ASD Nest Support Project PRESENTS

6th Annual New School Year Kickoff August 30 2018

Conference Handouts

Life Long Learning

NYU Steinhardt
COMIC STRIP CONVERSATIONS®

The goal is to break down conversations and situations using basic symbols in order to:

- Build social awareness
- Highlight perspectives
- "Work through" a situation to increase understanding
- Identify possible solutions to problem situations

CONVERSATION SYMBOLS DICTIONARY©

Use color to visually define the emotions and intentions. Carol Gray suggests colors or create your own version with the student’s ideas.

COLORS FOR FEELINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>anger, unfriendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>comfortable, cozy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>proud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>frightened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>facts, things we know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of colors</td>
<td>confused</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REMEMBER: teach / explain what the terms mean
THE ART OF CONVERSATION

➤ Introduce the concept
➤ Introduce the "conversation symbols dictionary"
➤ Student takes the lead
➤ We guide the student
➤ Talk
➤ Draw
➤ Write

QUESTIONS THAT GUIDE A CONVERSATION

➤ Where is this?
➤ Who is there?
➤ What are you doing?
➤ What did others do?
➤ What did others say?
➤ What did you say?
➤ What happened?
➤ What did you think?
➤ What did others think?

WORK THROUGH A SITUATION / PROBLEM SOLVE

➤ Higher order thinking in content

HIGHLIGHT PERSPECTIVE

➤ Hidden Curriculum

BUILD SOCIAL AWARENESS

➤ Routines

ROUTINE EXAMPLE
“Well, I declare…”: Using Declarative Language in the Classroom
Lauren Hough Williams

Normal interactions between people usually consist of about 20% imperatives (questioning, directing) and 80% declaratives (sharing ideas and information). However, when we interact with children on the spectrum, the ratio is turned around, 80% imperative and 20% declarative.

- Bill Nason

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Declarative Language <strong>IS</strong></th>
<th>Declarative Language <strong>IS NOT</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statements that share information.</td>
<td>Questions or commands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Declarative language
- Invites ________________________________________________________
- Decreases _____________________________________________________
- Encourages ____________________________________________________

**Don’t fake it**
Be interested, mean it, and make it authentic. Our students can spot a fake.

**Don’t rush it**
Give students processing time and remember that declarative language does not demand a response!

**Don’t cheat**
Do not use this as just another way to give directions or prompt a behavior.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Declarative Language</th>
<th>Narrative Writing Example</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predictions</td>
<td>I bet that you’re going to come up with a creative solution here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>Oh, so she’s going to ask her friend first.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitations</td>
<td>Let’s start by thinking about what you know about bridges.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declamations</td>
<td>I’m tired of sharpening pencils. I’m going to go sit at the table.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-narratives</td>
<td>Okay, so I have a pencil. Now I’m going to start thinking of interesting setting details.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrations</td>
<td>You did it! You wrote 5 sentences before the timer went off! You really used your time well today.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections</td>
<td>I thought that this was going to be pretty tricky, but once you got the hang of it it don’t seem to be that difficult.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>It was great brainstorming with you today - you tried really hard to come up with multiple ideas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declarative Questions</td>
<td>I’m wondering what she’s feeling right now.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspective Sharing</td>
<td>I’m actually really interested in the Civil War.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Prompt</td>
<td>Now would be a great time to check for ending punctuation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Prosody</td>
<td>(speeding rate of speaking to indicate excitement about a student’s idea or action)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Non-verbal Gestures</td>
<td>(nonverbal gestures to indicate that you are stopping to think)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Facial Expressiveness</td>
<td>(big smile to show interest in a novel idea)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Agenda**

- It Drives Me Crazy
  - Students' sensory needs and related behaviors
- What about us?
  - A look at our sensory processing
- You Can't Always Get What You Want
  - Addressing sensory needs
- U Know the Rules
  - Writing rules for fidget use

There's more than one way to see it

There are different perspectives when looking at the same situation. Restrictions are often very important to people with autism.

- May be experts in a particular area, have a strong focus and determination. May have very strong interests on a topic and activities related to these interests may result in a great sense of joy and satisfaction.
  1. Innovative and imaginative use of objects. Creativity.
  2. The ability to follow a schedule. Seeing patterns in things – very useful if the person wants to work for the police as an investigator or be a mathematician or climate scientist.
  3. Passionate engagement in a particular interest. As life progresses, Autists can develop a huge general knowledge based on all the topics they may have been interested in. Very useful if the person wants to be a university professor. Also, the interests can form an excellent self-soothing tool should the person be depressed.
  4. Exceptional, accurate and perceptive sensory skills. This is highly useful in areas like catering and viticulture.

