MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR CHALLENGES IN ASD: IMPACT AND INTERVENTIONS

Brenda Smith Myles, Ph.D.
brenda_myles@mac.com

Executive Function

- The set of brain-based abilities that help people control their behavior and reach their goals
- There are many brain-based abilities that make up executive function

Ability Set 4

- Managing Frustration
- Modulating Emotion

Ability Set 4: Managing Frustration

- Being able to match emotions to events
- Having an overwhelming sense of emotions
- Focusing on one feeling to the exclusion of others
- Being overly sensitive to the comments and actions of others
Ability Set 4: Modulating Emotion

- Regulating emotions and behaviors to match events and societal expectations
- Sadness
- Depression
- Discouragement
- Calming self, when needed

Physical Aggression

![Graph showing percentage of aggression across age groups](image)


Self-Regulation - Underactivity

The yellow areas represent a composite of fMRI scans showing the areas of the prefrontal cortices that are significantly less active in people with autism during emotion regulation.

Richey et al., 2015

Reactive Aggression

- Not planned in advance
- Occurs because the individual does not have the skills to problem solve, recognize feelings in self, match feelings, to event, and calm self

Farmer et al., 2014

Aggressive Behavior

\[ \text{Higher adaptive behavior, communication, IQ} \rightarrow \text{Lower levels of aggressive behavior} \]

TRADITIONAL TEMPER TANTRUMS vs “MELTDOWNS”
Temper Tantrums
- The child will look to see if behavior is getting a reaction
- The child can alter behavior to ensure that she does not get hurt
- The “temper tantrummer” will use a situation to his benefit
- The child has a goal and when the goal is met, the behavior returns to typical
- The child is in control

The Meltdown
- The child has no involvement in the social situation
- The child is not concerned for his own safety
- The child does not look to or care if others react to his behavior during the meltdown
- Meltdowns appear to be under their own power and have a cycle
- Are not manipulation – they are the only behavior the child has to react to the situation

Rumbling Stage
- Most important stage
- Building up to rage
- Some thinking ability still intact
- Individual children have their own patterns of “rage behavior”

Rage Stage
- This is the lightening stage when the neurotransmitters are not working correctly.
- The child or youth may shout, swear, kick, or hit.
- He or she is clearly out of control.

 Recovery Stage
- The child or youth may sleep for awhile.
- He/she may apologize or be contrite.
- Withdrawal may occur; a fantasy world may be the target.
- The student may deny meltdown.
- Some do not remember what happened during the Rage Stage.
ABILITY SET 4

Visual Supports
Self Management
Structured Teaching
Antecedent Based
Peer Implemented

EXPLAIN USING CARTOONING AND OTHER VISUALS

Student Crisis Plan Sheet
Page 1
Rumbling Stage

Student Crisis Plan Sheet
Page 2
Rumbling Stage

Student Crisis Plan Sheet
Page 3
Rage Stage
Recovery Stage

Executive Function
Organizing, prioritizing, activating
Focusing, sustaining, and shifting attention
Regulating alertness, sustaining effort, processing speed
Managing frustration, modulating emotions
Utilizing working memory and accessing/recalling
Monitoring and self-regulating action

Adapted from Thomas E. Brown
Cognitive Picture Rehearsal

Video Modeling
- Xtranormal
- Videojug
- Model Me Kids
- YouTube

When My Worries Get Too Big
By Buron

Turtle Technique
- Recognize that you feel angry.
- Go into shell. Take 3 deep breaths. And think calm, coping thoughts.
- Come out of shell when calm and thinking of a solution.

http://www.pinterest.com/pin/15910379930771831/
**Photo Album**
- Identify calming photos
- Place in album
- Review throughout the day with coaching about the calming effects of the photo album
- Prompt to use when upset
- Available to learner on an as-needed basis

