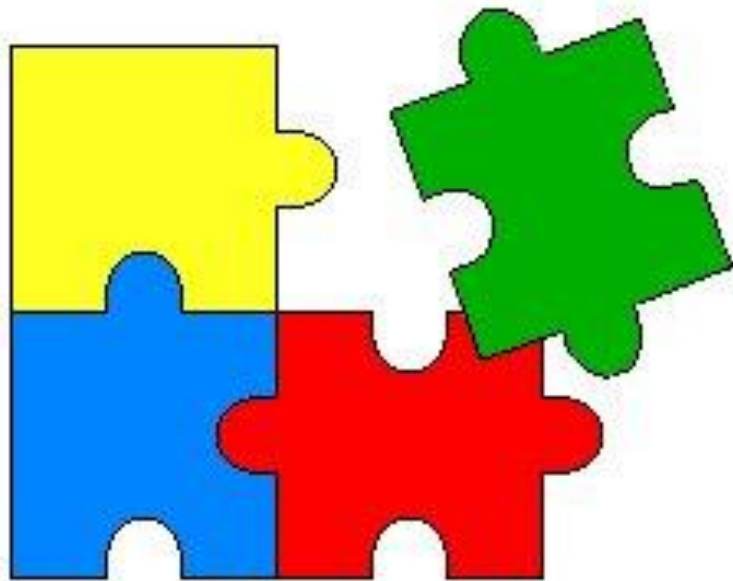


Autism Diagnosis: Challenges and Questions



Welcome

Introductions

Who are we?

Tonight's Presentation:

- Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder, challenges and educational intervention
- Questions and discussion

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Autism

are both general terms for a group of complex disorders of brain development. These disorders are characterized, in varying degrees, by difficulties in:

- social interaction
- verbal and nonverbal communication
- restricted repetitive behaviors, interests and activities.

With the May 2013 publication of the **DSM-5** diagnostic manual all autism disorders were merged into one umbrella diagnosis of ASD.

Previously, there were four subtypes including autistic disorder, childhood disintegrated disorder, pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) and Asperger Syndrome.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

DSM-V

American Psychiatric Association

- Autism spectrum disorder is a new DSM-5 name that reflects a scientific consensus that four previously separate disorders are actually a single condition with different levels of symptom severity in two core domains.
- ASD is characterized by:
 - 1) deficits in social communication and social interaction and
 - 2) restricted repetitive behaviors, interests, and activities (RRBs).

Because both components are required for diagnosis of ASD, social communication disorder is diagnosed if no RRBs are present.

Video Clip-Overview of ASD

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= S35ND
Muoj4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S35NDMuoj4)

Varied Patterns of Skill Acquisition

- Some skills develop rapidly
- Other skills develop more slowly or fail to develop

Strengths:

- Visual Processing
- Memory

Core Challenges:

- Joint Attention- shifting attention
- Central Coherence- focus on details; difficulty seeing the big picture
- Perspective Taking- ability to take another person's point of view or predict what another person is likely to do

