

Working with Students with Disabilities in General Education

Virtual Class Strategies:

Explain what pay attention means and give list to parents:

Examples:

1. keep your face close to your device
2. show me your eyes
3. sit at a table or desk
4. prop your device up so you don't have to hold it
5. no virtual backgrounds
6. listen with both your ears and eyes
7. what you hear/see should match what you are thinking about-brain in the game
8. eat your snacks, lunch, etc before coming to class

Establish a method for choosing students to answer questions

Or try choral repetition of important information (especially for participation of shy, distracted or reluctant students)

Write down new rule for any behavior that emerges

Give students alternate appropriate behavior for getting wants and needs met.

Understanding Autism:

- lack of perspective-taking
- difficulty understanding context cues in social situations
- Often very high stress level due to difficulty understanding much of their environment and unpredictability of stimuli
- Often also have ADD symptoms as well

Understanding ADD:

- lack of attention to context cues
- Attention problems are often due to the frontal lobe “falling asleep” or not engaging (executive functioning)
- This causes a delay in responding, processing information, making decisions, and difficulty working independently
- Difficulty with Impulse control – frontal lobe is not engaged to filter inappropriate responses

Difficulties for Both Conditions: Many children with Autism also have some form of Attention deficit

- Difficulty sorting relevant information-overwhelmed
- Difficulty recognizing transitions or dealing with transitions emotionally
- More frequent experiences with failure- causing expectations and fear of failure
- Difficulty connecting rewards & consequences to targeted behavior
- Difficulty communicating internal and external experiences
- Developing behaviors in response to stress

How it looks:	Possible Factors	Whole Classes Strategies	Individual Strategies	What to Avoid
Avoiding Work & Refusing Work	Too difficult Visually overwhelming Lengthy Past experiences of failure Difficulty ending previous activity Overwhelming Environment Difficulty letting go of conflict or event Chronic emotional distress- abuse, chaotic homelife,	Set up classroom with only relevant visual stimuli Create visual boundaries/cue between work areas; carpets; dividers; low furniture Routines for ending activities Give 3 easy physical movement directions, then transition direction	Avoid pictures on worksheets that don't provide instructions If needed, black out with marker Highlight key words in written instructions Highlight frame of boxes such as “Key words, hints, visuals that correspond to instructions (e.g. see figure 1-highlight frame of “figure 1” Draw line from “see figure 1” to actual figure. Work through first item with the student 1-1	Insisting on starting work without help or exploring reason

	<p>worry about current events or loved one</p> <p>Physical distress: illness, psychosomatic symptoms- stomach ache, avoidance of restroom due to fear of noise, bullying, or cleanliness, diabetes-high or low, tiredness (not sleeping or time of day)</p>		<p>Do next item together, giving control to student, giving corrective feedback in a positive way</p> <p>Use the words “oops” “whoops” instead of the word “no, not”</p> <p>Use the phrase “that’s the way” instead of “good job” or “you did it” (indicating that the child is making progress in the right directions, but is not finished”</p> <p>Find out if there is anxiety or other negative thoughts taking away from the child’s ability to focus. E.g. “I notice that you look ____ (upset, anxious, etc), what’s on your mind?</p> <p>Help the child solve the problem or reassure the child that they are not on their own, you are always there to help. Model the words you would like the child to use when it occurs again. E.g. raise your hand when you want help, say “I’m feeling ____ because ____”</p>	
Not noticing transitions	<p>Attention deficits – too many distractions (auditory and visual)</p> <p>Visual cues are too subtle</p> <p>Focused on previous task</p> <p>Not oriented to discriminate teacher’s voice from other noises and voices</p> <p>Lacks perspective that whole class directions include themselves, unless their own name is called</p> <p>Lack of routine or concept of routine</p>	<p>Hold up a visual that indicates the transition (pencil, math book, worksheet, pointing to visual schedule)</p> <p>Use the same words every time you transition (e.g. “Time to change activity” or “Stop, Look, Listen”)</p>	<p>Seat student in a front corner of class, away from distractions, but where you can easily tap their desk or wave transition object in front of their eyes.</p> <p>Agree on a secret signal for transition time</p> <p>Explain to student the cues for transition time (e.g “when you hear me say “red row”, it means I’m talking to you too.)</p>	Calling name out 5 times before they notice
Refusing transitions	Previous activity is more engaging (coming in from recess, engaging in conversation with peers)	<p>Whole class schedule</p> <p>Point out break times</p>	<p>5 min. individual instruction</p> <p>I do it, we do it together, you do it. Give praise for all attempts</p>	Power struggles

