

Autism Spectrum Disorder(ASD) for Transportation



Safety For All

*Strategies in working with
autistic students*



This presentation contains information and case studies from Virginia Commonwealth University's -Autism Center for Excellence (VCU – ACE)

Information used to create this Power Point presentation is derived directly from the series of the 8 videos titled, “Safety for All: ASD for Transportation”

Review and helpful tips regarding ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder)



Safety Team

Safety for students with ASD
is all of our responsibility

School
Administrators &
Teachers

Parents or Guardians
& the Community

Bus Safety

Students

Drivers & Assistants



Being Proactive

The goal is to be proactive regarding unwanted behavior, and proactive to reward positive behavior.

Behavior	Study on Over 300 Buses
Out of Seat	68%
Disrespectful or Rude	43%
Noise	64%
Hitting/Fighting	39%



Proactive Approach

Explain changes in route

Let the school know I have a different bus

Pre-warn student of a need for change in seating

Explain that there will be a substitute bus driver or assistant

Let the student know that there will be a different bus number tomorrow

Reactive Approach

Respond to child's anxious behavior

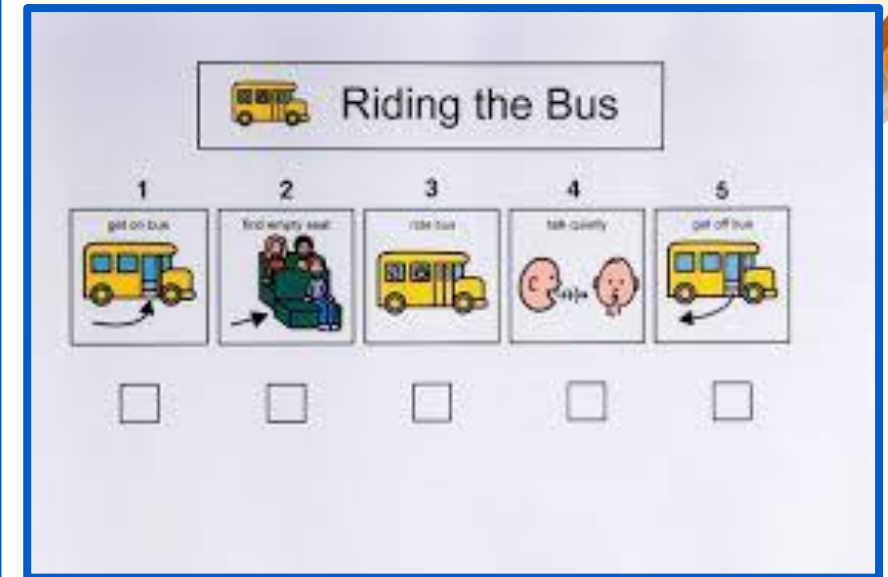
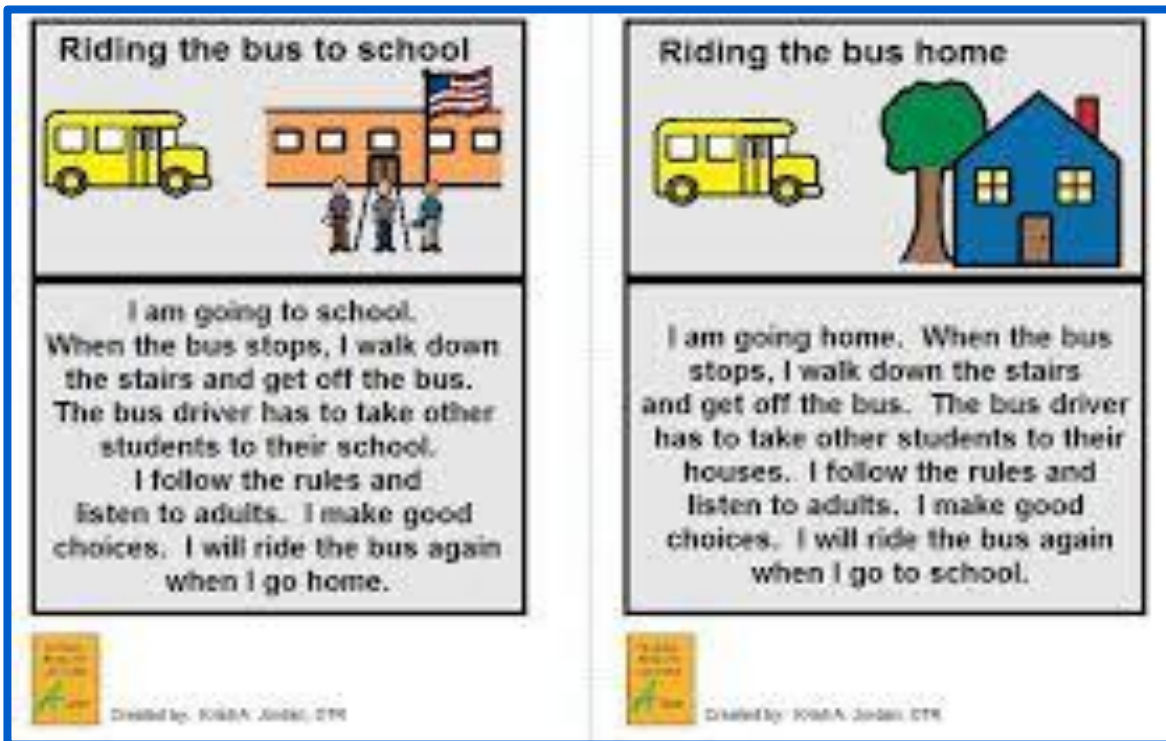
Calm the student after he notices the change

