

Simple Strategies for Behavior Change

Successful programs for Students with Severe Language and Learning Deficits

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- If you don't like the behavior you are seeing – teach a new one.
- Characteristics of ASD and other disabilities result in limitations in appropriate ways to get needs met.
- Our job is to teach the student a more acceptable way to get what they want or avoid what is difficult until they are able to tolerate unpleasant situations.

What to do

- 1. Getting Attention**
- 2. Training Programs**
- 3. Schedules**
- 4. Identifying Reinforcers**
- 5. Calming Strategies**

5 Components of an Initial Curriculum

- Non-verbal students often use undesired behavior to get adult attention
- They are stuck in the infant stage
- Crying/fussing = an adult to check and see what's wrong

Attention

- Critical to teach a student an easy way to get your attention
- Initially you must respond very quickly, the student has already mastered undesirable ways to get your attention
- Gradually increase the 'wait' time between signaling and responding



Augmentative device

- Make attention predictable – negative attention getting strategies are very predictable for the student.
- Set a timer – tell the student you will be back to check on them when the timer goes off.
- Gradually increase the length of time
- “I’ll be back at 10:00 – if I forget, come tap me on the shoulder”.

Attention for verbal students



Training Programs

- Beginning Choice Making
- Wait Training



Training Programs

- It is your responsibility to establish a positive relationship with the child
- Have all nominated potential reinforcers easily available.
- Let the child explore the room and observe items/activities of interest
- Make beginning training sessions fun!
- Don't start until you are ready

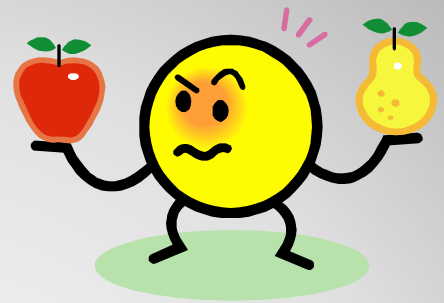


Getting Started

- Make initial training sessions short 5-10 minutes
- Alternate with free play of equal length
- Sit at the child's level
- Start with tasks the child knows how to do
- Reinforce learning ready behaviors
- Do not use materials or reinforcers that are difficult for you to remove
- If the child carries a calming object, do not remove it

Getting Started

Teaches symbolism by placing a desired item in a plastic baggie. The item in the baggie becomes a symbol for the identical item that the child will receive when he indicates that what he wants is in the baggie.



Beginning Choice Making

- STEP 1. PLACE A HIGHLY DESIRED ITEM I.E. FRUIT LOOPS, CHIPS, DVD, BUBBLE WAND, TOY CAR, IN A ZIP LOCK BAGGIE. ATTACH THE BAGGIE TO THE VELCRO ON THE INSIDE OF THE CHOICE NOTEBOOK.
- STEP 2. POSITION THE NOTEBOOK SO IT IS STANDING UPRIGHT IN FRONT OF THE STUDENT. HAVE IDENTICAL ITEMS IN A SECOND CONTAINER AWAY FROM THE STUDENT UNDER YOUR CONTROL.
- STEP 3. ESTABLISH EYE CONTACT WITH THE STUDENT AND GIVE THE VERBAL COMMAND, "I want this one". AS SOON AS THE STUDENT TOUCHES THE BAGGIE, GIVE THE DESIRED ITEM FROM **YOUR** SUPPLY CONTAINER. IF IT IS A FOOD CHOICE, GIVE ONLY A SMALL AMOUNT. IF IT IS AN ACTIVITY CHOICE, GIVE THE STUDENT 15-20 SECONDS TO ENGAGE IN THE ACTIVITY.

