

# TEACHING INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

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# Introduction

The Direct Support Worker's or para-professional's job is to teach and support the daily living, health, safety, social and communication skills of the individual he or she supports.

Teaching and support occur in the home, in the community, and in nearly every interaction and activity.



# Concepts

In this presentation you will learn to

- **Plan** what you are going to teach
- **Assess** the learning modality of the person you support
- **Implement Visual Teaching Strategies**
- Implement various **Teaching Strategies** to increase learning success.
- **Prompt**



# PLAN

- ISP is the roadmap for the services we provide to the individuals we support.
- IP is our statement of how we are going to support the individual in meeting his or goals as defined on the ISP.
- The approaches are the specific things the DSWs will do in their work with the individual to support him or her in meeting those goals.



# Assess

- **Auditory Processing – Does the individual you support have the auditory skills necessary to learn and process auditory information?**

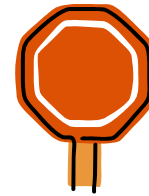
**Do they have good  
Auditory memory?  
Auditory  
discrimination?  
Auditory sequencing?**



# Assess, cont.

**Use informal assessments to ascertain if the individual you support has possible auditory processing deficits.**

Ask the individual you support to repeat sequences of increasing length and follow oral directions of increasing complexity to find out how she or he performs.



## Do this:

- Stand up
- Touch the top of your head with your right hand
- Touch your right ear with your left hand
- Nod your head twice.
- Sit down



# Do this:



STAND UP



Touch your nose with your right hand.



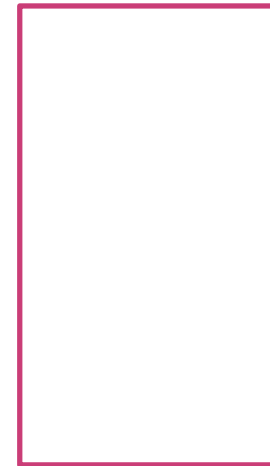
Touch your right knee with your left hand.



TURN AROUND



SIT DOWN



# Assess, cont.

- If you notice auditory difficulties:
  - Minimize auditory clutter when teaching new skills
  - Present information, instruction, schedules, and directions visually.
- Many individuals on the autism spectrum, with intellectual disabilities, or sensory integration disorders have trouble processing auditory information.





**Implement teaching  
in the best learning  
modality**



# Visually Assisted Learning

If the person you support can read use:

- charts,
- lists,
- graphs,
- a white board,
- maps,
- notes,
- books and
- videos to instruct and communicate.

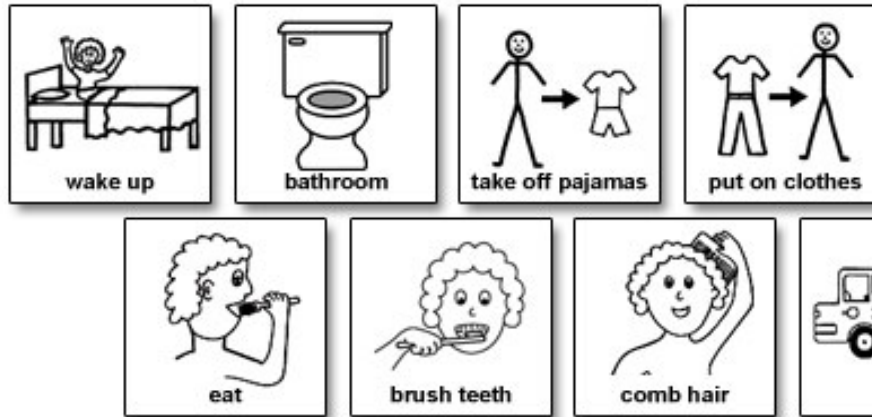


# Visual supports for non-readers.

- If the individual you support cannot read use pictures, gestures and ASL to support learning, understanding and communication.



# Picture Schedules

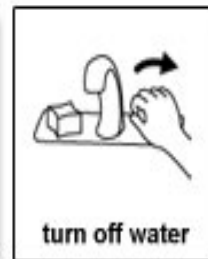
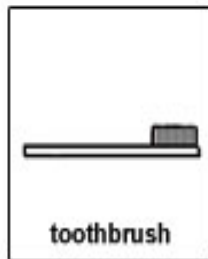


