Discovering the Possibilities with Visual Strategies: Meeting the Communication, Behavior & Social Skill Challenges in Autism Spectrum Disorders

Presenter:
LINDA HODGDON
M. Ed., CCC-SLP

Friday, October 26, 2012
8:30 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Four Points by Sheraton
Pittsburgh North
910 Sheraton Drive
Mars, PA 16046
724.675.6400

REGISTRATION

Fee includes lunch, refreshments, and handouts.

Student or Individual with Autism Spectrum Disorder $ 50
Family Member or Individual $ 70
Professional (including credits) $150
TOTAL $ ___

Name(s) ___________________________ ____________________________
Address ___________________________ ____________________________
City __________________ State ______ Zip ______
Phone ____________
Email ____________________________

Organization ____________________________

☐ Check Enclosed (payable to ABOARD’s Autism Connection of PA)
☐ Credit Card ______ Mastercard ______ Visa ______

☐ (please check)

Card # ______ Exp. Date ______ 3 Digit Id. ______

Phone ____________
Email ____________________________

Register online at autismconnectionofpa.org

click on events

CANCELLATION POLICY

A complete refund will be given if a participant cancels their registration five days prior to the program. A 75% refund will be given if a participant cancels their registration one to four days prior to the program. No refunds will be made for cancellations or “no shows” on the day of the program. In the event the program is cancelled by ABOARD’s Autism Connection of PA, a complete refund will be given.

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Discovering the Possibilities

About Our Speaker
Linda Hodgdon M.Ed., CCC-SLP is a Speech-Language Pathologist who is internationally known as a pioneer in developing the use of visual strategies to support communication for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and related learning challenges. Her training programs are packed with best-practices and effective ideas for using a range of low tech to high tech visual tools, including apps, video and tablets like iPads, to meet the communication, behavior and social skills needs of these students. A powerful and entertaining presenter, Linda shares practical information that inspires program participants to accomplish new goals with students immediately.

Linda is the author of Visual Strategies for Improving Communication and Autism: Considered essential resources for professionals and parents, these are two of the most recommended books in the field. She provides support for Language Pathologists, educators and parents of students with special learning needs via her online training materials.

Linda Hodgdon is the Director of Cornerstone Communication Center, an organization that provides consultation, training, and professional development with the goal of improving communication.

Disclosure: Author for Quark Roberts Publishers and receives royalties payments. No relevant nonfinancial relationship exist.

Autism Communications Issues
Communication challenges are a defining feature of Autism Spectrum Disorders and many students with related learning needs. The difficulties with social-skills and appropriate behavior that are common in these students are frequently related to the communication difficulties these students experience.

Current thinking suggests that communication impairments transcend all aspects of the life of students with autism and Asperger’s Syndrome. While it is common for educational programming to focus on the development of communication skills for these students, that focus tends to be directed toward developing the student’s expressive communication skills. Comparatively little attention is directed toward increasing the student's ability to understand the communication in his life.

For these children, their struggle with communication is far more complicated than just the development of verbal language. Understanding the communication of others, trying to figure out what is happening or not happening, handling changes and transitions, and interpreting cues and situations in their environment can all be areas of difficulty that result in frustration and behavior that is seen as disruptive.

At the same time, research demonstrates that most of these students display a relative strength in visual skills compared to their auditory abilities. Visual strategies can capitalize on that strength. Using visual strategies to support communication helps students organize their lives, significantly reduces behavior problems and increases functional communication. This is accomplished in part by developing a system of visual tools and aids to increase comprehension. Schedules, to give directions, aids to give information, and aids to establish and communicate rules and consequences are designed to increase the student's understanding of what's happening around him.

Visual tools and supports are not magic. They won't fix every problem that students have, but they will provide a valuable framework to support their lives. Implementing a system of visual tools and supports significantly reduces various behavior problems and increases effective communication interactions for most students.