Beginning Choice Making

- STEP 4. ONCE THE STUDENT IS CONSISTENTLY TOUCHING THE BAGGIE TO GET A DESIRED ITEM BEGIN TO SHAPE A POINTING RESPONSE INSTEAD OF JUST PATTING OR SWATTING AT THE BAG.
- STEP 5. ADD A SECOND BAGGIE WITH ANOTHER DESIRED ITEM. ALTERNATE POSITION OF BAGGIES SO THAT THE STUDENT IS NOT CHOOSING LOCATION OF THE BAGGIE BUT IS CHOOSING THE ACTUAL ITEM.
- STEP 6. AFTER THE STUDENT IS SELECTING FROM TWO DESIRED ITEMS CONSISTENTLY, PLACE UNFAVORED ITEMS IN BAGGIES I.E. MARKERS, BLOCKS, PUZZEL PIECES, SMALL TOYS. GIVE THE STUDENT A CHOICE BETWEEN A DESIRED ITEM AND AN UNDESIRED ITEM.



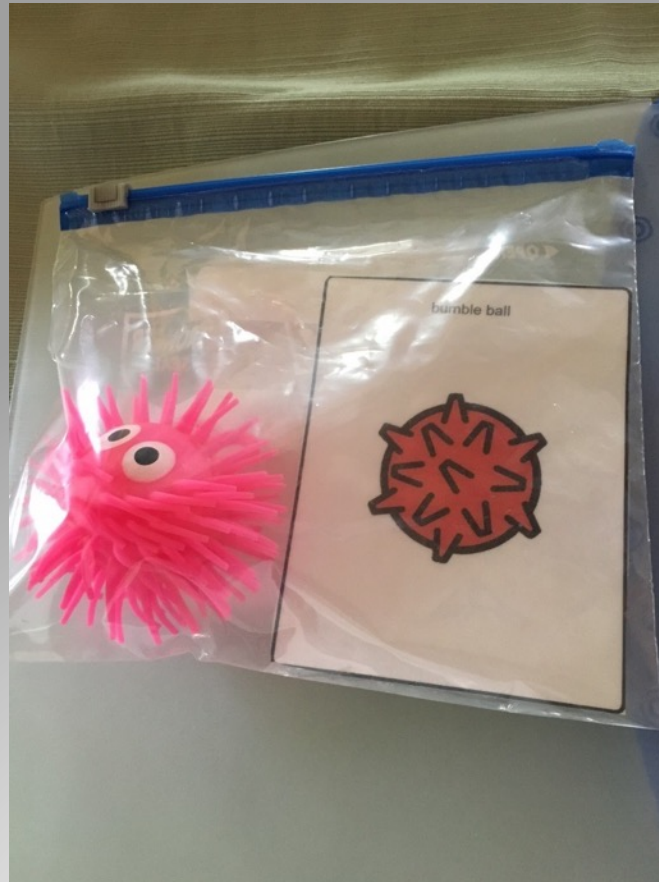
Beginning Choice Making

- STEP 7. PLACE AN ICON OR PHOTO OF THE ITEM INSIDE THE BAGGIE WITH THE ITEM. YOU CAN ALSO USE THE PACKAGING THE ITEM CAME IN. YOU ARE NOW PAIRING THE ITEM WITH A PICTURE SYMBOL.
- STEP 8. WHEN THE STUDENT CONSISTENTLY CHOOSES DESIRED ITEMS, REMOVE THE ACTUAL ITEMS FROM THE BAGGIE AND USE THE ICON OR PHOTO IN THE BAGGIE ONLY. BE SURE TO ALTERNATE POSITION OF THE ICONS SO THE STUDENT IS MAKING AN ACTUAL CHOICE.

Beginning Choice Making



Beginning Choice Making



BCM with icon



Wait Training

- Designate a “wait” chair
- Do not place the chair in a high traffic area.
- Place a visual symbol on the back of the chair
- Place books, tactile toys, small mirror in a basket next to the wait chair.
- Transition the child to the chair



Wait training

- Set a timer for an amount of time that the child can sit successfully without getting up from the chair. This can be as little as 15 seconds. It is important that the child be successful.
- Tell the child “you’re waiting” and provide social praise, “good waiting” while the child is seated in the chair.
- Allow the child to select toys, books, etc. to look at while waiting.



