



AUTISM+ PROGRAM / CDD
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NM Pharmacy Association 1.20.24

AUTISM+ PROGRAM: INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY
FOR ALL IN OUR COMMUNITY

Indigenous Peoples' Land and Territory Acknowledgement

Founded in 1889, the University of New Mexico sits on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Sandia. The original peoples of New Mexico – Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache – since time immemorial, have deep connections to the land and have made significant contributions to the broader community statewide. We honor the land itself and those who remain stewards of this land throughout the generations and also acknowledge our committed relationship to Indigenous peoples. We gratefully recognize our history.

Objectives

Participants will:

1. Identify characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
2. Describe two environmental strategies to support a person with a disability in their environment
3. Increase their understanding about creating inclusive culture through awareness of family and self-advocate perspectives
4. Know where to find additional resources and support for people with ASD.

Autism+

Dedicated to promoting an increased sense of community belonging for individuals with autism and other disabilities and their families.

Supporting the continuous evolution of inclusive culture through:

- Autism and other disabilities education
- Implementation of supports and strategies
- Facilitating attitudinal change by challenging stereotypes

Creating Inclusive Communities

With greater public understanding, people with disabilities have :


- Reduced risk of social isolation
- Meaningful integration into communities



(Articulate 360)

Medical Model	Social Model
The person is disabled by the condition	The person is disabled by the environment
Disabled people need to be fixed or cured	Disability is a natural variation of being human
Disabled people can't make decisions on their own	Disabled people have the right to make their own choices
The disabled person should adjust to fit into society	The disabled person should be supported by society

Adapted from: (<https://eisforerin.com/2017/08/05/disability-101-medical-model-vs-social-model/>)



Autism Definition

A neurodevelopmental disorder

- Changes/differences in brain development affect learning and behavior.
- Characteristics emerge in early childhood
- Significant variability in abilities of autistic people

(CDC, n.d.)



(Articulate 360)

Incidence



- 1 in 36 children
- Occurring in all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups
- 4 times more common in boys
- One-third also have an intellectual disability

(CDC, n.d.)

Common Myths about ASD

- People with autism do not feel emotions
- People with autism don't have/want friends
- Results from bad parenting
- Is caused by vaccines
- Can be '**cured**' or that people want to be cured



We are here to teach!

(CDC, n.d.)

Characteristics of ASD

DSM define characteristics are listed in 2 categories:

1. Social communication and interaction
2. Repetitive and/or restricted behaviors

Persistent deficits across multiple contexts must be present in both categories.

(American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

Social Communication and Interaction

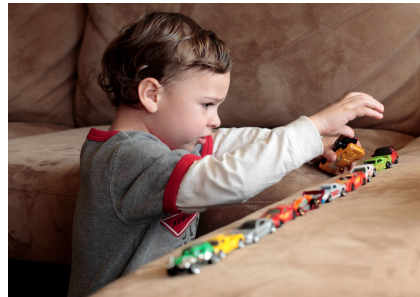
- Social emotional reciprocity
- Nonverbal communication
- Relationships



(American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

Characteristics of ASD

- Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests or activities
- Stereotyped or repetitive motor movements, use of objects or speech



<https://www.adhd.com.au/autism/symptoms>

Repetitive and/or Restricted Interests

- Repetitive motor movements, speech or object use
- Fixated interests with unusual intensity
- Insistence on sameness
- Unusual reaction to sensory input

(American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

Learning Differences

- May have wide variability in various skill levels
- May need assistance with skill generalization
- May benefit of 1:1 instruction
- Attention span may vary



<https://www.autismepicenter.com/teaching-children-with-autism.shtml>

Embrace Diversity

Individuals with autism and those with lived experience remind us to:

- Honor Individuality
- Presume Competence
- Show Respect



(<https://unsplash.com/@marissadaeger>)

When *everyone* is included and *all* perspectives are valued, we all benefit!

