

BUILD EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AND SOCIAL TOGETHERNESS



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AbleNet University Webinar
February 11, 2021

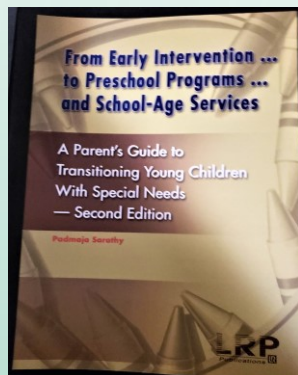
Session Focus and Objectives

- In this session, we will explore how to build students' emotional regulation and social competence to facilitate social connections.
 - The target population: students with autism and significant and complex learning needs in early childhood and elementary settings.
- Gain skills in:
 - Creating a supportive environment and activities to enable student's growth in emotional literacy, self-regulation, problem-solving to facilitate social togetherness.
 - Design activities to facilitate students to connect with each other:
 - Using a variety of enriching literacy activities
 - Practicing math concepts using group games
 - Working and playing cooperatively with peers in small groups

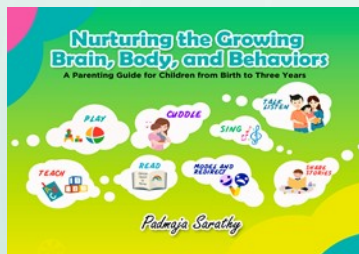
Participant Poll

Are you serving as...

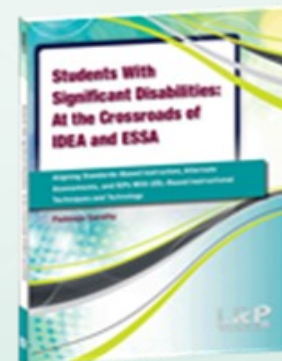
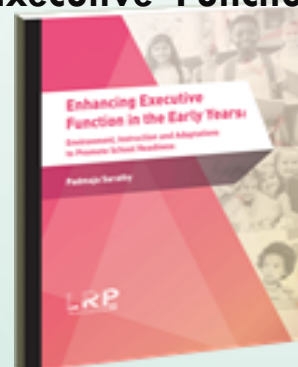
- ☐ **General education teacher?**
- ☐ **Special education teacher?**
- ☐ **Early Childhood teacher?**
- ☐ **Administrator?**
- ☐ **Speech pathologist?**
- ☐ **Other support staff?**
- ☐ **Parent**



Early Childhood Transition Guide



Executive Function

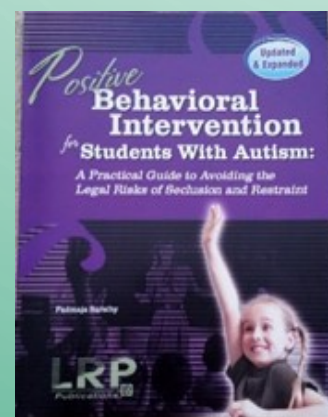


Severe & Multiple Disabilities



Padmaja's Sarathy' Books and Publications

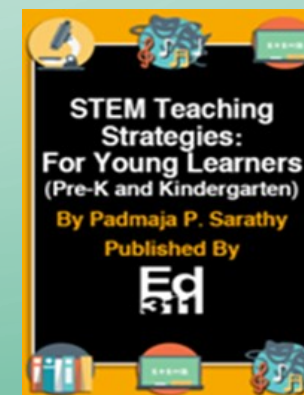
- ❑ **Autism: Support Strategies & Interventions, Autism Seven Steps of Support; Music CD – Transitions**
- ❑ **Behavior Guide (Preventive and Positive Approaches) and Mindfulness Guide**
- ❑ **Early Childhood: Transition; Parenting Guide; Executive Function - Early Years; and STEM Teaching Strategies**
- ❑ **Paraeducator Training Guide and DVD**
- ❑ **Severe and Multiple Disabilities; Significant Disabilities and ESSA**



Autism Spectrum Disorders



Behavior Guide



Mindfulness Guide



Participant Poll

What skills do your students need to gain to be successful with social interactions and connectedness?