Wait training

- Wait training is **not time out!**
- When the timer signals that the wait period is over, provide praise for waiting and immediately allow the child to get up from the chair.
- Transition to the next activity.
- Begin to increase the wait time until the child can wait comfortably for 2 minutes.

Wait training



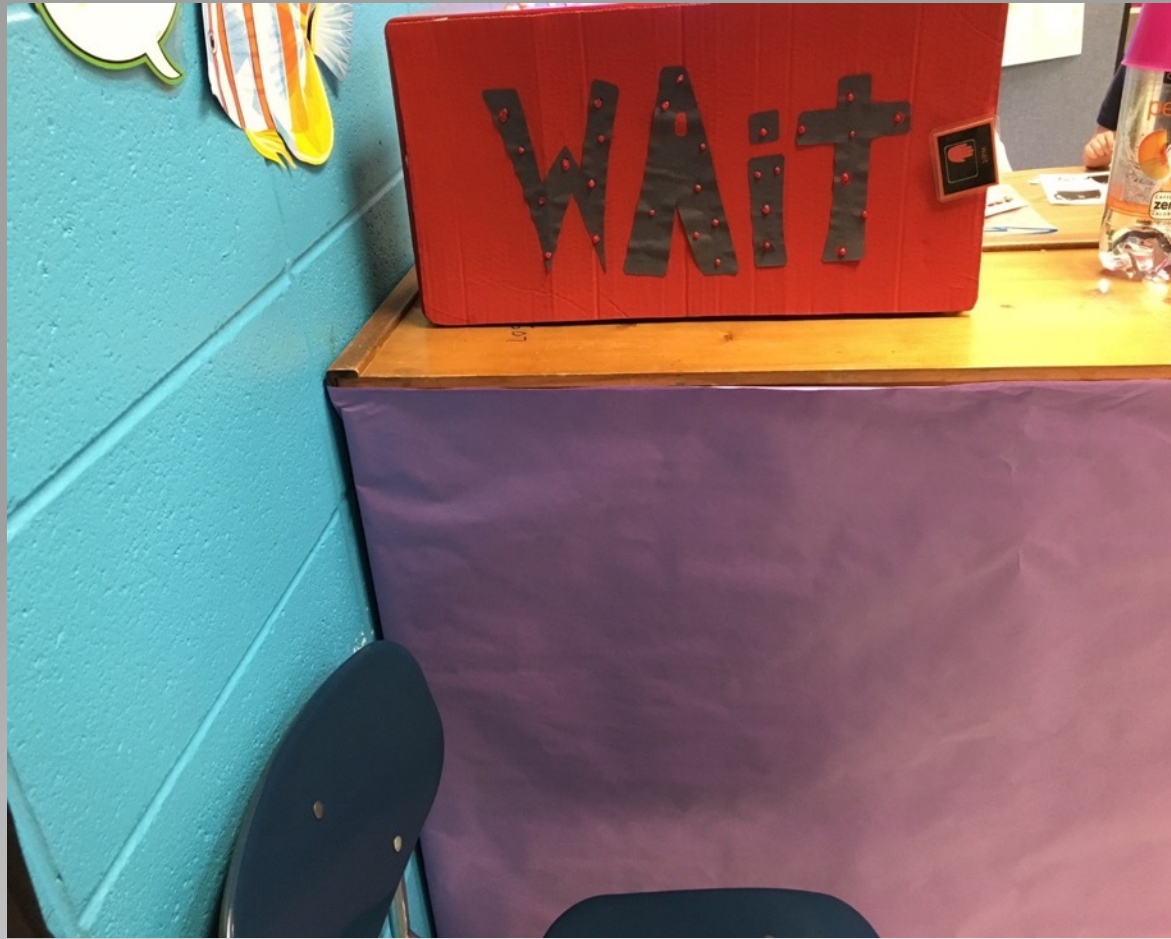
- Once the child has mastered sit and wait for 2 minutes, introduce stand and wait.
- Place a round red circle on the floor large enough for the child to stand on.
- Guide the child to the circle and direct them to stand on the circle.
- Prompt the child to “wait” and set a timer for an amount of time that they can be successful.
- When the timer signals time’s up, provide social praise “good waiting” and transition to the next activity.
- Continue to increase the time until the child can successfully stand and wait for 2 minutes.