### Sensory Motor Preference Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>Preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alerting</td>
<td>Calming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Chewing gum
- Drinking something carbonated
- Singing to myself
- Rocking chair
- Drinking something warm
- Classical music
- Scratch on a chalkboard
- Tapping pencil or pen

**Drumming**

- Overlooked sensory challenges
- Tier 1 & Essentials
  - Consider:
    - Lighting
    - Background noise
    - Seating options
    - Movement breaks

**Fidget Making 101**

Presented by Brandy Stanfill-Hobbs
Fidgets

• Provide sensory input in a controlled, non-disruptive manner
• Can provide calming or alerting input
• Can be used across a variety of settings
• Are common in the NT adult world

Consider…

• The age of your students
• The type of sensory input that you have observed that they enjoy
• Whether a calming or alerting tool would be more beneficial
• The colors and textures that meet your purpose

When does a fidget become a toy?

Questions?

When is a fidget a fidget?

You must have permission from a teacher
• It can only be used in the our room. Fidgets must be returned to the bin before you leave the room
• Fidgets must be in your hands and unseen by others
• Fidgets are for therapeutic use, if one becomes a distraction you must put it away

Fidget Rules

If you break the rules you will not have fidget privileges
• Ask a teacher
• Keep the fidget in your hands
• Keep your brain in the activity

Elementary
Middle School
ASD Nest Support Project        6th Annual New School Year Kickoff
Questions?
Thank you!!!
Good luck this year!!!

Brandy Stanfill-Hobbs
Brandy.stanfill@nyu.edu
The purpose of creating communities is to help all students feel a sense of belonging (not to be confused with friendship) by providing supports & opportunities for students to be social. It's an important issue (where "issue" stands for: Identity, Strength in Numbers, Shared Goal, "Us" Language, and Excite & Celebrate!)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>I</strong>dentity</th>
<th><strong>What:</strong> It is important for students to be self-aware and be recognized as individuals in order to be able to be a part of the group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **How:**      | • Morning meeting/advisory, check-ins  
• Sharing interests & "superpowers"  
• Ask Me About..., X of the week, etc.  |
| **Why:**      | All students deserve to be heard & recognized for their interests and strengths, and this is worth spending time on. Group membership starts with self-awareness |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>S</strong>trength in Numbers</th>
<th><strong>What:</strong> &quot;Many hands make light work&quot; says the old adage. Certain tasks are simply easier when done by a group (without losing one's individuality)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **How:**                 | • Jellybean test and group challenges  
• Roles  
• The Avengers |
| **Why:**                 | Recognizing one can be an individual and a member of a group is important, and roles help us do this. We can help highlight contexts when many is better than one |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>S</strong>hared Goal</th>
<th><strong>What:</strong> A shared goal means everyone is working towards the same thing. It means it is everyone's job to succeed, and this leads to more collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **How:**        | • Classwide Positive Behavior Supports  
• In-group mentality  
• Service-based learning |
| **Why:**        | Having a common goal necessarily unites a group and generates an "in-group" mentality. Service-based learning can be one way to bring together a group for a common purpose |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>&quot;U</strong>s&quot; Language</th>
<th><strong>What:</strong> Using uniting language (like &quot;we,&quot; &quot;us,&quot; &quot;team,&quot; etc.) &amp; creating a shared knowledge base of in-group activities or jokes creates community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **How:**          | • Labeling moments  
• In-jokes and rituals  
• Group name, mascot, etc. |
| **Why:**          | Labeling moments helps support our students’ episodic memory, and can create in-jokes. Class-wide rituals and group names also build a sense of community |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>E</strong>xcite &amp; celebrate!</th>
<th><strong>What:</strong> While we do not externally reinforce social behaviors in Nest, celebrating each other (as a group and as individuals) helps ensure group belonging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **How:**                | • Wall of Wow/Spotlights  
• Classwide PBS  
• Actual Celebrations |
| **Why:**                | Highlight moments when students succeeded together to help them make shared memories & recognize the benefits of group thinking. Also a good end-point to classwide PBS |

Want visuals of each activity? Go to: tinyurl.com/communityinnest
H**OWEVER:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Snowflakes</strong></th>
<th><strong>What:</strong> None of the above should be at the expense of students recognizing their uniqueness, feeling proud of it, and recognizing there are times to go solo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Why:</strong> Students deserve to be celebrated for their individualism, and self-awareness is the foundation of empowerment &amp; self-advocacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recognizing &amp; celebrating differences</td>
<td>Allowing students breaks from &quot;social&quot; is key, too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Through similar activities to &quot;Identity&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Normalizing solo work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**It's a part of Nest!**