Strategies for Meaningful Engagement



Photo courtesy of <https://www.immunize.org/clinical/image-library/vaccination/>

Environmental Considerations

- Minimize distractions
- Visually defined spatial boundaries
- Tell about changes in advance
- Social Story
- 'Get to Know Me' forms
- Consider having just 1 person giving instructions

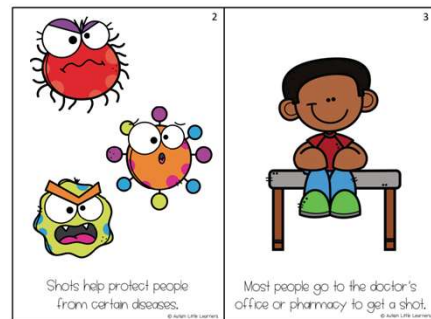
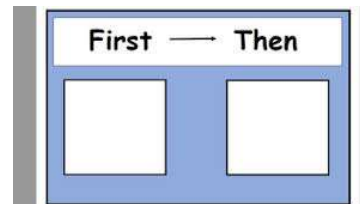


Photo courtesy of <https://autismlittlelearners.com/getting-shot-story/>

Visual and Environmental Supports

- Schedules (objects, pictures or written)
- Step by step instructions (breaking large tasks down)
- Reduction of visual and auditory stimuli
- Visual representation of rules
- Comfort items

1. Check in at pharmacy window
2. Wait in waiting area
3. Go to vaccination room
4. Meet the pharmacist
5. Tell them your name & birthdate
6. Share which arm you prefer for shot
7. Get your sticker and papers
8. Check out at pharmacy window



Potential Accommodations

- Provide clear timeframes, consider timers
- Use concrete language
- Give extra time to process
- Allow breaks and movement
- Don't require eye contact
- Offer pain reducer/shot blocker



(<https://unsplash.com/@pixelfreund>)

Behavior

- A term that refers to any human action
- Serves a purpose
- Is a form of communication
- May not match a person's internal feeling



Prevention of Unexpected Behavior

Set up for success



(<https://unsplash.com/@imrxia>)

Make environmental changes before a behavior occurs.



(<https://unsplash.com/@mpumelelomacu>)

Prevention Strategies

Small, individualized changes can have a big impact

Before:

- Consider giving out a 'What to Expect' form
- Consider a Social Story
- Ask for a 'Get to Know Me' form

During:

- Visuals
- Natural social supports
- Frequent breaks/movement breaks
- Transition cues
- Proactively offer choices

Positive Feedback

- The easiest and most effective strategy for increasing expected behaviors and teaching new skills
- Can be more effective than trying to 'correct' the unexpected behavior



(<https://unsplash.com/@srz>)

Support during Unexpected Behavior

Come in as an ally

- Avoid Judgement
- Be Supportive
- Be Responsive
- Have a reintegration plan
- Safety First



(<https://pixabay.com/users/geralt-9301/>)

Best Practices

- Person first vs. identity first language
- Presume competence, check for understanding
- Dignity of Risk
- Self-Determination
- Evolution of ASD symbolism



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autism_rights_movement

Benefits of a Diverse Community

Communities are Positively Influenced when there are:

- Increased creativity
- More perspectives
- Wider range of skillsets



(https://unsplash.com/@john_Cameron)

Awareness and Acceptance

“Acceptance is an action. This means that autism acceptance is an active process that requires both a shift in thinking and in action”. - Autistic self advocacy network



**Different
Not Less**

“Autism is a natural variation of the human experience, and we can all create a world which values, includes, and celebrates all kinds of minds” –
autismacceptancemonth.com

(https://unsplash.com/@amit_lahav) (<https://pixabay.com/users/ancelin-1987740/>)

References

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Autism Family and Provider Resource Team

A statewide information phone line for families, individuals with ASD, and providers seeking Autism specific services

- Contains statewide resources pertaining to therapies, clubs, activities, services, community spaces and more!
- Including but not limited to: ASD friendly hair salons, ASD friendly movie nights/hang outs, accommodating sports, trainings for families, therapies etc.
- Offers guidance for families and self-advocates on “Navigating the System”.
- Can be accessed via phone or email: (505) 272-1852 or toll free at 1-800-270-1861 HSC-AutismPrograms@salud.unm.edu
- Hablamos Español



Thank you!

Questions? Consultation?

Contact us:

ikalberg@salud.unm.edu



Survey

Please take a moment to let us know what you thought about today's training by completing this brief survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QSGLFMSM>

Or scan the QR code



Thank you!