- A. Initiate, reciprocate, and engage in back-and-forth conversations?**
- B. Exercise self-regulation and impulse control?**
- C. Understand nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interactions?**
- D. Use problem-solving skills to get along with peers?**
- E. Be cooperative when engaging in group activities during play/work?**

Social-emotional Competence and Social Connectedness

- **What are some of the problems that students with autism and/or with significant disabilities typically experience in connecting with others?**
 - Having limited speech or communication
 - Understanding nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction
 - Initiating, reciprocating and engaging in back-and-forth conversations
 - Developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships
 - Exhibiting tantrums and other inappropriate behaviors
 - Exercising impulse control
 - Using problem-solving skills to get along with peers
 - Engaging in group activities and in cooperative play/work

Social Connectedness

- **Strengthen social emotional literacy**
 - **Build emotional vocabulary and competence.**
 - **Teach calming techniques**



Super Talker: To promote group participation and response

All-Turn-It-Spinner



To promote social skills

- **Facilitate friendship formation and social connectedness.**
 - **Use intentional teaching to help children to connect and interact with others.**
- **Play Games**
 - **Pursue literacy-focused activities.**
 - **Incorporate math group games and other fun group activities.**

Build Emotional Competence, Impulse Control and Problem-solving

Activities to promote Social-Emotional Literacy

Developing problem-solving and self-regulation skills

Teach and Practice Turtle Technique

Learn to Express Emotions Safely

Teaching and practicing 'Calming Techniques'

Learn to Label Emotions

Musical Games

Role-play and Drama

Play Literacy and Math Games

Sharing/Turn Taking Activities

Happy



Situation

Sad



Situation

Angry



Situation

Scared






Situation

Build Social-emotional Competence - Emotional Literacy Playing Games

- Make up a 'feelings bingo' game to build emotional vocabulary. Provide picture supports as needed.

Challenge words could be: embarrassed, lonely, disappointed, etc.

Happy 	sad 	surprised	angry
Scared 	proud	excited	frustrated

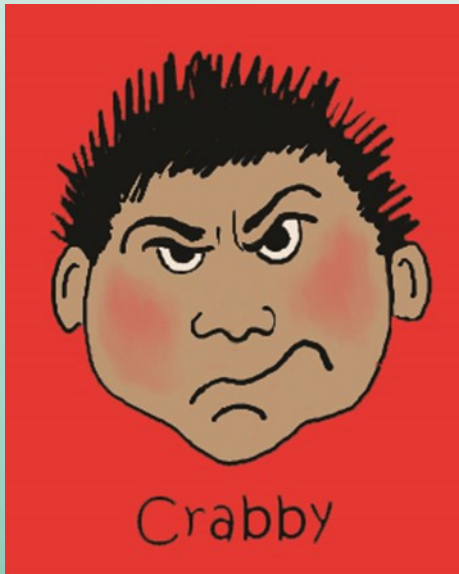
Connect with the story of:

When Sophie Gets Really, Really Angry

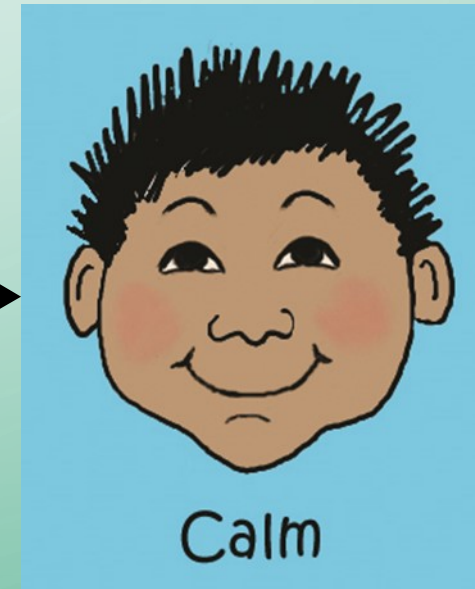
by Molly Bang

- Play the 'charades' game with children taking turns roleplaying emotions and their peers make a guess.
 - Use the book (*On Monday When it Rained* by Kachenmeister) to teach emotions.