**Elementary Guideposts**

- Label the moment: Brainstorm a word or phrase together to capture a moment (After a group puzzle activity, label the memory as “*The Puzzling Puzzle Search*”).
- Roles: Facilitating the use of roles helps students recognize their place in a group and promotes group problem solving (e.g. one person can be the director, one can be the reporter, and another can be the camera-person).
- Partnerships: Tasks that require collaboration can help students problem solve and think flexibly as a team.
- Match interests/strengths to roles: Incorporate strengths and interests when defining roles to help student channel their intrinsic motivation towards working with their group.
- Celebrate strengths to build competence: Helping students learn to recognize and celebrate their individual strengths can help students increase their feelings of competence and increase their intrinsic motivation.

**MS/HS Nest Essentials**

- Before beginning group work, options for each student’s role are determined and clarified
- Support is given during class activities that may tap into social challenges (e.g., finding a partner, accepting feedback from peers)
- Expectations for behavior are explained, and positive behavior is highlighted and reinforced
- Strategies developed in team meetings are implemented consistently across classes
- Instruction and assessment are differentiated according to students’ learning needs and special interests

**From the Experts:**

"I know sometimes it looks like I’m isolating myself. But it’s hard to sustain a conversation when you can’t identify with the other person, so I tend to stay quiet around people who don’t have much of an interest in space. I’ve formed friendships with people who could talk about the ins and outs of space exploration and colonization because these are things that interest me. That’s my community, and anytime I’ve wanted to socialize, I know I can talk to them. —Heidi"  

"I would never talk just to be social. Now, to sit down with a bunch of engineers and talk about the latest concrete forming systems, that’s really interesting. Talking with animal behaviorists or with someone who likes to sail, that’s interesting. Information is interesting to me. But talking for the sake of talking, I find that quite boring.”  

"I find as you get older you learn to adapt better in social situations, but sometimes we just don’t want to be social — not because we are depressed — we just want to be alone.”  
-Melanie Reinburg (Source: [themighty.com/2015/07/making-friends-when-you-have-autism/](https://themighty.com/2015/07/making-friends-when-you-have-autism/))

Questions? Contact me at: [jules.csillag@nyu.edu](mailto:jules.csillag@nyu.edu)
Let's Talk About Sex: Sexuality and Autism Spectrum Disorder

Sarah Kern, LCSW
Clinical Assistant Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
August 30, 2018

Importance of Sex Education

- All children and adolescents have the right to a sex education that is individualized to account for individual differences and learning styles (Tissot, 2009).
- Individuals with autism are less likely to learn about sex and sexuality from their peers, movies, or media outlets.
- Education for parents and caregivers is a crucial part of sex education to help address absence of information or misinformation.

Sex Education

- Focus should be placed on particular core components including personal safety and building knowledge:
  - Basic facts and personal safety
  - Individual values
  - Social competence

Concepts for Children and Adolescents

- Public versus private behavior
- Good touch versus bad touch
- Proper names of body parts
- "Inappropriate" names of body parts
- Personal boundaries/personal spaces
- Masturbation ("Private Touching")
- Avoidance of danger/Abuse prevention
- Social skills and relationship building
- Dating skills
- Personal responsibility and values

Concepts for Children and Adolescents - Continued

- Middle School Topics to Consider:
  - Anatomy
  - Puberty
  - Reproduction
  - Crushes
  - Body Image
  - Hygiene

- High School/College Topics to Consider:
  - Dating
  - Intimacy
  - Power
  - Sexual Response
  - Reproduction
  - Sexuality and the Law

Ways of Teaching

Socialization

- We send messages about sexuality with our facial expressions and tone and with what we talk about and what we do not talk about.

Formal Lessons

- Making the implicit explicit!
Ways of Teaching - Continued

Behavior Planning

- How we use routines, intervention strategies, reinforcement, practice and environmental changes to promote healthy behavior and reduce problematic behavior.

Advocacy

- Creating safe spaces for sexual expression.