Theory of Mind: understanding of the feelings, beliefs and desires of others

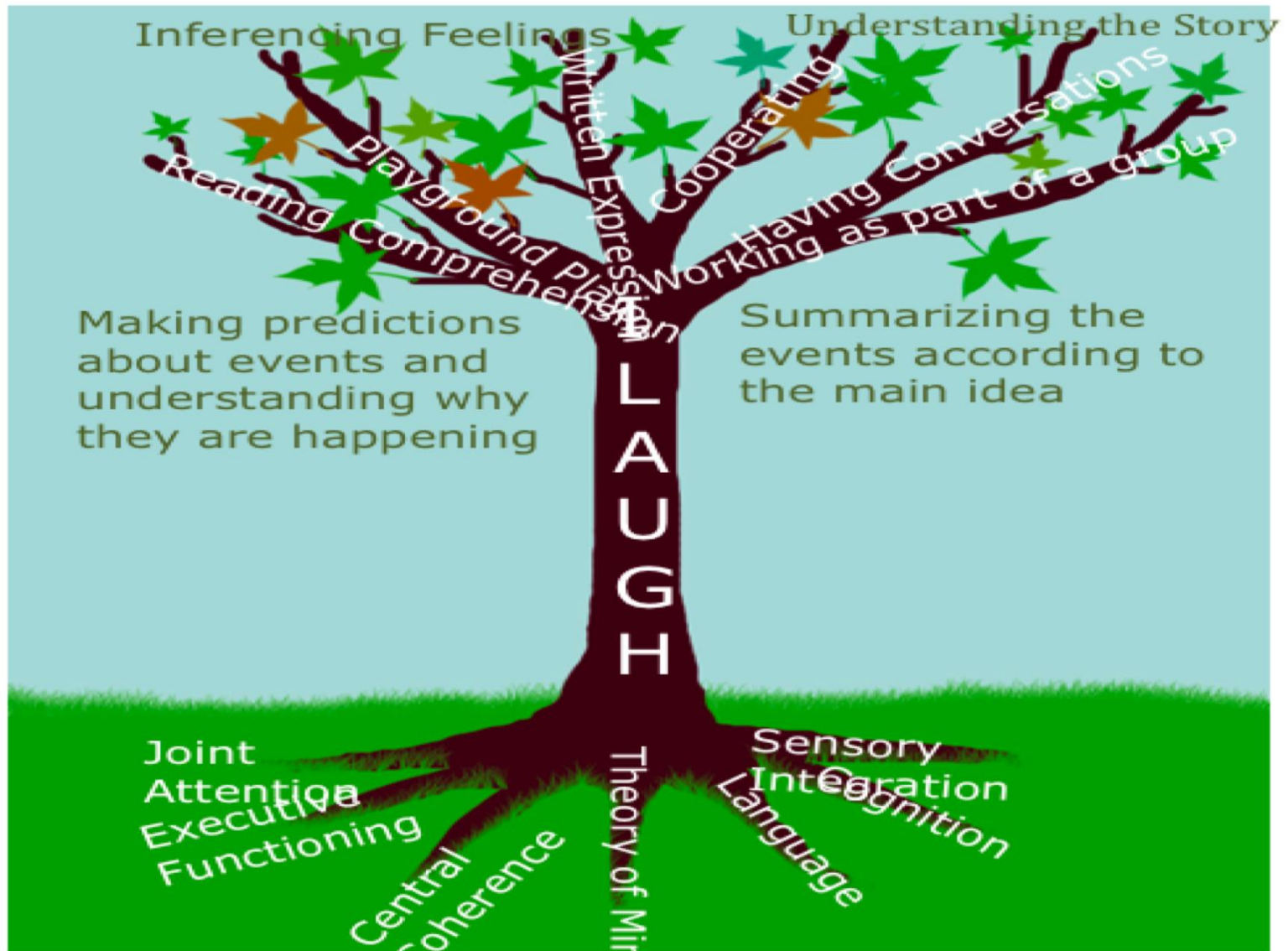
Additionally.....

- Cognitive development
- Motor skills
- Sensory processing

Build on Strengths Remediate Weaknesses

- Communication
- Language-Auditory Processing
- Cognitive Skills
- Play Skills
- Social Skills including Theory of Mind
- Sensory Processing and Modulation
- Self Regulation
- Behavioral Challenges
- Organizational Skills (Executive Functioning)
- Self Advocacy

Academics-aligned with the Common Core Standards



Video Clips- Three General Approaches

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= S35ND
Muoj4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S35NDMuoj4)

General Approaches

1. Compensate for a Weakness by Maximizing Strengths

- Use of Visual Supports

2. Use Alternate Means to Accomplish the Same Result

- Keyboarding
- Communication Books or Devices

3. Explicitly Teach the Skill That is Missing

Intervention Approaches

Traditional Behavioral → Developmental

Applied Behavior Analysis

Discrete Trials TEACCH SCERTS DIR/Floortime
More Than Words
RDI

Milieu Teaching

Incidental Learning

Pivotal Response Training

Approaches May be Combined and Change over Time

- Symptoms/weaknesses vary with age, developmental level, and context
- Strategies that work at one point don't always transfer to another point

National Academy of Science Report: Educating Children with Autism

Six Kinds of Intervention should have a priority:

1. Functional, spontaneous communication should be the primary focus of early education. Effective teaching techniques for both verbal language and alternative modes drawn from the empirical and theoretical literature should be vigorously applied across settings.
2. Social Instruction
3. Teaching of Play Skills
4. Instruction aimed at goals for cognitive development

5. Intervention strategies that address **problem behaviors** should incorporate information about the context in which the behaviors occur; **positive proactive approaches**; and the range of techniques that have empirical support including:
 - functional assessment
 - functional communication training
 - reinforcement of alternate behavior

6. Functional academic skills should be taught when appropriate to the skills and needs of a child.

Resources

- Autism Speaks
www.autismspeaks.org
 - 100 Day Kit for Newly Diagnosed Families
 - Transition Tool Kit
- Asperger's Association of New England
www.aane.org
- Autism Support Center
www.ne-arcautismsupportcenter.org
- IAN- Interactive Autism Network
www.iancommunity.org

- autism NOW

www.autismnow.org

- Social Thinking Information (Michele Garcia Winner)

www.socialthinking.com

Questions

Thank you for joining us this evening