Wait to see if the student will react

Introduce the substitute once the student is already on the bus

Deal with behaviors one day at a time

- How might being PROACTIVE help to alleviate fears and disruptive behaviors?
- How might being REACTIVE increase the likelihood of negative behaviors?



-Tip to being proactive: Use social narratives to regulate behavior and alleviate anxiety. Clear expectations, familiarity, and clear directions are comforting to students with ASD.

-For students who have a particular struggle with change, possibly have a social narrative for changes in route, time, or if a substitute driver or assistant will be working with them.

ASD Level 1 Behaviors (Primary)



- Impairment in Communication
- Social skills/language
- Language may be restrictive and/or repetitive (including noises and sounds)
- Difficulty with behavior (may include repetitive body movements)
- Issues with organization and planning
- Preoccupation with the same object
- Strict, sometimes inflexible, adherence to schedules
- Sensory issues with food, clothing, touch, noise, smells, and temperature

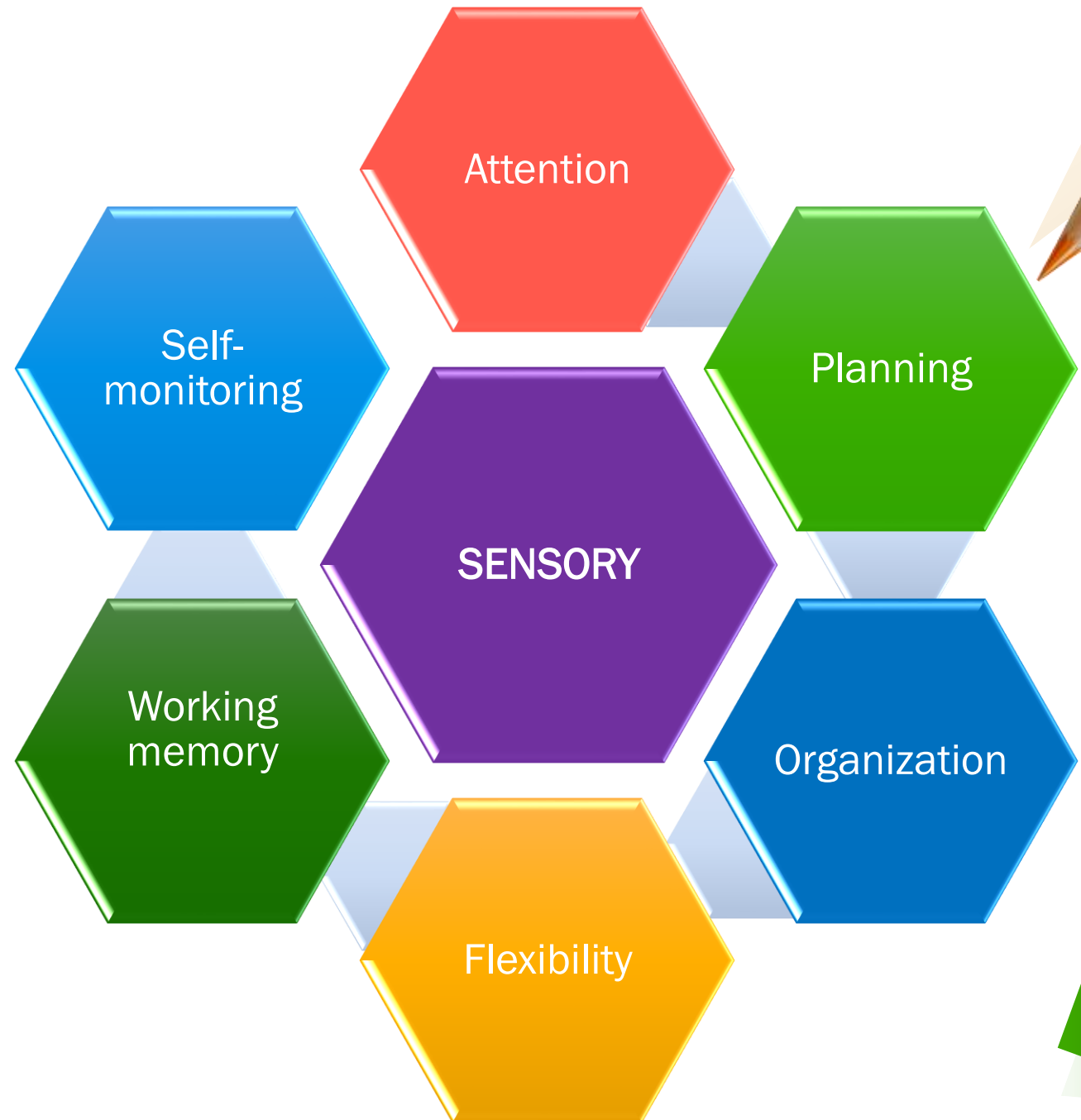
Note: Level 1 behaviors do not pose a threat to others

ASD Level 2 Behaviors (Secondary)

Executive Function: an umbrella term for the cognitive processes that help us regulate, control and manage our thoughts and actions and aide in learning.

