

Connections

A Newsletter For Teachers Working With Autism
Educational Equity For All



December 2015



Building flexibility and predictability into classroom routines this holiday season

It is important to build flexibility into your usual classroom schedule by explaining to students that sometimes the schedule will change and teaching them how you will indicate when a change occurs.

Having a consistent icon for change is an easy way to let students know that a change in routine will happen that day. A change icon can be placed directly on to your existing schedule and may be in reference to a particular activity or time at which an activity takes place. Change icons are especially helpful for unexpected changes and are applicable in a variety of situations year round, so don't wait to introduce the symbol to your students!

Attachment 1 below provides examples of symbols for change that you can print and use in your classroom.

Continue to reference your regular classroom schedule to show students the shape of the day

Even though you may be spending the whole morning building gingerbread houses, it is important to review your usual daily schedule before getting started. Though the activities listed will be different, students can still get a sense of how long activities will last and be reassured that some aspects of their day will remain consistent, such as recess and lunch.

<http://www.autismoutreach.ca/tipomonth/building-flexibility-and-predictability-classroom-routines-holiday-season>



THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY - PART 2
Saturday 12/8 at 10am

THE GOOD DINOSAUR Saturday: 12/12 at 10am
STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS Tuesday 12/22 at 7pm & Saturday 12/26 at 10am

Movie Showings for Guests & Families Living with Autism or Other Special Needs

AMC is proud to partner with the Autism Society to bring you unique movie showings where you can feel free to be you! We turn the lights up, and turn the sound down, so you can get up, dance, walk, shout or sing!

We are now expanding our Sensory Friendly Film program to four showings per month.

- The second and fourth Tuesday and Saturday.
- Family-friendly movies will continue to show Saturdays, starting at 10am local time
- We've added Tuesday showings at 7pm local time that may appeal to others on the autism spectrum.

Tickets are \$4-6 depending on location and can be purchased on the day of the event.

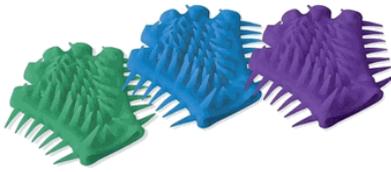
To find a participating theater:

<https://www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films>



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FEATURED IDEA OF THE MONTH



Spiky Glove

The spiky glove looks scary, but it's made of a soft, stretchy nontoxic material that is fun

to manipulate and touch. Just put on the spiky glove and use it during handwriting for increased proprioceptive input and deep pressure. Or, just play with it for some great tactile fun. Gloves come in assorted bright colors. Use the spiky glove for tactile stimulation, deep pressure, or to provide additional sensory feedback while writing. The bright colors and soft spines entice even the most reluctant child to give it a try.

<http://www.nationalautismresources.com/spiky-glove.html>

HOLIDAY WISHLISTS: ALTERNATIVE IDEAS FOR GIFTS FOR THE CLASSROOM

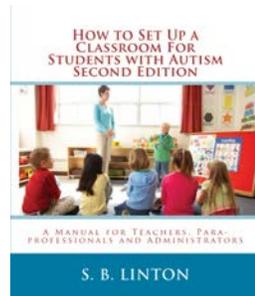
I know that talking about gift giving with families is a touchy issue and I'm not suggesting that you make them feel obligated to give gifts or to give specific things. However, if it comes up this is an alternative that might work for everyone.

Here are some ideas from classrooms that I know would be a nice addition and can be small expenditures or larger.

- **Wipes, paper towels, and antibacterial gel** are always needed in self-contained classes (and most others as well)
- **Spring loaded scissors**
- **Or nonstick scissors**
- **Velcro**—teachers would love Velcro coins to avoid having to cut the Velcro each time they need it, but I've never known a teacher to turn down Velcro of any kind.
- **Laminate**—consider whether the teacher has a personal laminator and find out what weight of laminate it will take.
- There are tons of other things that could go on this list but the focus is really on giving something to a teacher that can benefit the classroom.

<http://www.autismclassroomresources.com/holiday-wishlists-alternative-ideas-for/>

RECOMMENDED READING & VIDEO



A Teacher's Recipe for Success

<http://www.autismclassroom.com/index.php/strategies/for-teachers>

WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

http://www.txautism.net/uploads/model_sites/BlueprintModelSites.pdf

http://dddc.rutgers.edu/pdf/Paper_Matching_Children_to_Classrooms.pdf

<http://www.paulakluth.com/books-and-products/>



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON

Indiana Resource Center for Autism

Autism Modules on Evidence Based Practices: Part 1

This *online course* presents the history, diagnosis, prevalence and etiology of autism spectrum disorders, and introduces the strategies of 24 evidence-based practices.

There are 8 modules consisting PowerPoint presentations and reading materials. Also, each module consists of pre-test, post-test questions that are multiple choice, true/false or fill in the blank.

A module is worth 2 hours of training; completion of the course is equal to 16 hours of instructional hours.

The one time registration fee is \$50.

The workshop can be completed at your own pace. You can start and finish during the timeline that works best for your schedule.

<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/Autism-Modules-on-Evidence-Based-Practices-Part-1>

Transition Time: Helping Individuals on the Autism Spectrum Move Successfully from One Activity to Another

A number of supports to assist individuals with ASD during transitions have been designed both to prepare individuals before the transition will occur and to support the individual during the transition. When transition strategies are used, individuals with ASD:

- Reduce the amount of transition time;
- Increase appropriate behavior during transitions;
- Rely less on adult prompting; and
- Participate more successfully in school and community outings.

Transition strategies are techniques used to support individuals with ASD during changes in or disruptions to activities, settings, or routines. The techniques can be used before a transition occurs, during a transition, and/or after a transition, and can be presented verbally, auditorily, or visually. The strategies attempt to increase predictability for individuals on the autism spectrum and to create positive routines around transitions. They are utilized across settings to support individuals with ASD.

<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/Transition-Time-Helping-Individuals-on-the-Autism-Spectrum-Move-Successfully-from-One-Activity-to-Another>