

Overview

Capacity and Curriculum Building for High Schools

450 Telling My Story

This activity is an opportunity to learn about each individual participating in the training. Components of this exercise are essential to informing other parts of the training. It is also important for the trainers to share their own story as part of this exercise.

451 Sense and Sensibilities

Sensory differences are an important difference in how individuals with autism experience the world. In this component each trainee completes a sensory profile with his or her differences. Coping strategies are discussed and considered as an important element in self-disclosure and possible accommodations.

452 Social Skills for the Workplace

Video models will be drawn from *The Science of Making Friends: Helping Socially Challenged Teens and Young Adults* by Elizabeth A. Laugeson, Ph.D. This is an evidence-based approach from the UCLA Peers Program. Key Social Skills include: trading information, appropriate eye contact, personal space boundaries, appropriate volume, taking turns in conversation, and starting and entering conversations. Besides the video models, role plays in small groups, video clips from YouTube will add some humor, and handouts of do's and don'ts will be distributed to trainees.

453 Stress Busters

Individuals with autism frequently have difficulty regulating emotion. This module will cover brief, effective practices which are tools to manage stress. These skills will be expanded and practiced each day of the training. These tools are covered briefly in the power point file entitled, Stress Busters.

454 The Hidden Curriculum

Defined as “the rules everyone knows but nobody talks about” by Dr. Brenda Smith-Myles and colleagues, these unwritten or unspoken rules of society can be particularly challenging for individuals on the autism spectrum to perceive, decode, and transmit. Instruction, demonstration, videos from YouTube, and roleplaying shall be used to teach this vital part of interaction.

455 Self-Advocacy and Disclosure

The initial part of this process includes developing a firm foundation of self-awareness pertaining to individual strengths and challenges that can be related to the workplace. Building upon this foundation of self-awareness, participants will learn to implement a three-step procedure promoting successful self-advocacy; recognizing challenges to doing their job effectively, developing and implementing an advocacy plan in a way others can understand and provide support, and finally, disclosing the reason they are asking for a modification or increased understanding.

This module includes a presentation on how to make a 4 step plan for self-disclosure in the workplace. This includes the information for full or partial disclosure to potential employers and managers.

456 Do's and Don'ts of Social Media

Employees' use of social media can be one of the most treacherous components of workplace interactions. Quite often, a person on the autism spectrum is not aware of the social implications of posting online, especially in a circumstance where the online “friends” are the same people they are working with on a daily basis. This module will provide suggestions and guideline for social media use, and help individuals manage their online and real world interactions.

457 Staying Focused

There is evidence that nearly 30% of individuals with autism also show signs of ADHD: this rate that is three times higher than in the general population. Another 20% of individuals diagnosed with ASD have at least some of the symptoms. In adults with ASD the symptoms include:

- Difficulty getting organized
- Extremely distractible
- Poor listening skills
- Restlessness and trouble relaxing
- Lateness
- Angry outbursts
- Problems prioritizing

In this module, each trainee will complete an informal ADHD rating scale. Coping strategies to deal with specific challenges will be presented and discussed.

458 Emotional Regulation

A common stereotype is that people with autism are emotionless and lack empathy. In reality, people with autism have very strong emotions and often struggle with emotional regulation. Short video clips will be utilized to illustrate core emotions. The “5 point scale”, developed by Kari Dunn Buron and Mitzi Curtis, will be utilized by the trainers to help the trainees understand and control their emotional responses to various social situations.

Bibliography

- Barkley, R. (2010). *Taking Charge of Adult ADHD*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Dunn Buron, K., Thierfeld Brown, J., Curtis, M., & King, L. (2012). *Social Behavior and Self-Management: 5-Point Scales for Adolescents and Adults*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.
- Greene, R. W. (2010). *The explosive child: A new approach for understanding and parenting easily frustrated, chronically inflexible children*. New York: Harper.
- Laugeson, E. (2013). *The Science of Making Friends, (w/DVD): Helping Socially Challenged Teens and Young Adults*. New York: Jossey-Bass.
- McHenry, I. & Moog, C. (2014). *The autism playbook for teens: Imagination-based activities to calm yourself, build independence, and connect with others*. Oakland: New Harbinger.
- Naseef, R. (2013). *Autism in the Family: Caring and Coping Together*. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing.
- Smith-Myles, B., Cook, K., Miller, N., Rinner, L., & Robbins, L. (2000). *Asperger Syndrome and Sensory Issues: Practical Solutions for Making Sense of the World*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.
- Smith-Myles, B., Endow, J. & Mayfield, M. (2012). *The Hidden Curriculum of Getting and Keeping a Job: Navigating the Social Landscape of Employment: A Guide for Individuals With Autism Spectrum and Other Social-Cognitive Challenges*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.
- Robison, J. E. (2007). *Look me in the eye: My life with asperger's*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- Shore, S. (2004). *Ask and tell: Self-advocacy and disclosure for people on the autism spectrum*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.