PLAY THE MIRROR GAME



Mirror, Mirror in my hand,
Tell me, tell me the feeling I show.
Is it angry? Is it sad?
Is it happy? Is it scared?



Teach emotion words playing the mirror game.
Children sit in a Circle. Have children make feeling
faces using a hand-held mirror, taking turns. They pass
the mirror to the next child.

Teach Calming Strategies to Strengthen Self-Regulation and Impulse Control



- **Mindful Meditation Practices**

- **Breathing Exercises (Alternate Nostril Breathing)**
- **Yoga (Super Brain Yoga)**



- **Visual Imagery**

- **Positive Reflections**

Thinking
of others



- **Chocolate and Bricks Activity** (From **3-Minute Motivators** by Kathy Paterson - New Edition, 2014) To release frustrations and appreciate something good.

Opportunities to Promote Social Togetherness

Set up peer support: A natural support available in the classroom.

- Structure the environment & activities to encourage interactions and foster friendships.
- Engage ongoing communication between students with significant needs and their peers providing support.
- When a student is asking for help, redirect the student to see if she can request a peer for help.
- Have the target student complete part of the task and a peer assists to finish it. Make it almost like a game. (e.g., putting away items, blocks, etc.).
- Identify in advance the types of supports peers can provide in different settings.

Teacher and Paraeducator Role Facilitating Social-Togetherness

- **The teacher and the paraeducator work cooperatively to:**
 - Facilitate opportunities for the student to interact with the other students in the classroom.
 - Teach students how to get the attention of a peer/adult and to sustain their attention. Provide additional assistance as needed to ensure that peer social interactions are successful.
 - Teach students how to “read” and react to social situations.
 - Encourage student communication by limiting the amount of adult talk and drawing out student to talk.
 - Paraeducator minimizes proximity and maximizes invisible and discreet support to students.
 - Create situations to promote student-to-student interaction and communication to occur.

Participant Poll

Do you routinely?

- 1. Play literacy and math games?**
- 2. Teach feelings words to build emotional competence?**
- 3. Facilitate peers as supports?**
- 4. Use calming techniques?**
- 5. Engage students in group role-play activities?**
- 6. Embed problem-solving questions into literacy activities?**

Bean Bag Toss

Group games

Charades



- Provides opportunities to develop and practice appropriate social interactions with peers.
- Reinforces academic concepts.
- Teaches teamwork, taking turns and following rules.
- Strengthens executive function: Working Memory, Cognitive Flexibility and Impulse control.
- Helps to promote verbal and nonverbal communication with peers.
- Games are highly motivating. Reduces anxiety and stress levels. Study shows a positive relationship between physical activities and self-regulation (piche et al, 2015)

♪ Musical Chairs ♪

Guessing Games

Literacy Game

- Play the 'toppings' game: pizza topping/sandwich topping/ice cream topping.