	<p>Feeling need to finish previous activity.</p> <p>Avoiding non-preferred activity (e.g. writing, independent work, etc)</p> <p>Lack of confidence/feelings of failure with next activity</p> <p>Difficulty letting go of anger, conflicts, sadness about events (recent, from home or school, or ongoing)</p> <p>Feeling of not belonging to group/being different - rules do not apply to me</p>	<p>Explain when they can finish the activity</p> <p>Explain how they can get help during difficult tasks</p> <p>Allow peer buddies for difficult activities</p> <p>Use a visual timer (free app)</p>	<p>Picture of whole class including the student ("Look, you are part of my class. I really want you to be here. You matter too. Let me help you to join in a little bit.)</p> <p>If anxiety: Allow student to watch class for a little while during fun activity, telling them that they can join in when they feel ready.</p> <p>Talk them through conflict with others or refer to counselor or trusted adult.</p>	
Leaving the group	<p>Lack of perspective that they are part of a group,</p> <p>Work avoidance</p> <p>Anger, upset about something</p> <p>Obsession/compulsiveness for other activity or object</p> <p>High interest objects or activities in other areas of room</p> <p>Unable to communicate need for restroom</p>	<p>If eloping from class, call office/admin to retrieve student.</p> <p>Continue to teach the rest of class</p> <p>Find solutions to patterns of behavior outside of teaching time (consult with admin)</p>	<p>Work with other specialists to address perspective taking</p> <p>Use token reward system</p> <p>Use high interest objects/activities as rewards for work</p> <p>Point out social cues for staying in group</p> <p>Consult with parents and/or previous teacher</p> <p>If eloping from classroom, develop a response system with administration</p>	Interrupting your teaching of other students
Spacing out Singing; humming; talking to self Repetitive behaviors (organizing markers over and over, playing with objects	<p>Short attention span</p> <p>Difficulty noticing social cues</p> <p>Distracting thoughts</p> <p>Emotional concerns</p> <p>Anxiety</p> <p>Hunger</p> <p>Tiredness</p> <p>Distracting noise or visuals</p> <p>Work avoidance</p> <p>Ticks</p>	<p>Referring often to visuals</p> <p>Visual timer for activities</p>	<p>Token reward system</p> <p>Visual cues (e.g. list or pictures of expectations: eyes on work, mouth closed)</p> <p>Reduce anxiety for student</p> <p>Allow time in their schedule for obsessive/compulsive behavior: Organize class markers at the end of the day, 5 min talking</p>	<p>Forbidding compulsive behavior without an escape time during appropriate time of the day</p> <p>Expecting student to control their behavior without intervention</p>

Self-stimulation (eg. Drumming, picking nose, rocking, etc)	excitement, obsessive/compulsive		time after work is complete, clean your nose in the bathroom at X time) Extra praise when focused, start small: (“Wow, I like that you picked up your pencil right away.”) Place distracting objects on your desk (“you can have your I-Pad, book, pencil box, toy at break time”. Come ask me if I forget.)	
Odd behaviors Laying or rolling on the floor Smelling items Putting items in mouth Not wanting to touch items	Sensory integration Immature neurological development Avoidance or sensory seeking Lack of perspective to other’s thoughts	Continue to teach the rest of the students	Consult with school psychologist, behaviorist, parent, or Occupational therapist for strategies	Calling attention to the behavior in front of others
Talking at inappropriate times Calling out Walking around the room	Copying other’s behavior Lack of perspective Impulsiveness Lack of comprehension of conversation rules Not enough structure Attention seeking Sensory seeking	Ignore calling out for all students; continue to call on students that raise hand, even if the answer was already called out Role play the right/wrong way to answer questions with whole class Use visuals to denote areas of the room (bookshelves, rugs, color tape lines on floor) Put expectation on place where all can see and review before each activity	Consult with psychologist or OT for sensory strategies Place student at individual desk Put tape around student workspace on shared table-let student know that they need to stay inside that area. Put talking time on the child’s schedule at appropriate time (e.g. break or 5 minutes before end of day)	
Unfriendly Tone of voice Verbal	Depression or anxiety	Explain to class that they should ignore and keep	Refer to student study team – consider referral to counselor	Allowing behavior patterns to continually disrupt class