Example: Formal Lessons

Skill: Staying Safe While Dating*

- Don't give out personal information at first
- Google your date before you meet
- Let friends and family know where you are and who you're with
- Get yourself to and from the date
- Meet your date in a public place
- Don't go anywhere alone with your date at first
- Check in with friends and family before and after the date

Example: Formal Lessons

Skill: Dating Etiquette and Letting Someone Know You Like Them*

- Talk to Mutual Friends
- Ask your friend if the person is dating anyone
- Ask your friend if they think the person would go out with you
- PM With Your Eyes
- Make eye contact
- Give a slight smile
- Look away
- Repeat several times
- Ask Them If They're Dating Anyone
- Give Compliments
- Show Interest in Them

Example: Behavior Planning

Social Stories and Comic Book Conversations

Circles Concepts: These circles can be used to demonstrate the behavior expected towards others, at home and at school. This concept can be expanded or adapted to include many situations which might be appropriate for the individual person.

Visual Supports

- Visual Stories: These stories can be used to demonstrate how the person can demonstrate the behavior expected towards others, at home and at school.

Websites

- The Birds and the Bees: Support for Teaching Human Sexuality to Individuals with Autism and Developmental Disabilities: https://asdsexed.org/category/general-teaching-information/advocacy-general-teaching-information/
- Teaching Sexual Health: https://teachingsexualhealth.ca/
- Teaching Parents Teaching Kids: http://teachingparentsforchildrenkids.info/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=44&Itemid=4

Books

Asperger's Syndrome and Sexuality: From Adolescence through Adulthood by Isabelle Hanaut

The Asperkid's (Secret) Book of Social Rules: The Handbook of Not-So-Obvious Social Guidelines for Tweens and Teens with Asperger Syndrome by Jennifer Cooke O'Toole

Sexuality and Relationship Education for Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders by Davida Hartman
Connecting the Thoughts: Making Instruction Visible
Aaron Lanou

KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURE DIAGRAMS

* While teaching a lesson, sketch a diagram that matches the knowledge structure of the content.

To represent a Process | Sequence | Cause-effect Relationship
Use a CHAIN
Helps answer the questions: When? How?
For when you’re teaching: steps, procedures, reactions, timelines, narrative story grammar, etc.

To represent a Hierarchy | System | Topic Breakdown
Use a WEB
Helps answer the questions: Who? What? Where?
For when you’re teaching: characteristics, taxonomies, examples, evidence, features, details, types, etc.

To represent a Comparison
Use a DOUBLE BUBBLE
Helps answer the questions Why? Which?
For when you’re teaching: compare-contrast, debates, evaluating alike/same, distinct/different

To represent Gradual Degrees of Difference
Use a CONTINUUM LINE
Helps answer the questions: How much?
For when you’re teaching: opposites, gradations between binaries (good v. evil; light v. heavy)

Sources/references: teachingHOW2s.com; Sunni Brown, The Doodle Revolution; Oliver Caviglioli, learningscientists.org

Lanou 2018
BACKGROUND

* Using knowledge structure diagrams supports the forging of connections and increases retention.

![Diagram showing the comparison between instruction with and without structured visuals.](image)

IMPLEMENTATION

* Plan which diagram to use, sketch it live while you teach, and show students how to use diagram.

![Diagram showing the steps of planning, teaching, and student role.](image)

REFLECTION

* Make short-term, mid-range, and long-term goals for your use of knowledge structure diagrams.

![Goal planning diagram](image)

Sources/references: teachingHOW2s.com; Sunni Brown, The Doodle Revolution; Oliver Caviglioli, learningscientists.org
Balloons are not just for birthdays.

Panagiotis A. Rekoutis, PhD, OTR/L

Balloons as Therapy Tools

- Respiration
- Regulation
- Ocular-Motor
- Eye-Hand Coordination
- Leisure
- Socialization

Main Area Targeted by Activity

- Main Targeted Area
  - Respiration
  - Regulation
  - Ocular-Motor
  - Eye-Hand Coordination
  - Leisure
  - Socialization

- Activity Name
  - Blow, Blow, Blow!
  - Balloon Stress Ball
  - Don’t Touch the Ground
  - Balloon Volley-Ball
  - Balloon Caterpillar, Secret Message
  - Waddle Relay

Don’t Touch the Ground!

Materials Needed
- One blown up balloon per child

Instructions
- On the word ‘go’, each child must hit his/her balloon in the air and hit it to the finish line.
- If the balloon touches the ground, the child must go back to the start.
- No holding the balloon allowed! The first child across the finish line wins!

Advanced:
- Do crab walking or hopping on one foot.
- Hit the balloon with just head or just feet.

Blow, Blow, Blow!

Materials needed
- One deflated balloon per child

Instructions
- On the word ‘go’, each child must blow up a balloon in the air, and then let it go in the direction of the finish line.
- The child then goes to wherever the balloon landed, picks it up, blow it up again, and lets it go. Whoever gets his/her balloon across the finish line first wins!