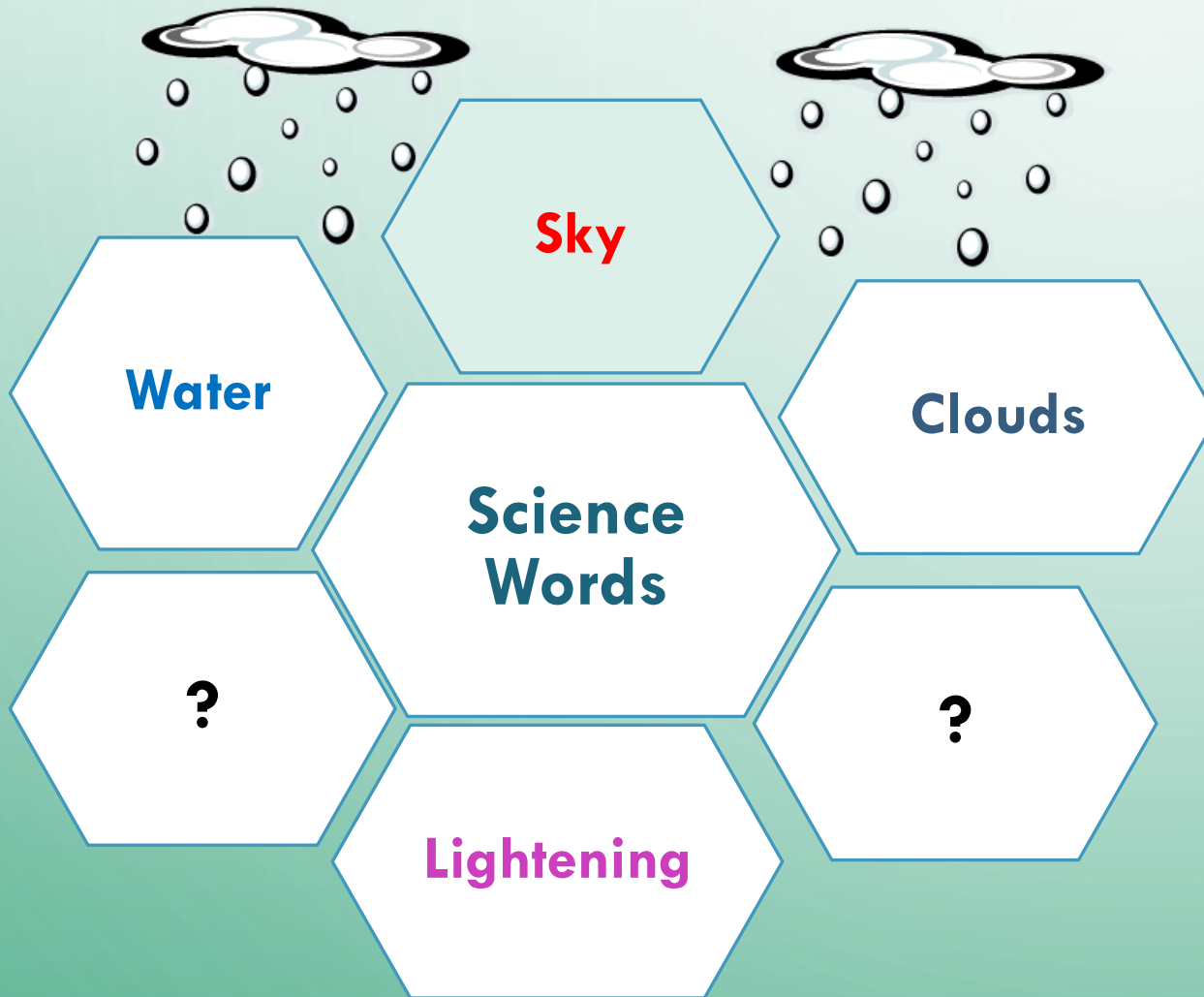
- Students identify with the aid of pictures supports or real items what topping they would like to have on a pizza or sandwich or ice cream.
 - Have students call out the names of the different toppings taking turns. Also, see if they can recall what his/her peer chose before his/her turn.

Builds Attention Skills, Vocabulary, Learning to Take Turns and Getting Along with peers.

- Provide picture supports and prerecorded words/phrases be in an at sequential communication device.
- You can also modify the game where the student selects the picture response given 2-3 choices.



Group Brainstorming - STEM Vocabulary



Working Together
Rain makes you think of...
Aided with picture supports and AT

Ocean
Thunder

- SCIENCE WORDS
- TECHNOLOGY WORDS
- ENGINEERING WORDS
- MATHEMATICS WORDS

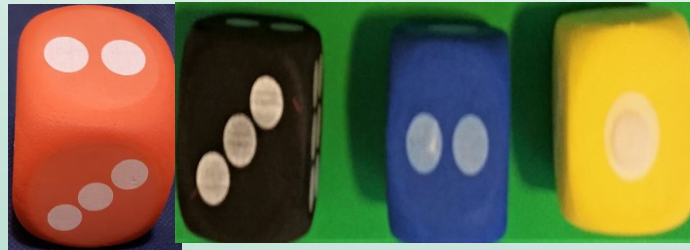
design

Internet

computer

Playing Math Games

- **One group competes with another team for highest total points.**
 - **Throw the dice, take turns and add the numbers together as a group.**