## Bedtime

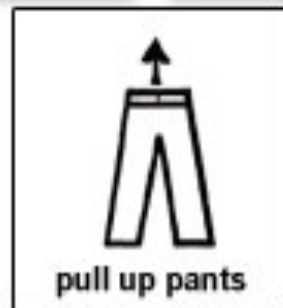
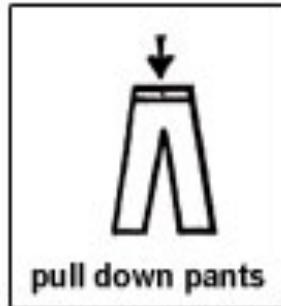
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 take off pajamas	✓						
 bath	✓						
 put on pajamas	✓						
 brush teeth	✓						
 read	✓						
 bed	✓						



# Reminder Strips

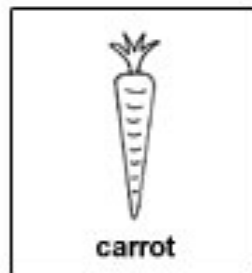


# Reminder Strips



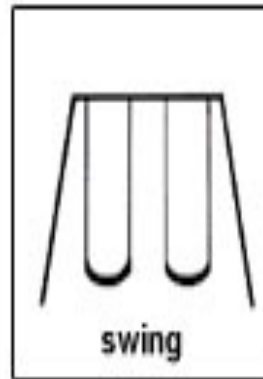
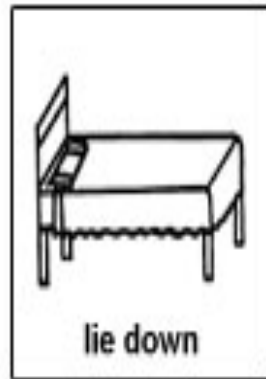
# Making Choices

- To teach choice making, start by offering two items simultaneously to someone with a clear preference for one over the other. Offer something like ice cream together with something the individual clearly doesn't like, such as carrots. Do this repetitively. Say: "You choose."



# Making Choices, cont.

- Once the concept of choosing is understood, you can begin to offer more subtle choices. Choice boards for learning coping skills can be very helpful.



# Other ideas for choosing

- Choices for mealtime or snack
- Choices for redirecting behavior
- Be creative! The list of ideas is endless.



# Relax and calm down



# Making Requests



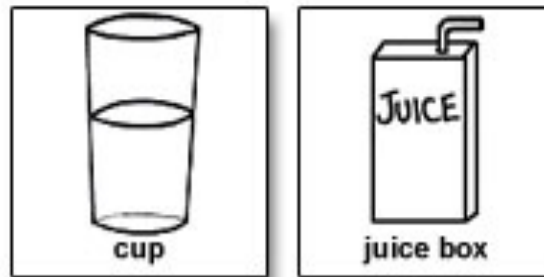
- Make picture cards available to a person learning to communicate.
- Teach him/her to bring you a picture to express one of his/her needs or wants.
- Enthusiastically respond!



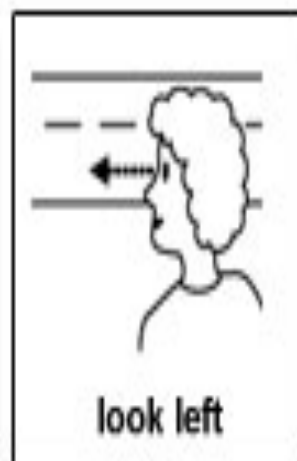
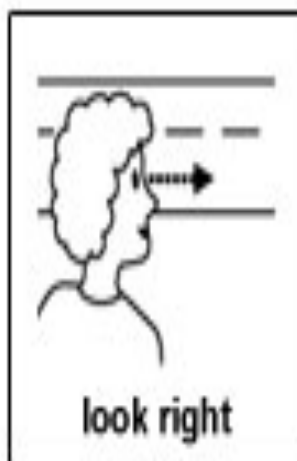
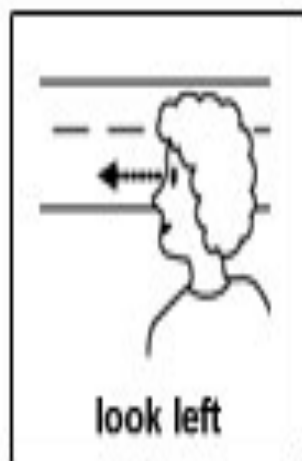
# Choice Board in Binder



- Display pictures of food and drink on the refrigerator. This can be done with magnets, tape, or a cardboard "choice board" with picture cards attached. When you know someone wants a drink, hand him the corresponding card (cup, juice box - *be consistent*). Have him look at the picture. Say "drink." Have him give you the drink card. Reinforce this repetitively several times before giving him the drink. It is easiest to teach these skills when someone is highly motivated, and that often involves food!