Waddle Relay

Materials Needed
- One inflated balloon per pair

Instructions
- Guests pair up into pairs of two.
- Guests stand face to face and put a balloon in between them (back to back, stomach to stomach or side to side).
- Pairs move from the starting line to end line.
- If a pair drops the balloon, they have to start over from the beginning!
Balloon Caterpillars

Materials Needed
One inflated balloon per person

Instructions
• Guests split into two teams
• Each guest gets a blown-up balloon
• Guests form into one line and put their balloon between their stomach and the back of the person in front of them
• Line leaders start walking their lines around the room.
• If anyone drops their balloon, that person is out. (optional)

Balloon Volleyball

Materials Needed
• 1 large size balloon per 5 children
• 1 paper tape

Instructions
• Tape each balloon a couple of times over
• A net can be used as a divider
• Each player can hit the balloon only once (volleyball rules can apply)
• Do not let the balloon touch the ground
• Pass the balloon over the divider within the agreed upon hits.

The more tape is applied the heavier the balloon gets and the degree of difficulty increases.

Secret Messages

Materials Needed
• Blow up two or three balloons for each child playing

Instructions
• Put a secret message in at least half of the balloons.
• These secret messages should be simple and/or funny tasks for to complete, such as doing the chicken dance or doing jumping jacks.
• Have the children sit in a circle. One at a time, have each child sit (or stomp) on a balloon to pop it.
• If there is a secret message inside, they have to complete the task!

Make Your Own Stress Ball!

Materials Needed
• 2 balloons per stress ball
• Flour, cornstarch, rice or beans
• Funnel
• Permanent Markers (optional)

Instructions
• Put one balloon inside the other while holding the openings together
• Use the funnel (or a cut out of an empty plastic water bottle) and pour the material in the balloon
• Tie a knot in the opening
• You can decorate the balloons with the markers

Hope you Had a lot of Fun
Have a Great year
Stuff You Can Do for Kids with Free Money
ASD Nest Staff Grants in Action

6th Annual ASD Nest New School Year Kickoff
August 30, 2018

Savvy Socialites
Lauren Sorezza & Danielle Balestrino
PS 69

THE NEED: Students needed an unstructured social platform and were eager to generalize skills taught in SDI/classroom

THE PLAN: Created a solely social after-school program to provide students a social platform with general and ASD Nest students.

THE RESULTS: Students and staff fell in love with the program. Students formed new friendships with peers from other classes and grades and participated in activities they may have never tried before.

Lunch Bunch Yoga for Young Yogis
Christina Sioss, Seung Yun Rhee, Elizabeth Seldin
PS 392

THE NEED: Students were eager to move during all parts of the school day, ready to socialize with peers and in need of space and equipment to help them be active during lunch.

THE PLAN: Created a space to allow kids to be active at lunch time, taught the students yoga and invited their peers so the Nest students could teach them yoga.

THE RESULTS: Students enjoyed teaching their peers; it built up their self-confidence and relationships and allowed them to feel successful in a leadership role.

Apply for a 2018-19 ASD Nest Staff Grant at: http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/asdnest/kickoff2018
My Place in the Group, My Place in the World
Stephanie Cohen & Shayna Leshem
PS 121

THE NEED: To improve students’ difficulties in collaborating together and tackle deficits in executive functioning.

THE PLAN: Planned a fundraiser by working together to coordinate roles and raise social consciousness. Broke down a large project while addressing time management and problem solving.

THE RESULTS: Organized a fundraiser for the Puerto Rican Hurricane Relief Fund and raised over $350. Students supported each other and demonstrated perspective taking and flexibility throughout.

Stand Up and Move for Your Best Work!
Janine Teabo & Yamaris Cruz
PS 76

THE NEED: The option for flexible seating was not always available in cluster subjects.

THE PLAN: Provided flexible seating options for our cluster classrooms. Ensured that seating options were adjustable and could be used with all ages.

THE RESULTS: Cluster teachers loved it! Productivity was much higher especially in Art & Science. The incline of the standing desks provided a more comfortable position that encouraged better pencil grip.

Science of Cooking
Shana Fratti & Jessica Price
PS 165

THE NEED: Students needed the opportunity and independence to make something themselves and see peers try it - especially those with sensory likes & dislikes.

THE PLAN: Improved social language skills and increased repertoire.

THE RESULTS: Picky eaters developed higher tolerance. Increased participation/commenting/expressive language.