**Totally Chill**

Table of Contents
- What Makes Me Stressed
- The Science of Stress
- Relaxing My Body
- Relaxing My Mind
- Flexible Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Getting Organized
- Being Healthy

Lynch, 2012

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**Home Base or Cool Zone**
- A place where the student can go to escape the over-stimulation of the classroom
- Not time-out
- Not a punishment
- Work goes with the student to Home Base
- May be scheduled or occur on an as-needed basis
- May be used for taking tests

**Five Stars**

![Five Stars Diagram]

**Home Base or Cool Zone**

- Home Base, Cool Zone, or Hot Pass card
- Prompts child to go to home base
- EVERYONE in school knows the child has one

**Rating** | Feeling | What It Looks Like | What I Should Do | What you should do for each number
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
1 | Have to leave; it is time to be alone | Fast rocking; loud voice | Use the secret signal with the adult you trust and leave the room when the adult acknowledges you | 1. Make a table
2 | Love to do it | Feeding/tearing paper | Tell the adult what you need to do | 2. Label the top columns
3 | I need to move to a different place in the room | Rocking back and forth; picking on fingernails | Think about saying one of these things: “I’ll talk with you later”, “I’m going to get a drink”, “I need to get some work done”. If that is not going to work, say “Gotta go!” and go stand by an adult you like and know. Ask the adult for help | 3. Write numbers down the side
4 | I can do this by myself | Starting to tap my feet | Think about saying one of these things: “I’ll talk with you later”, “I’m going to get a drink”, “I need to get some work done”. Keep doing what I am doing | 4. Write in your feelings for each number
5 | I need to go to a quiet part of the room | I’m off my leash | Think about saying one of these things: “I’ll talk with you later”, “I’m going to get a drink”, “I need to get some work done”. I am good. Nothing is really bothering me. | 5. Write what each feeling looks like for you
6 | I need to stay quiet | Stop talking | Think about saying one of these things: “I’ll talk with you later”, “I’m going to get a drink”, “I need to get some work done”. | 6. Write what you should do for each number

Myles, 2015
brenda_myles@mac.com
Visual Support

School Year Schedule

Routines That Need to Be Directly Taught

- How to ask for help
- When and what to throw away and where
- How to obtain school supplies when the student forgets to bring them
- How and when to hand in work
- How to pass out papers
- How to organize materials so that they are accessible in desk, locker, backpack, cubby
- How to make up missed work
- How to line up for lunch, recess, music, etc...
- How to walk down the hall with other students

Priming

- Preparing the student for daily activities
  - Can occur
    - At home for the next day
    - The morning of in school
    - At the end of the school day for the next day
  - Overview of schedule changes, assignments and activities

Mataya & Owen, 2012

Mataya & Owen, 2013

Talk It Out & Compromise

1. Figure out what the problem is.
2. Look at the four choices.
3. For each choice ask, “What would happen if I did that?” It is best to do this with an adult you trust.
4. Choose the best one; practice how to do it with an adult. Then do it!

Let It Bother You

Let It Bother You

1. Seek Help From Adult
2. Ignore & Move On
3. Talk It Out & Compromise
4. Ignore and Move On

1. Figure out what the problem is.
2. Look at the four choices.
3. For each choice ask, “What would happen if I did that?” It is best to do this with an adult you trust.
4. Choose the best one; practice how to do it with an adult. Then do it!

Let It Bother You

Mataya & Owen, 2012

Mataya & Owen, 2013
Guiding Principles

Break the Negative Cycle

| 4 | to | 1 |

Punish | Pray | Praise | Command | Reprimand |

Kenworthy et al.

Guiding Principles

- Refusing to work
- Getting quiet
- Saying "bad" words
- Screaming
- Stomping feet

TEACH UNWRITTEN RULES

UNLIMITED POTENTIAL

And that potential is largely dependent on us!

THE PLAN

Embedding Evidence Based Practices

Comprehensive Autism Planning System (CAPS)

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