The principle of visually supported communication is simple; the impact on the functioning of most students with autism spectrum disorders and others with communication and behavior challenges, however, is profound. While many people use a few visual tools in their homes and education environments, few use this medium of communication support nearly as much as would be beneficial for these students.

Course Description
This workshop will demonstrate how and why to expand your use of visual supports. We will explore a number of strategies, including APPS and video, for use at school and home. The use of visual strategies is effective across skill levels, for students from early childhood through adult. Visual strategies work for verbal and nonverbal students. Children with high or low skills benefit from visual supports designed to match their capability. Numerous systems and strategies will be presented that have significantly improved both receptive and expressive communication, social interaction, educational participation and overall behavior.

Participant Objectives
At the conclusion of the program, participants should be able to:

• Identify significant factors in student learning and functioning that affect communication
• Informally assess the student’s communication strengths and challenges
• Recognize situations where communication breakdowns can affect the student's understanding, behavior and participation.
• Use the Guide for Assessing Behavior Situations to identify causes of behavior problems.
• Develop visual tools to support communication, behavior & social skills
• Use specific visual supports, including Apps and video, that have significantly improved student participation and behavior.

Learning Objectives
Morning Session 1
Introduction to Visual Strategies
• Introduction to Visual Strategies
• Observations About the Population
• Communication Skills in the Targeted Population
• Assessing Receptive Communication Skills
• Communication Goals in the Educational Setting

Morning Session 2
Visual Strategies for Improving Communication
• Samples and Examples of Visual Strategies
• Using Apps – Moving from Low Tech to High Tech

Afternoon Session 1
Introduction to a Behavior/Communication Framework
• Discovering the Causes of Behavior Problems
• The Relationship Between Behavior Problems and Communication
• Assessment of Behavior Situations
• Samples and Examples of Visual Tools to Improve Behavior

Afternoon Session 2
Visual Strategies to Teach Social Skills
• Perspectives on Teaching Social Skills
• Teaching the Power of Video for Teaching Social Skills
• Implementation & Educational Issues
• Creating Visual Tools
• Teaching Skills to Support the Use of Visual Strategies
• Potpourri of Questions and Issues

Continuing Education Credits

PSYCHOLOGISTS
This program is co-sponsored by Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic and ABOARD’s Autism Connection of PA. Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic is approved by the American Psychological Association to offer continuing education credits for psychologists. Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic maintains responsibility for this program and its content. This program is being offered for 6.0 continuing education credits.

COUNSELORS
Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic is recognized by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) to offer continuing education for National Certified Counselors. Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic adheres to the NBCC Continuing Education Guidelines. This program is being offered for 6.0 continuing education credits.

AOTA OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
The Advisory Board on Autism and Related Disorders (ABOARD) is an approved Provider of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). A maximum of 0.60 credits (6.0 contact hours) will be awarded upon successful completion of the conference. The assignment of AOTA CEUs is not intended endorsement of Specific course content, products, or clinical procedures by AOTA.

PA EDUCATORS ACT 48
The Allegheny Intermediate Unit is recognized by the PA Department of Education to offer continuing education credits ACT 48 under guidelines. A maximum of 6.0 hours of PA EDUCATORS ACT 48 credits will be awarded for the completion of the seminar. A certificate of attendance is provided as well.

SOCIAL WORKERS
This program is offered for 6.0 hours of social work continuing education through co-sponsorship of the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Social Work, a council on Social Work Education accredited school and, therefore, a PA-approved provider of social continuing education. These credit hours satisfy requirements for LSW/LCWW, LPC and LMFT.Binomial license renewal. For more information call 412.624.3711.

ASHA
This program is offered for 0.60 ASHA CEUs (Intermediate level, Professional area).

AOTA Advisory Board on Autism and Related Disorders is approved by the Continuing Education Board of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) to provide continuing education activities in speech-language pathology and audiology. See course information for number of ASHA CEUs, instructional level and content area. ASHA CE Provider overview does not imply endorsement of specific content, specific products or clinical procedures.