Stand and wait

- Place wait areas near natural transitions like the classroom door.
- Use stand and wait circles in lines such as cafeteria, gym, car pool, etc.
- Provide parents with wait symbols to assist with wait areas such as doctors office, grocery store line, fast food lines, etc.

Wait training





Classroom wait area



Schedules

- We all use multiple supports to keep us organized and decrease our stress level.
 - Day planners
 - Calendars
 - Clocks
 - Alarms
 - To do lists
 - Reminders
 - Recorded messages



Schedules – Long Term Skill

Schedules serve a dual purposes

- Tell us where to be, when, and what to do
- Relieve **anxiety** by reminding and confirming our activities



Schedules – Stress Relievers

Beginning schedules

- Use object and/or tactile cues
- If the student does not have symbolism or symbol matching skills, use objects.
 - Plastic spoon to communicate meals/snacks
 - Toilet paper tube to communicate bathroom
 - Fabric to match where to be in classroom, i.e. carpet sample to communicate sit on rug
 - Small toy to communicate playtime
 - Whistle to communicate P.E.
 - Sandpaper to communicate playground

Schedules – Object Schedules



Object schedule



Daily schedule

Where am I supposed to go?

- Must have matching object, picture, tactile cue in the desired area to direct the student where to go.
- For example, if it is time to be on the rug, the student has a carpet sample and a matching carpet sample is on the rug.

Schedules

What am I supposed to do?

- Embedded schedules or task schedules organize student work tasks.
- For example, work materials are placed in a three drawer rolling cart, and/or in pocket folders. The student has objects on a schedule that match identical objects on the drawer of the cart or the front of the folder.

Schedules – Embedded Schedules



Embedded schedule and folders

How long do I do this?

- Timers communicate an auditory and visual cue for the length of an activity
- Visual timers communicate a clear cue for the passage of time

Schedules - Timers

What do I do next?

- First/then cards communicate the progression of activities.
- Communicates that a teacher demand is followed by a student preference.
- Visually communicates when a task is all done.

Schedules – First/Then cards



First/then

Beginning schedules

- Some students need a step between object symbols and picture symbols.
- TOBI's (true object based symbols) are pictures that depict the shape of the symbol. Provides an outline of the shape of the object instead of a flat two dimensional picture.

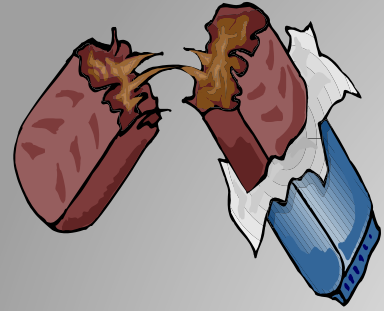
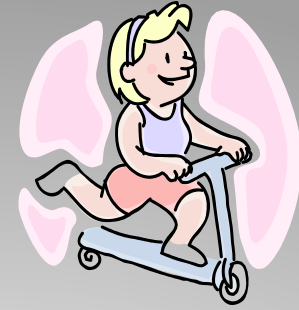
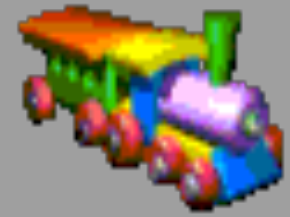
Schedules – TOBI's



TOBI – true object based icon

Frequently, beginning schedules mix object symbols, TOBI's, texture symbols, and photos.