outbursts Tantrums Or Crying	<p>Personal emotional problems</p> <p>Lack of skills for communicating distress</p> <p>Unable to tolerate whole class stimuli or expectations</p>	<p>working, not to look at the child</p> <p>Remove class if safety issue & call for help</p> <p>Develop buddy system with nearby teacher if this occurs often</p>	<p>Consult with school psychologist, parent, OT, counselor</p> <p>Develop token reward system</p> <p>Reduce or eliminate non-preferred tasks until child develops tolerance</p> <p>If severe pattern: With IEP team, determine if the student needs alternate placement, classroom expectations are too much</p>	<p>Power struggles</p> <p>Do not attempt physical intervention</p>
Hurting self- biting nails, eyelash picking, skin picking, pulling out hair or eyebrows, banging head	<p>Anxiety (about current activity, worry about “what if”, chronic anxiety, medication change Depression Emotional distress</p>	<p>Instruct the class to ignore and not to point it out to others</p>	<p>Consult with parent</p> <p>Discuss possible counseling with psychologist and admin</p> <p>Give student an alternative behavior when anxious (e.g. get up and get a drink of water; take deep breaths, ask for help)</p>	<p>Calling attention to the behavior</p>
Hurting others: hitting, kicking, grabbing, pinching, poking, throwing objects	<p>Anxiety/depression</p> <p>Past experiences with violence (including video games, movies, media)</p> <p>Attention problems: Brain does not engage in executive functioning, filtering appropriate responses</p> <p>Desperation to communicate negative feelings due to lack of other methods/skills</p> <p>Attention seeking</p>	<p>Review class rules</p> <p>Give whole class alternatives to deal with anger; role play</p> <p>Remove class if safety issues and call for help</p>	<p>Consult with admin, psychologist, counselor, OT, parent</p> <p>Ask the student “why” they engage in the behavior</p> <p>Individually teach alternative way to respond to anger or to get attention from others; role play with student</p> <p>With admin: consult with victims’ parents (provide solution)</p> <p>Look for patterns of when behavior occurs, remove triggers if possible (e.g. no competition activities at recess)</p> <p>Have student walk next to you in line</p>	

	Being bullied by others- responding back		Seat student where you can easily monitor Create space between student and others for problem times of the day	
Threats to hurt self or others	Lack of social/emotional skills Anxiety Depression Mental illness	Explain to class how to communicate with you about threats privately Give students ways to react to incidents: walk away, don't respond, find an adult	Consult immediately with admin	Waiting for end of the day to deal with it

Parent Survey

Student Name: _____

1. What do you like most about your child and what are their strengths?

2. Is schoolwork or homework difficult (too hard, or refusing to work, crying?)

3. Who helps with homework/independent work?

4. What motivates your child (e.g.: time with mom or dad, sticker chart, video game time, treats/snacks, competition or making a game of tasks, other)

5. What activities, chores or schoolwork can you child do independently?

6. What one or two behaviors or skills do you wish your child could improve on?

7. What works best at home for your child when motivating or disciplining?

8. What would you like to see the teacher or school staff do to help your child?

9. Does your child have difficulty participating in zoom sessions? If yes, explain

10. Do you or your child have difficulty with navigating the internet, zoom or finding assignments?

11. How many hours does your child sleep? _____

Parent Survey

12. Is your child struggling with distractions while online at school?

13. How many hours of daily screen time (school, video games, YouTube, TV, etc)

14. Is there anything else you would like me to know about your child (e.g. health, social, emotional, academic, or new changes in the home)?

15. How else can I support you and your family?

Please feel free to contact me anytime. I will get back to you ASAP.

Thank you so much for your communication. I will do my best to support your child.

Nombre del estudiante: _____

1. ¿Qué es lo que te gusta más de tu hijo/a y cuáles son sus fortalezas.?

2. ¿El trabajo en la escuela y la tarea son difíciles? (¿muy difícil, se niega hacer el trabajo o llora?)

3. ¿Quién ayuda con las tareas / trabajo independiente?

4. ¿Que motiva a su hijo/a (e.g.: tiempo con mama o papa, sellos, video juegos, comida o snacks, competencias en quien termina el trabajo primero, otros?)

5. ¿Qué actividades, quisieres o tareas puede hacer su hijo/a independientemente?

6. ¿Qué comportamiento/s o habilidades quisiera que su hijo/a mejorara?

7. ¿Que trabaja mayor en su casa para motivar o disciplinar?

8. ¿Qué le gustaría ver a la maestro/a o personal de la escuela hacer para ayudar a su hijo/a?

9. ¿Tiene dificultad su hijo/a para participar en sesiones de zoom? ¿Sí?, por favor de explicar

10. ¿Usted o su hijo/a tienen dificultad navegando la red, zoom o buscar las tareas?

11. ¿Cuántas horas duerme su hijo/a? _____

12. Su hijo/a tiene dificultad con distracciones durante el tiempo de zoom?

13. ¿Cuántas horas diarias se la pasa en una pantalla (escuela, video juegos, YouTube, TV, ...)?

14. ¿Hay alguna otra cosa/s que usted quisiera que yo supiera acerca de su hijo/a (e.g. salud, social, emocional, académico, o nuevos cambios en el hogar)?

15. ¿Como puedo yo apoyar a usted y a su familia?

Gracias por su comunicación. Hare lo mejor para apoyar a su hijo/a.