- Display pictures of activity choices on a board, a strip or even in a notebook. Using the above explanation, help the person build his own activity schedule.
- Picture strips can be used to teach many safety skills, for example:



# Resources:

- <http://www.usevisualstrategies.com/AutismVisualPrintablePictures.aspx>  
(emotion and behavior pictures)
- <http://www.do2learn.com/picturecards/printcards/index.htm>  
(rich variety of cards in many areas)
- <http://www.lifeprint.com/>
- (ASL site with videos for each sign)
- <http://www.picturecommunicationtool.com>
- [Jupiterimages.com](http://Jupiterimages.com)



# Teach

- Instruct
- Model
- Rehearse
- Feedback



# First, provide instruction.

- During instruction, the DSW provides information, tells how to do something, and provides examples (perhaps using pictures and gesture)



# Model



# Role Play



# Rehearse

- Third, the learner has the opportunity to rehearse the skill as the DSW modeled it. **The rehearsal is probably the most difficult step in the teaching process.** However, this is a method that helps develop a person's confidence in dealing with a variety of situations.



# Feedback

- Finally, the DSW provides feedback. The feedback should be positive. Depending on the learner, the DSW may need to break the skill into smaller steps or have the learner rehearse the skill several times.



- There is no set amount of instruction and rehearsal that is needed for everybody. The only criteria is that the person can complete the skill and apply it following the training. If it takes some individuals two attempts at it, that is fine. It is also fine if it takes 20 times to master a skill.



# Motivation

- Finally, motivation is an important part of the learning process. If an individual is not motivated to learn or use the skill, the best teaching available is useless. Involve the learner as much as possible in the training, make the practices fun, and provide feedback in a positive way.



# Shaping.

- Shaping involves reinforcement of part of the final skill even though the whole skill has not been completed.



# Chaining

- Each step serves as a cue for the next step; a chain is really a series of signals and behaviors.
- The completion of one behavior in a chain produces the signal for the next action.



# Chaining, cont.

- **EXAMPLES:**

- eating,
- getting dressed,
- using the computer,
- counting,
- brushing your teeth,
- riding a bike, and so on.

The procedure for building chains is called **chaining**.





- Chaining is the reinforcement of successive elements of a behavior chain. If you are teaching an individual the alphabet, you are attempting to build a chain, if you are teaching the tying of shoelaces, you are also attempting to build a chain.
- There are two chaining procedures, forward and backward chaining.



# FORWARD CHAINING:

- Forward chaining is a chaining procedure that begins with the first element in the chain and progresses to the last element (A to Z)



# BACKWARD CHAINING:

- This is often a very effective way of developing complex sequences of behavior. In forward chaining, you are teaching A to Z; in backward teaching, you are teaching Z to A. Backward chaining is a chaining procedure that begins with the last element in the chain and proceeds to the first element.



# Backward Chaining, cont.

- Backward chaining a puzzle gives an individual the idea of what s/he was doing ahead of time (there weren't just a bunch of puzzle pieces laying there) and teaching in this way gives an even more clear clue of the next step. I would be reinforcing each step as I am teaching it, but once the individual learns step 6, I will only reinforce steps 5 & 6 together (next link in the chain).



# RULES FOR CHAINING:

- Define the target behavior:



# Task Analysis

- Breaking the chain into small manageable steps is called performing a **task analysis** and a simple way of describing it is teaching *A to Z and every single letter in between*. Individuals with Autism/PDD have shown that they can learn very effectively using this method.



# Rules for Chaining, cont.

- **Reinforce successive elements of the chain.**



# Rules for Chaining, cont.

- **Monitor Results**



# Shaping vs Chaining

- The *similarity* between shaping and chaining is that the goal in each case is to establish a target behavior that doesn't yet occur. The *difference* is that shaping always moves forward. If progress breaks down, you may have to take a step back before moving forward again, but there is no such thing as backward shaping.



# Shaping Example

- **Current Level:** Mark does not know his address.
- **Goal:** Mark will learn his address.
- **Step Analysis:**

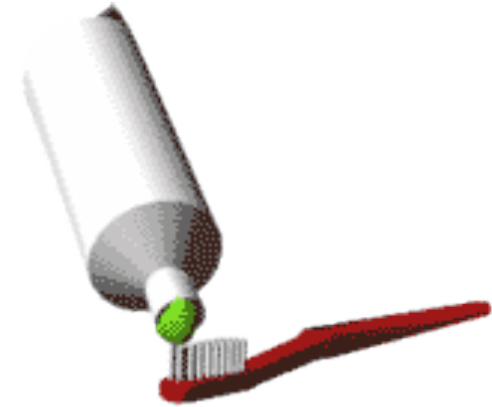
When asked, "Where do you live?" Mark will:

  - Recite the first two digits in his house number.
  - Recite the first four digits in his house number.
  - Recite all six digits in his house number.
  - Recite his house number and his street name.
  - Recite his house number, his street name, and his city.