Schedules



Identifying Reinforcers

Stimulus preference assessment

- Typically used with verbally challenged students
- Empirical demonstration of preference for particular item or activity at a particular time
- Typically, items/activities are nominated by people who know student best

- Compile a list of preferred items/activities
- Obtain items
- For activities, use pictures i.e., trampoline
- Include items/activities that are novel
- Include items/activities that provide visual, tactile, motor, and/or auditory stimulation.
- If using edibles, provide small samples that are easily consumed

Preference Assessments

Multiple Stimulus without Replacement

- One type of preference assessment
- Presents all nominated potential reinforcers and allows a brief sampling
- Students choose which item/activity they want from the group
- Items are presented several times until a rank order of preference is determined

Preference Assessments

MSWO Preference Assessment Data Sheet

Student

Assessed by

Date

Time

Stimulus item Rank by Trial Sum of 1, 2, & 3 Overall rank (list smallest sum first)

 1 2 3

Stimulus item	Rank by Trial			Sum of 1, 2, & 3	Overall rank (list smallest sum first)
	1	2	3		

MSWO Preference Assessment Data Sheet

Student Reed

Assessed by Sue

Date 1/13 Time

Stimulus item	Rank by Trial			Sum of 1, 2, & 3		Overall rank (list smallest sum first)
	1	2	3			
<u>OREO's</u>						
<u>Snickers</u>						
<u>Frito's</u>						
<u>Kit Kat</u>						

MSWO Preference Assessment Data Sheet

Student *Reed*

Assessed by *Sue*

Date *1/13* Time

Stimulus item	Rank by Trial			Sum of 1, 2, & 3	Overall rank (list smallest sum first)
	1	2	3		
<i>OREO's</i>	<i>2</i>				
<i>Snickers</i>	<i>3</i>				
<i>Frito's</i>	<i>1</i>				
<i>Kit kat</i>	<i>4</i>				

MSWO Preference Assessment Data Sheet

Student Rexed

Assessed by Sue

Date 1/13 Time

Stimulus item	Rank by Trial			Sum of 1, 2, & 3	Overall rank (list smallest sum first)
	1	2	3		
<u>OREO's</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>			
<u>Snickers</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>			
<u>Frito's</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>			
<u>Kit Kat</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>			

MSWO Preference Assessment Data Sheet

Student Reed

Assessed by Sue

Date 1/13 Time

Stimulus item	Rank by Trial			Sum of 1, 2, & 3		Overall rank (list smallest sum first)
	1	2	3			
<u>OREO's</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>			
<u>Snickers</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>			
<u>Frito's</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>			
<u>Kit kat</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>			





MSWO Preference Assessment Data Sheet

Student **Reed**

Assessed by **Sue**

Date **1/13**

Time

Stimulus item	Rank by Trial			Sum of 1, 2, & 3		Overall rank (list smallest sum first)
	1	2	3			
OREO's	2	3	1	6		
Snickers	3	4	4			
Frito's	1	1	2			
Kit Kat	4	2	3			

MISWO Preference Assessment Data Sheet

Student Reed

Assessed by Sue

Date 1/13 Time

Rank by Trial

Stimulus item 1 2 3 Sum of 1, 2, & 3 Overall rank (list smallest sum first)

Stimulus item	1	2	3	Sum of 1, 2, & 3	Overall rank (list smallest sum first)
<u>OREO's</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>	
<u>Snickers</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>11</u>	
<u>Frito's</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>		
<u>Kit kat</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>		

MSWO Preference Assessment Data Sheet

Student Reed

Assessed by Sue

Date 1/13 Time




Stimulus item	Rank by Trial			Sum of 1, 2, & 3		Overall rank (list smallest sum first)
	1	2	3			
<u>OREO's</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<u>Snickers</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>11</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<u>Frito's</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<u>Kit Kat</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>9</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

