

Effective Programming to Address Common Difficulties for Students with Autism in the General Education Classroom

Nancy Kling, MA

Effective Programming

- There is no short-cut or lasting change that can be gained in a few months
- Lasting positive outcomes come slowly and require persistence and consistency

Most Critical Element

- Effective programming requires effective teachers who have
 - Extensive training on autism
 - Hands-on experiences across multiple settings in academic and non-academic situations
 - Patience, understanding, and acceptance of the implications of the disability
 - District and campus administrators who are dedicated to the success of this population

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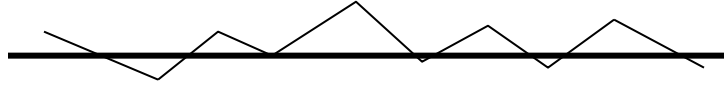
Things to know down deep in your knower...

- Autism is pervasive and persistent. It effects every minute of every day.
- You must always be aware of the presence of autism and know autism is always at work.

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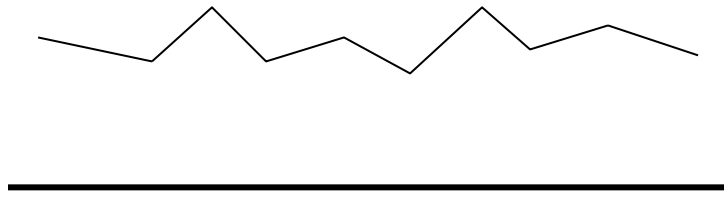
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Uneven Development



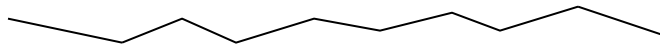
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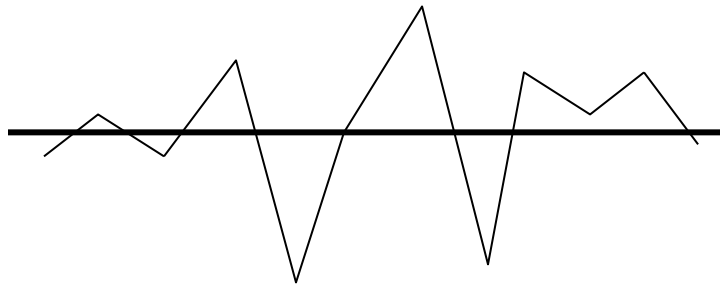
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Expect to be surprised at things they
know

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Expect to be surprised at things they do
NOT know

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More things to know down deep in your knower...

Areas of Strength

- Visual
- Honest
- Want to do well
- Good at rote memory
- Linear thinkers: logical, methodical
- Detail oriented
- Strong sense of fairness

Areas of Weakness

- Auditory
- Tactless
- Frustration when not easy
- Synthesizing, generalizing, summarizing
- Abstract thinking, emotional content & multi-tasking
- Big picture implication of actions

Note-taking – difficulty listening and writing at the same time, knowing what's important and what is not. 9

Autism is always at work

- Concrete processing causes literal interpretation of things they read, hear, think, do, social situations



Autism is always at work

- Concrete processing causes literal interpretation of things they read, hear, think, do, social situations

“Tommy yelled in my ear”

“He likes to be hit”

- Misperceptions

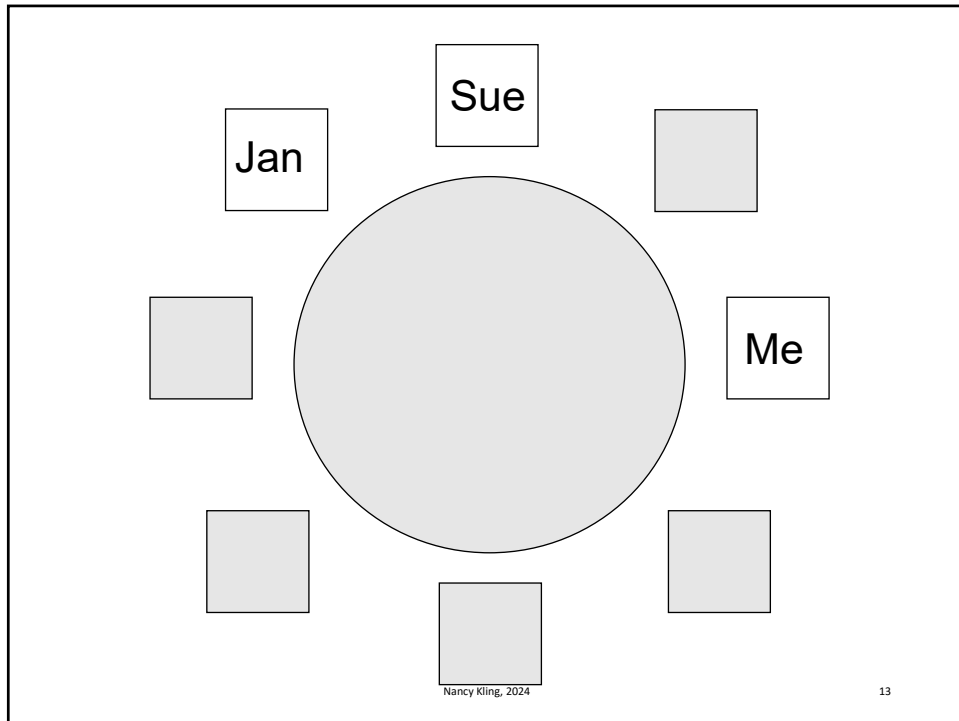
“If I ask for help...”

“They’ll think I don’t know their name”

Autism is always at work

- Difficulty analyzing social situations appropriately

Breast-feeding questions



Autism is always at work

- Difficulty analyzing social situations appropriately

Field trip to amusement park

Autism is always at work

- Lack of self-awareness and difficulty understanding their behavior impacts others

Class policeman
“That’s easy”
Calling out the teacher or a student for
making a mistake

Autism is always at work

- Difficulty handling strong emotions: Anxiety, frustration, and anger, being misjudged causes shutdowns and misbehavior

Pencil vs Pen

Autism is always at work

- When a student with ASD is sent to the office for misbehavior, their most knowledgeable teacher should talk to the administrator first, reminding them that autism is at work. If possible, this teacher should accompany student to office

Convenience store robbery

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Autism is always at work

- Do thorough evaluation of life skills, including extensive interview with parents before reducing services; realize at least one parent may be on the spectrum...

Mother bathing GenEd 8th grader
Shopping for Mother's Day
End of Year swim party

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Effective Programming

- The leader in this field, Michelle Garcia Winner, knows more than anyone about this topic
- The curriculum Social Thinking has written, in my opinion, is more extensive, effective, and thorough than any other curriculum and covers PreK through young adults

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