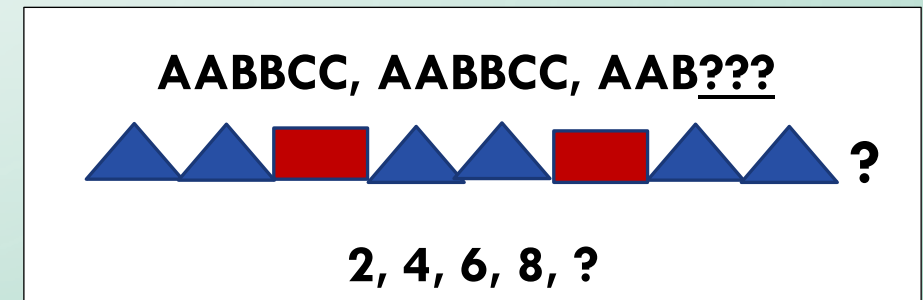
Use dice to count, add, subtract, multiply and divide.

- **Beanbag toss: Student throws/drops a specific number of beanbags into the basket/box corresponding to the number on the card shown by a peer.**
 - **Alternatively, they can toss beanbags to one another.**

Facilitate Teaming Together - Math

- **Teaming together to make patterns will help facilitate social interaction and cooperation.**

(preschool and early elementary)



- **Teaming together to set up and run a mock store (for older students)**



Playing Games Aided with AT Support

- **Play group games aided with All-Turn-It-Spinner:**
 - Match emotions pictures on the spinner with the student's word.
 - Connect emotion words related to a story with corresponding pictures.
 - Match numbers with corresponding quantity.
 - Throw dice, add the numbers together and match it to the spinner.



Example: Play a simple matching game as a group:

Each student takes a turn spinning the All-Turn-It-Spinner.

Match pictures/words/numbers on the spinner with student's word/number.

If there is a match, the student gets a point.

The one with most point wins.

Friendship Formation and Social Interaction Strategies

- How can you facilitate on-going social connection and interactions for the following students?
- *Alan is a preschool student with autism and plays alone during Center activities. How do you facilitate his playing with and connecting with his peers?*
- *Selena uses eye gaze does not use verbal communication. She loves the company of her peers and smiles. How do we promote her social interaction with others?*
- *Ahmad uses a wheelchair and is not able to join his peers to play when they are in the playground? How do we engage him with his peers during the recess time?*
- *Edward is diagnosed with autism, is verbal but does not initiate communication with his peers. He usually has his paraeducator sitting next to him during lunch. How do we facilitate his social connection with his peers?*

Use Video Modeling to Teach Social Skills

- Use video modeling to teach targeted communication, social, and play skills to learners with significant needs (ASD, severe and multiple disabilities, etc.).
 - ❑ Video modeling, an evidence-based practice, is highly motivating.
- **Plan the video:.** (Identify the target skill the student needs to learn, e.g., how to initiate communication, invite a friend to play)
- **Make the video:** (The team decides on the type of modeling – who will perform the target skills)
- **Show the video:** (How you implement the video modeling intervention to the target student, the prompting that may be required)
- **Monitor progress:** (Monitoring progress to see if intervention is working)

For more details, go to: https://autisminternetmodules.org/mod_view.php?nav_id=1408.

The pandemic has presented challenges to maintaining and supporting social togetherness.

- What can you do during online sessions to facilitate togetherness and connectiveness?
 - Roleplay emotions and story characters
 - Play games together as a group
 - Demonstrate mindfulness practices and breathing exercises
 - Build group story-telling aided with picture supports and AT.
 - Connect and coordinate with families to see how to promote friendships for target child.
Recommend sibling support and other options.
- Take positive action steps when you return to in-person classes.



T H A N K S.

**A special thanks to AbleNet University
for hosting the webinar**

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Upcoming Webinars:

**Proactive Interventions and Supports
for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Webinar: On APRIL8, 2021