MSWO Preference Assessment Data Sheet

Student *Reed*

Assessed by *Sue*

Date *1/13* Time

Stimulus item	Rank by Trial			Sum of 1, 2, & 3		Overall rank (list smallest sum first)
	1	2	3			
<i>OREO's</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>6</i>		<i>Fritos (4)</i>
<i>Snickers</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>11</i>		<i>Oreos (6)</i>
<i>Frito's</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>		<i>Kit Kat (9)</i>
<i>Kit kat</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>9</i>		<i>Snickers (11)</i>

- After initial assessment consider using preference assessments on a scheduled basis to determine if new potential reinforcers have emerged
- Use preference assessments prior to instruction to determine what a student's preference is right now
- For students with limited preferences, provide exposure to a broader range of items or more typical items/activities during a teaching session. Teach the student how to engage with the item/activity until it acquires reinforcing properties

Preference Assessments



Object choice board



Object choice board



Calming Strategies

- Many students have difficulty regulating their emotional states
- Anxiety triggers need to be identified
- It is important to teach calming strategies to provide the student with relief from stressors
- All behavior is serves a purpose

Calming Strategies

- 1 in 8 children in the U.S. suffer from anxiety disorders (Anxiety Disorders Association of America)
- 25.1% of 13-18 year olds experience an anxiety disorder (National Institute of Mental Health)
- 13-20 IQ point loss during an anxiety episode (working memory)
- When you ignore anxiety behavior the observable behaviors increase in intensity and frequency

Generation Anxiety

- **Journal of Intellectual Disabilities December 2007**
- compared 34 adults with autism with 20 adults with intellectual disabilities
- Adults with autism were almost three times more anxious than the comparison group
- significantly higher scores on the anxiety subscales of panic and agoraphobia, separation anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder.

Levels of anxiety and sources of stress in adults with autism

- stress was found to correlate with high anxiety levels for the autism group, particularly the ability to cope with change, anticipation, sensory stimuli and unpleasant events.
- the more anxious the individual with autism, the less likely they were able to cope with these demands

Levels of anxiety and sources of stress in adults with autism

ASD BEHAVIOR

- Restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities
- Asperger special interests
- Apparently inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals
- Stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (e.g., hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole-body movements)
- Persistent preoccupation with parts of objects

- Individuals with ASD are living with chronic stress.
- Stressors in autism are highly idiosyncratic
- Visual images, things being out of place or not intact, making mistakes, changes in routine, transitions, are a few.
- When an acute stressor is introduced such as divorce in the family, moving from homes or schools, illness, individuals with ASD are overwhelmed.

