Start Communicating Today: Foundational Skills for Autistic Toddlers and Preschool-Aged Students

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ABA SPEECH
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1

Disclosures

Financial: Rose is the founder/owner of ABA SPEECH LLC, where she sells materials and trainings for speech therapists working with autistic students. She is also founder/owner of Supervision Academy, which provides supervision to those seeking the BCBA certification. Nonfinancial: Rose is a Board-certified Behavior Analyst and creator of the "ABA Speech" blog.

2

- **Participants will be able to list 8 foundational skills for younger autistic learners.**

2. Participants will be able to define joint attention.

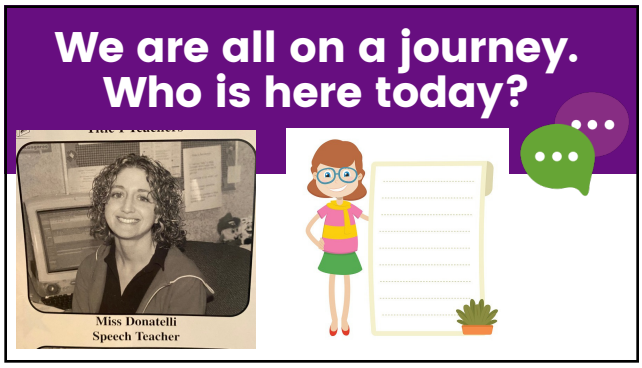
3. Participants will be able to discuss 3 ways to work on joint attention.

ASHA practice portal retrieved July 2021

3

Autism
Outreach
WITH ROSE GRIFFIN
ABA Speech

4


We are all on a journey.
Who is here today?
Miss Donatelli
Speech Teacher

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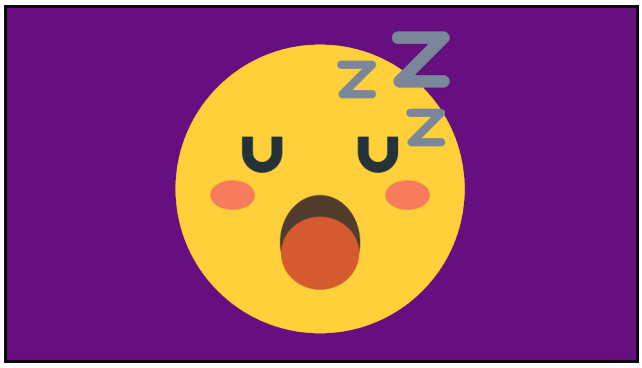

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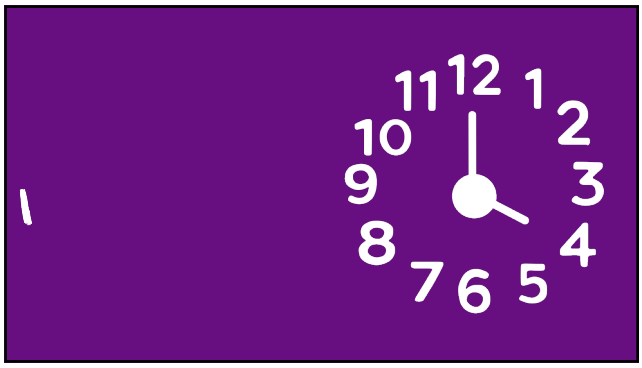

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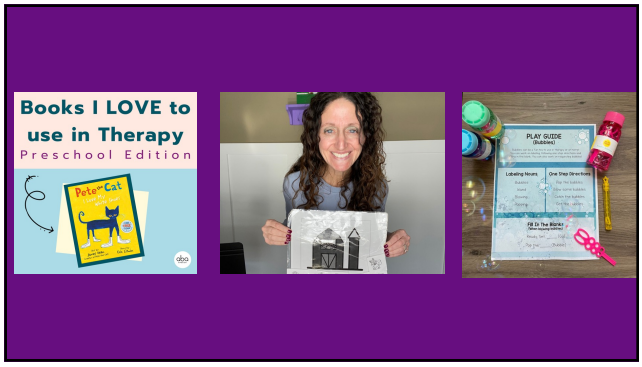
Books I LOVE to use in Therapy
Preschool Edition
Pete the Cat
PLAY GUIDE
(Bubbles)

12

Joint Attention

What is it?
JA involves shared attention between at least two people on an object or event, with both people knowing they are attending to the same entity (Tomasello, 1995)

13

Why is it so important?

- There is a strong relationship between JA and both receptive and expressive language skills.
- It is an important skill to address for our younger students with autism.

14

How will we address joint attention?

