizing wellbeing and social-emotional growth. The goal is to enhance each student's quality of life and empower them to succeed in and out of the classroom.

Co-Teaching

High School & beyond

Implementation Coach

Coaching is an ongoing, collaborative partnership designed to build the capacity of educators, support staff, and instructional teams in implementing effective practices that improve student outcomes. Coaching bridges the gap between professional learning and successful day-to-day application by providing sustained, job-embedded support that helps staff implement strategies with confidence, consistency, and fidelity.

I wonder if you see me...

Thank you!

We hope you leave feeling inspired with a few takeaways to implement in the future & have a restful summer!



Have the worst day...

