

S P R I N G 2 0 1 2

Autism Services

Thinking about Transition . . .



Building Capacity

One of our goals for our team is to build capacity within school teams and buildings. We want staff to be and feel successful in offering students with Autism Spectrum Disorder a meaningful, functional and individualized education. Transitions to new programs/ new grades can be impactful on families, students and staff. Putting in supports around transitions can support students with anxiety, regression, and recoupment concerns. We sincerely hope this newsletter is supportive for you and welcome your feedback.

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Save the Date!

FACTER Training

April 26 & 27, 2012

This training has
been CANCELED

**Expanding PECS in
the Classroom**

May 21, 2012

Register on the
Learning Campus

**Contact your ASD Specialist
with any questions, concerns or
requests for materials*

Supporting Transitions

As students are transitioning to new programs there are several ways that school teams can help the student and incoming teacher be prepared.

Preference Inventory

Reinforcement is key! Some of our students have extremely particular things that make them tick (e.g. the gears on a bike or Waste Management). A preference inventory is a great way to have this useful information recorded and ready to be shared so that the next location is able to brush up on Portland's Waste Management!

Transition Packet

The Autism Team has a few different copies of transition packets that help ensure that all of the amazing information that teachers are holding in their heads about students can be shared and passed on.

Talk to your ASD Specialist about getting a copy.

School Visits

Some students have significant anxiety about changes in programs and schools. The switch from Elementary to Middle School and Middle to High School can be intimidating and terrifying for students. A school visit with the students SLP or Teacher can significantly help reduce anxiety. Taking pictures, touring the school and meeting consistent supportive adults. Talk to your Autism Specialist if you would like support with this.

Transition Meetings

While spring time is a very busy time and full of paperwork, IEP meetings and those final 3 year eligibilities, holding a transition meeting between the current teacher and the incoming new teacher can be a powerful way for information to be shared between schools. This simple meeting can be the difference of the family feeling supported and secure, as well as pertinent information being shared with all necessary parties





Social Stories

As a strategy to ease transitions to new classrooms, new schools and new programs.

What does the research say?

What does this mean for my classroom/ teaching?

Ivey et. al (2012) examined the use of social stories with three students with PDD- NOS as it helped them prepare for novel events. Their independence during the novel events was measured using event recording. Results indicated that the social stories produced a 15% to 30% increase in participation in novel events.

As we support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in moving onto their next setting, whether it be from a general education fifth grade classroom to a middle school program or a student from a focus classroom to a new program, it is important to provide the knowledge and structure that supports the student in being prepared for that transition.

The Autism Team would like to support programs in creating a social-story book that can be adaptable and edited to provide for students about your school and program. We will create generic stories with pictures of important people and places around the school. As a school team, you can modify it and edit it to add specifics about your school.

Case Example: Johnny (pseudonym) had been in a k-2 classroom. Sometimes he got upset and cried, but the teacher and para-educator always knew that they could sing *The Wheels On the Bus* to him or any other song to that tune to calm him down. The teams, as they were busy and drafting paperwork during the spring, did not have a transition meeting. Johnny transitioned to a 3-5 classroom and was struggling. The two teachers happened to cross paths the following fall and talked about Johnny's struggles. When this tiny bit of information was shared it made a huge impact on the 3-5 grade classroom. They now had a de-escalation strategy and a way to connect to Johnny. As teachers, we hold immense amounts of valuable information about our students that could be imperative to their success in the next setting. We need to develop ways to communicate this knowledge!