-May have difficulty with common childhood tasks such tying their shoes, choosing what to wear, or brushing their teeth.

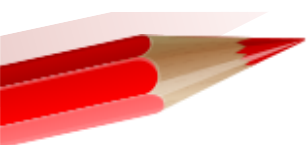
-May exhibit behaviors such as hand flapping, rocking, and sensitivity to noises, taste, smells, and textures. -





The WHY to some behaviors



- 
1. Rocking and repetitive behaviors give familiarity to an unfamiliar environment
 2. The behavior is fun for them
 3. Communicate a need or to get your attention
 4. Communicate that they do not want to engage in an activity



Whenever possible, create predictability
* familiar environments * routines * helpers

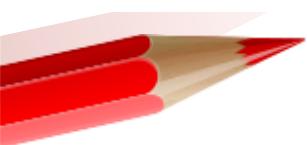
“Stimming” –
Self-regulating
behaviors

- **Behavior has meaning!**
Reacting in frustration increases the likelihood of more extreme behaviors
- Be proactive with empathy and understanding, and try to see the behavior as a method of communication
- Model calm behavior





Bullies use their size, age, and social stature to intimidate and embarrass others

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- Physical: damaging property/causing physical harm
 - Verbal: Goal is to degrade, embarrass, or damage emotions
 - Covert: (Sneaky) spreading lies, embarrass, humiliate, socially exclude, mimic unkindly
 - Cyber: email, text, stalking, harsh responses to posts, pictures designed to harass or humiliate



Middle School Students are the most prone to bully and to be the victims of bullying.

Percentage of students being bullied increases if they have Autism Spectrum Disorder

63% Report being bullied in Elementary school

75% Report being bullied in Middle School

Why are students with ASD more vulnerable?

- Anxiety & Fear
- Difficulty self-advocating
- Peer rejection
- History repeats itself (they are unaware of cause and effect of bullying)
- Inability to predict social situations
- Fewer friends and social network
- Prone to be loners
- Their social cues are misunderstood



12 Year Old Case Study:

Location: School Bus

Situation: Carter was told to pull down his pants by other students on the bus. They told him it would be funny, and that the other students would like him.

Carter thought they were truly being his friends, and was confused when he was later suspended from the bus



Signs of Bullying

Emotional

- Changes in mood
- Anger
- Tears
- Hesitant to participate

Behavior Signs

- Refusing to get on the bus
- Behaviors may escalate/become severe

Physical Signs

- Missing Belongs
- Unexplained cuts or bruises
- Damage to belongings



If you suspect that a student is being bullied on your bus, intervene immediately!

Before & After School

- ✓ Change in bus driver
- ✓ Change in bus
- ✓ Change in seating
- ✓ Change in timing

Change

In Route

- ✓ Change in route
- ✓ Traffic
- ✓ Accident
- ✓ Emergency pull-over

Chance

“You can’t prepare the road for the child, but you CAN prepare the child for the road.”



Have clear expectations and whenever possible, use pictures.

- Utilize a mature, kind peer buddy.
- Positive reinforcement (high-fives, thumbs-up, clear praise)
- Ask the student's safety team (anyone who currently works with the student) to help you with a social narrative
- Sensory activities: Ear phones, noise reduction head phones, listening to
- Music, sitting alone, iPod, fidgets
- Consider Autistic students when creating a seating chart. Whenever possible, keep the
- Autistic student in the same seat by a trusted peer buddy and close to the driver.
- Consistency – this helps with all students, but is crucial for students with ASD

When riding the bus



Your hands only touch yourself



And your feet stay on the floor.



This makes for a great bus ride!



Collaboration

Always care enough to ask for help!
Do you need more training? Please ASK!
Did you witness bullying? Please intervene!
See a change in behavior? Please explain!



School Bus Drivers, Special Needs Drivers and Assistants play a crucial role in the success of their students. The school relies on us to let them know how their behavior has been before and after school. You are privy to important information such as...

Did the student sleep well?

Did the student eat breakfast?

Is the student adjusting well to changes in medication?

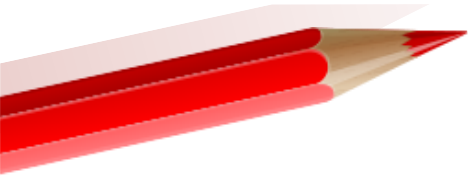
Any seizures? Acting out? Positive behaviors?



Almost finished!



ASD for Transportation Quiz





Thank You!

Be Safe!