# Chaining Example

- **Goal:** Rachel will brush her teeth.
  - Get toothbrush
  - Get toothpaste
  - Turn on cold water
  - Run toothbrush under water
  - Remove cap from toothpaste
  - Place cap on rim of basin
  - Apply toothpaste to toothbrush
  - Brush
  - Spit
  - Rinse toothbrush
  - Fill cup with water
  - Rinse mouth
  - Spit
  - Turn off water
  - Put cap on toothpaste
  - Put toothpaste away
  - Put toothbrush away



# Practice

- In groups of three write a task analysis for making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.



**PROMPT**



# Prompting

- **What it is**

A prompting hierarchy is a systematic method of assisting students in the learning and skill acquisition process. Prompts are only used as a support to students when necessary and only for as long as is necessary, with a plan in place for phasing out all levels of prompts.

- **What it's not**

A prompting hierarchy is not meant to be used in a way that produces prompt dependency in students. Prompts are also not used to fill in quiet space while a student is processing/ responding.



# Prompt Hierarchy Levels

- **Independent** – the student is able to perform the task on his/her own with no prompts or assistance
- **Indirect (Verbal or Nonverbal)** – tell the student that something is expected, but not exactly what (e.g., “Now what?” “What’s next?”, etc.) or use body language (e.g., expectant facial expression, questioning hand motion with a shrug, etc.)
- **Direct Verbal** – tell the student what he/she is expected to do or say (e.g., “Wash your hands.”)
- **Gesture** – indicate with a motion what you want the student to do (e.g., point at the flush handle)
- **Modeling** – show the student what you want him/her to do
- **Partial Physical Assistance** – provide minimal supported guidance
- **Full Physical Assistance** – provide hand-under-hand guidance to help the student complete the desired task



# Prompting, cont.

- Begin with the most intrusive (closest to the bottom of the hierarchy) level of prompt necessary to get full success. If the individual is successful with that level of prompt, reinforce. If the individual is not successful with that level of prompting move down the hierarchy.
- Do not repeat a prompt level, ever. If you do not get a successful response, pause (1-5 seconds; repeat the request at the next lowest level on the hierarchy, wait for response and respond with positive reinforcement if successful. If not successful, pause, move down to next level and proceed as above.



# Prompting, cont.

- When an individual is consistently successful with any level of prompting, move UP the hierarchy to the next level and reinforce success at that level. For example, if the individual you support responds 100% of the time to a verbal prompt (“Wash your hands”) then move up the hierarchy **quickly** to an indirect verbal prompt (“What’s next?”) This is called prompt **FADING**. You want to fade prompts in order to decrease the chances that the person you support will become prompt dependent.



# Prompt Dependency

- This occurs when the person you support will not attempt a task without a prompt. It is common for people to become dependent on verbal prompts. For this reason it is very important to move from verbal to non-verbal prompts and then to reinforcing independence (no prompt). It is also important to give one and only one **VERBAL** prompt, or indirect verbal prompt and continue to move down the hierarchy until the individual responds.



EXAMPLE:

DSW: What do you need to do after you use the toilet?

PAUSE

Individual: (No response.)

DSW says, "Flush the toilet."

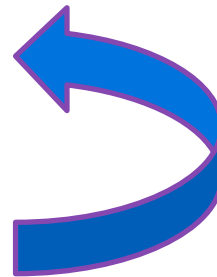
PAUSE

Individual: (No response)

DSW: Points to the flush handle.

Individual flushes the toilet.

DSW: Reward and reinforce.



- Next time, you will start at the gesture level on the hierarchy.
- **DO NOT REPEAT VERBAL PROMPTS.**
- It is the easiest level for individuals to become prompt dependent.



# HERE IS HOW IT LOOKS!

Step one of the task -

You give the instruction, model, practice and then prompt using the least intrusive prompt that guarantees success until the person you support is performing that step independently.

Then you move on to step 1 and 2 of the task analysis, providing instruction, modeling, practice and then prompting with the least intrusive prompt that guarantees success until the person you support is performing those 2 steps independently.



- You follow this procedure through every step of the task.
- This way there is no failure, ever.
- The person you support is 100% successful at every attempt and you are assuring success.
- Progress is steady and learning is taking place.
- You and the person you support feel successful, proud and capable.





