

Education: Autism Spectrum Disorders: Basic Facts

Resource: *Autism Spectrum Disorders: Primer for Parents and Educators*. Ruble, Lisa, & Gallagher, Trish. University of Louisville Health Sciences Center. National Association of School Psychologists. 2004. [Excerpted from pp1-2] Available at http://www.nasponline.org/resources/handouts/Autism204_blue.pdf

Reaction Questions:

1. In your view, what is meant by Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)?
2. Why is this topic of ASD important to your stakeholders (school personnel, agency representatives, families, students, etc.)?
3. What assessment tools does your school/district use to evaluate Autism Spectrum Disorders? Who are the people who have the skills to use these assessment tools? What is the process for training those people to fidelity?
4. What are the factors that might be identified as contributing to Autism Spectrum Disorders? Why do these factors matter to your role group?
5. What are some examples of characteristics of ASD you have observed in students in your school?
6. The article states “Although a small number of children may make significant improvements, relative weaknesses in social and communication skills remain.” In your experience working with children with ASD, what levels and areas of improvement have you observed?

Application Questions:

1. Who (school personnel, agency representatives, families, students, etc.) needs to be involved in decision-making relative to assessment/identification/interventions regarding students with ASD?
2. What are the areas of expertise (knowledge and skills) that the persons making the assessment will need in order to assess identify and provide appropriate interventions for students with ASD? How do we create opportunities for knowledge acquisition and skill development?

3. What process/system can the school /district implement to ensure active family and student involvement in the development of materials and methods used to support students with ASD?
4. How might the school/district determine, collect, and analyze data to implement a system of progress monitoring of individual student achievement?
5. In addition to academic and social supports/interventions, what process/system will the school/district use to develop classroom and schoolwide supports/adaptations in both structured and unstructured settings to effect positive student progress?

The following stakeholders worked together within the IDEA Partnership and the Autism Community of Practice to create this dialogue starter:

Role: Related Service Personnel
Location: Connecticut

Role: General Education Administrator
Location: Illinois

Role: State Technical Assistance Provider
Location: Illinois

Role: Special Education Administrator
Location: Kentucky

Role: Parent/Professional Development Specialist
Location: New York

Role: National Technical Assistance Provider
Location: Washington, DC



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