Chronic Versus Acute

Stress in Asperger Syndrome

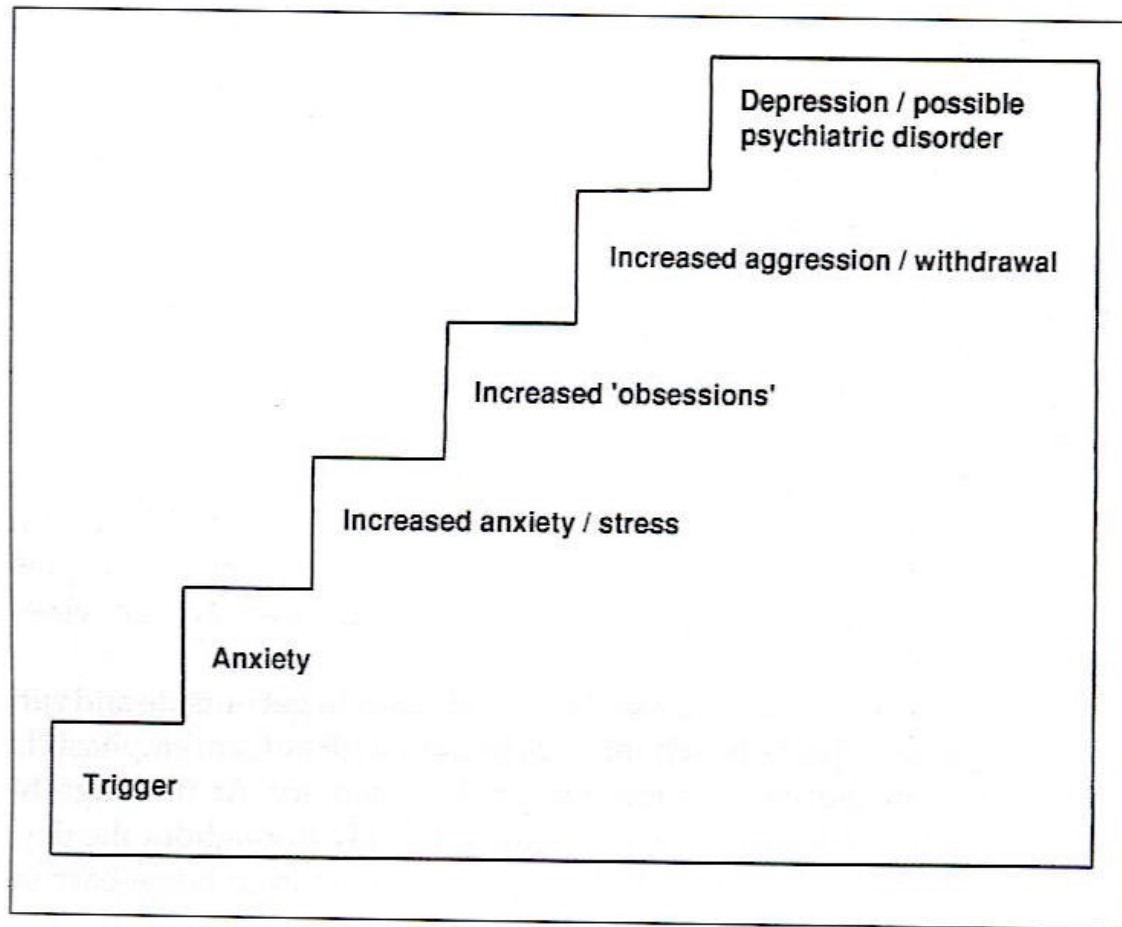


Figure 5.2 Steps in the escalation of stress in Asperger syndrome

- Someone who is not involved in correction/discipline

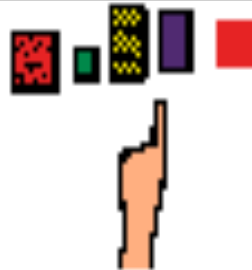


- Free standing tents, large cardboard appliance boxes, under teachers desk

Safe Person – Safe Place



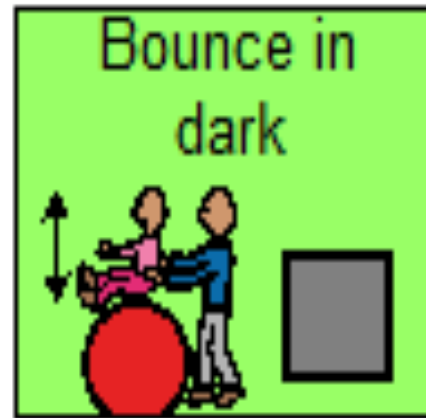
Relax



Choices



Body sock
in tent



Bounce in
dark

Behavioral Relaxation Training and Assessment – *Poppen*

Postural relaxation

Relaxation Training

- Weight is supported by a comfortable chair
- Slow breathing begins session
- Body posture is guided by verbal, visual, and physical cue if necessary
- Eyes closed when body is positioned
- Slow count to 50
- Open eyes, maintain posture
- Slow breathing ends session

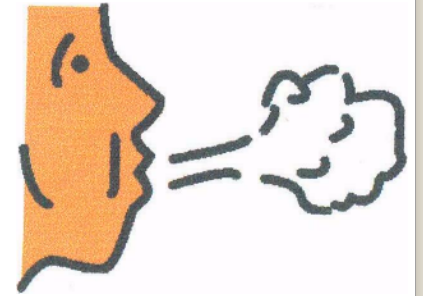
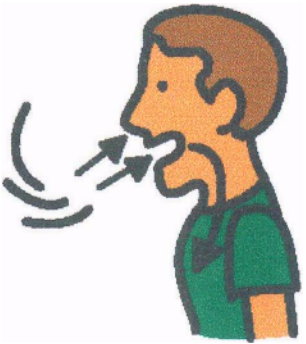
Behavioral Relaxation Scale