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Goal: Shay will increase his joint attention skills by engaging in a variety of shared activities with the therapist for a duration of 3 minutes, without prompts, over 2 consecutive sessions.

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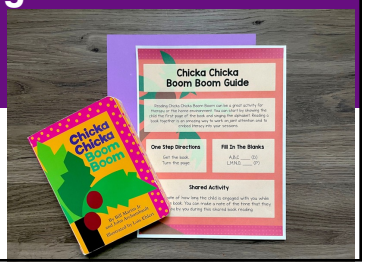
While Reading A Book

- Present a book
- Give student a choice of books
- Read the book and encourage engagement



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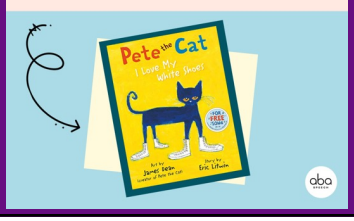
While Reading A Book

- Make it fun!
- Don't demand engagement
- Note does your student enjoy this?

18

Books I LOVE to use in Therapy

Preschool Edition



19

Objective 2: Shay will engage in a shared interaction with the therapist while engaged in a music-based activity for a duration of 3 minutes without prompts, over 2 consecutive sessions. .

20

While Singing A Song

You present a visual
You give student a choice between songs
You sing the song and encourage engagement

21

The Wheels On The Bus

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If You're Happy and You Know It

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What is your favorite song to use in therapy?

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Objective 3: Christopher will engage in a shared interaction with the therapist while playing with preferred toys for a duration of 3 minutes without prompts, over 2 consecutive sessions.

26

While Playing With Toys

You present the toy
Let the child explore the toy
You model play + engagement

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What is your favorite toy to use in therapy with younger learners?

30

Foundational Skills

- Joint Attention
- Imitation
- Requesting
- Matching
- Play
- Following One Step Directions
- Labeling
- Filling In The Blanks

31

Imitation

Reciprocal imitation training (RIT) is a naturalistic behavioral intervention that teaches imitation to children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) within a social– communicative context. RIT has been shown to be effective at teaching spontaneous, generalized object and gesture imitation. In addition, improvements in imitation are associated with increases in verbal imitation and spontaneous language.

Ingersoll and Lalonde (2010)

32

33

Object Imitation

Have a duplicate of the child's toy
Model an action during play
Example: The farm animals leaving the barn
Use a verbal marker "bye bye cow"

34

Object Imitation with Similar Objects

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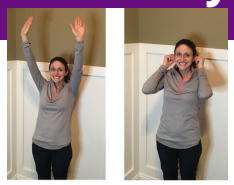
Imitation through song

The Wheels On The Bus
Old Macdonald Had a Farm
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes

36

Imitation through modified simon says



It is always "Simon Says"

37

Verbal Imitation

If spontaneous verbal imitation occurs- naturally reinforce this!

38

Sound Inventory

- What sounds can the student say?
- Start with an assessment when possible
- If the student will not imitate words- keep a running log of sounds or words they say during the session or at home with family

39

Manding/Requesting

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Why work on requesting?

Mands are first in the language repertoire learned by all children, and are very important for the early development of language and for day-to-day verbal interactions of children and adults (Cooper, Heron and Heward 2007)

41

Rules for Requesting

- **Identify what items or actions the student enjoys**

42

Work on Specific Requests

43

Embed Opportunities Throughout the day!

44

Matching

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Matching is an early learner skill.

- Matching identical objects
- Matching identical pictures

46

To think about……

- Use the direction "match (targeted word)"
- "match apple" "match cow"

47

Matching mini object to picture

48

One Step Directions

An important early learner skill across people and environments

49

To think about….

What directions are functional for your student?
What directions are functional across environments?

50

Keep it functional

Give to mommy
Get your shoes

51

Play

52

How can we incorporate this into therapy?

53

To think about.....

- What are the child's current play skills?
- Does the child need a direct goal for play?
- What are the child's current play preferences?

54

Play Strategies- Strategy 1

Be a play partner and remain flexible!

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Strategy 2

Parallel play is a great start!

56

Strategy 3

Introduce toys-observe- note interest

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Strategy 4

Incorporate Movement Based Play

58

Labeling

- May be functional for some students- based on assessment!
- Work on preferred labels first

59

Where to begin?

Labeling in play

60

Next Steps

Labeling preferred people, places, items

61

Add in actions

- **Preferred**
- **Frequently Occurring**

62

Phrase Construction

63

Filling in the blank

A great way to work on social engagement!

64

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Questions/ Stay In Touch

67