RELAX

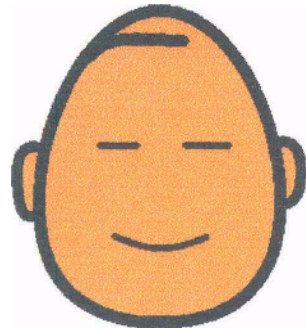


**BREATHE IN
BLOW OUT**

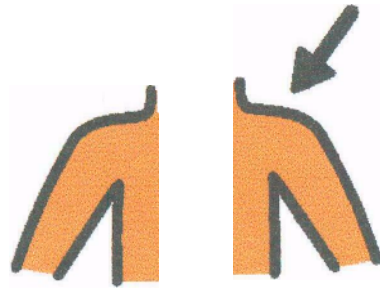
3 TIMES



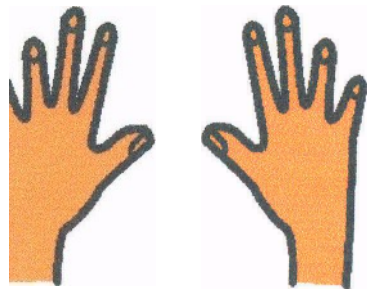
HEAD



SHOULDERS



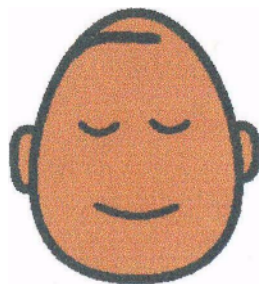
HANDS



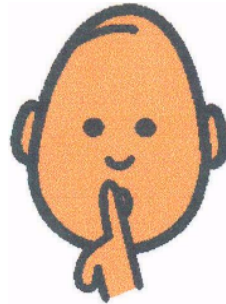
F E E T



EYES



QUIET

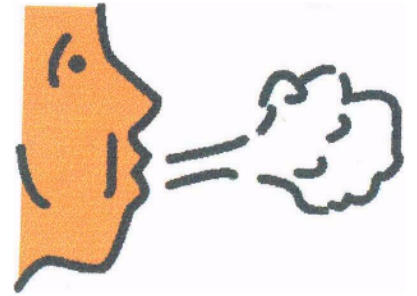
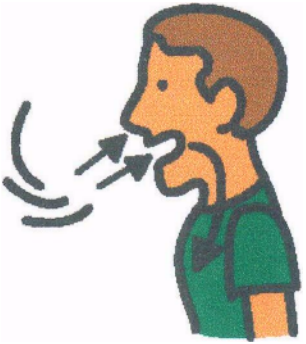


COUNT

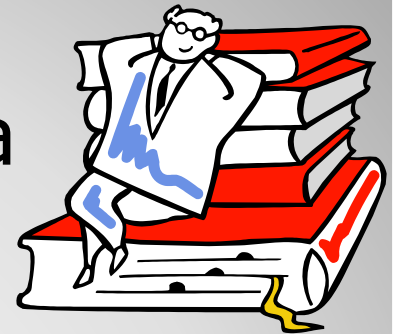
TO 50

**BREATHE IN
BLOW OUT**

3 TIMES



- Practice, practice, practice
- Use prior to known stressful situations
- Directed use when stress indicators are observed
- Gaining self-control following a meltdown



Behavioral Relaxation Scale

- Don't rush
- Stay organized
- Use visuals
- Prepare for change
- Provide choice when possible
- Schedule time for relaxation
- Know what triggers stress
- Have a plan



Final thoughts