

- Hello everyone.

Welcome to this session on Transform Transition Meltdown to Calm Down: Seven Support Strategies for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

This is the third webinar in this series, and again, welcome to you all.

I look forward to presenting the session.

So in the first two webinars of the series, we looked at, how do we make sure we fully understand the factors that contribute to the transition related problem behaviors in children, and what causes that kind of tantrums, and meltdowns, and problem behaviors, and then we looked at how we can use preventive strategies, flexible approaches when we respond to the behaviors, and then we looked at several student specific and context specific supports that we can provide in terms of environmental supports, structural supports, and also we delved into what kind of instructional support will help reduce the challenges or the triggers to the challenging behaviors.

Today, in this final third webinar of this series, I'm gonna be touching a little bit on the instructional element, and I'm also going to go look into the what kind of social supports, executive function, self-regulation, crisis support can we provide these students with autism spectrum disorder so that we decrease those tantrum triggers?

It is not one simple thing that we have to do.

It is a diverse array of supports that we have to provide in order to reduce the problem behaviors and enable each child to increase his or her skill building opportunity, and one of the most important thing is to enable these children to cultivate their self-regulation, and their cognitive flexibility, which is really a part of executive function so that they achieve longer term outcomes, and we will also be looking at one of the most important things that is how do we look at this whole problem of tantrum triggers, and responding to those triggers, and build skill building opportunities into the routine and for these children to have longer term outcomes? We will look at it from a team approach.

How can the team come together collaboratively, including the family to help the child, especially during severe meltdowns?

Now let's see who has joined us for this webinar.

Are you serving as a special education teacher, administrator, a speech pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, or behavior therapist, because all of you together shape the environment, shape the learning opportunities, and provide those supports to reduce tantrum behaviors.

Looking at it, I see that there are a number of occupational therapists, the largest group seems to be, and that's wonderful.

I was going to emphasize the critical role they play in providing the supports for children with autism.

Okay, let me share the results.

Yes, the first group, the largest group is occupational therapists, and the next seems to be speech pathologists.

Welcome each and every one of you, all of you together collaboratively contribute to shaping the appropriate behaviors, and the knowledge, and the skill building opportunities for these students.

And just a little bit about myself, as you would've seen, my name is Padmaja Sarathy.

I am an author of a number of books, and several of them include segments, or deal exclusively with children with autism, like this one, "Positive Behavior Intervention for Students with Autism".

A second edition of the book came out in last year, and then I have a behavior guide, then I have a paraeducator guide, I have an autism mini guide, that's this one, and then books on severe and multiple disabilities, executive function, a variety of books.

I also serve as a consultant, and run a nonprofit organization as well.

Just a brief look into what we have already talked about in the first couple of webinars just to remind ourselves.

One of the first basic things in order to prevent tantrums and meltdowns in children with autism spectrum disorders is we have to examine what precipitates those tantrums, so we have to understand what triggers those tantrums, and I'm sure every one of you is familiar with the fact that changes in routines, activities, materials, environment, personnel, all of these things when you have a new substitute teacher in the classroom, and if the child or the student is not adequately prepared beforehand, that can cause tantrum, severe tantrum, because it introduces kind of unpredictability.

It introduces ambiguity, so that causes a certain anxiety.

When there is a kind of a break between one activity ending, another activity begins, that can cause problem, and of course all of us are familiar with the fact that transitions from one environment to another can be quite challenging for children with autism.

They have a need for sameness.

They have difficulty with being flexible, that's not one of their characteristics, behavioral flexibility, so that may cause them to engage in aggressive or opposition behaviors, because they get stressed and anxious because of the need for sameness, and so that may shift into a kind of a tantrum and a meltdown.

As I mentioned, new personnel, new situation, new setting.

If you take the child or even a high school level, if you take the student on a community-based trip, that, even though the student may have gone previously, and may have found things that attract him or attract her, but each time you go may look a very different situation for that student, and asked to stop an activity, and move to another activity.

Quite often, as a consultant, I have observed all of these things in various classrooms, and I find you have to prepare in advance to address many of these things.

And one of the things I am going to be talking about very briefly, that executive function alone, being able to attend, being able to think flexibly, demonstrate impulse control and self-regulation, which are all the elements of executive function, children with autism struggle with it, and we have to focus on building executive function growth.

So these are all the things, some of it we addressed before, and some of it we will be addressing today.

So when you think, again, you would've seen this in the last webinar, the seven steps for ASD support.

We looked at environmental support, that is the advanced preparation and alerts.

How do we reduce the stress and anxiety?

We looked at structural and visual support.

How do we consistently use that, and how do we make sure pictures or objects, whatever we use for that schedule is used consistently in all settings?

And then instructional support, how do we make sure that that instruction, the tools, the techniques, everything that we use, we follow the universal design for learning principles, and we make sure there is flexibility in that task and adapt to the needs of the student?

Today we will touch on that a little bit on the instructional support, but other elements of that, and emotional and social competence.

How do we strengthen the social emotional competence?

How do we provide calming support?

How do we teach the student self-management to enable the student to calm down herself himself, so that it is a lifelong tool that they carry with them?

And then as I mentioned, the executive function support, impulse control, and cognitive flexibility, which includes the behavioral flexibility.

And then finally, how do we team together, as a collaborative group in providing crisis support?

I hope we can avoid reaching that stage, and we can prevent, but if it should happen, what can we do to prevent such occurrences in the future?

So I'm going to begin with a couple of examples of instructional support, where it can fail, and what we should avoid.

This is based on a couple of classrooms that I mean, I have observed several classrooms that has kind of had somewhat similar type of situation.

There was absence of structure, absence of instruction, and lack of active student engagement.

That led to a lot of problems when one of the classrooms, they called it the brain break.

It's almost every day they have about 30 minutes, 40 minutes of brain break, and this was six students in the classroom.

They had significant disabilities and several students, about four of them had autism spectrum disorder, and the teacher informed that they were on a brain break, but what was happening during the so-called brain break was one student, I mean the teacher was busy doing something else, and the students, kind of one student was in an enclosure.

The paraeducator was monitoring, because of his aggressive behavior.

A couple of students were playing with toys individually, another lying on the mat rolling around, and one student was wandering around.

There was no instructional delivery, and this went on for more than 25 minutes, and then they had to go for lunch, and these kind of brain breaks is just not suited to students with autism spectrum disorder, and then in another high school classroom, which was a self-contained classroom, just like the previous one, they were identified as students with significant disabilities.

Half of the day on a Friday they call it Fun Friday.

They watch movies and they're kind of on their own.

There was no structured instructional activity, and it was quite a chaos from my perspective, what I observed.

One student was throwing a ball, another one was moving around the classroom.

Some students had nothing to do, they were kind of aimlessly wandering, and unless you have structured activities, they need structure throughout the day, what you see is just chaos, and it actually aggravates the problem behavior.

I am sure those of you who are teachers, who have joined will not be doing any of these kind of brain breaks or Fun Fridays, but the therapists who are joining can help make sure that they don't have these kind of free time, so-called free time when students don't know what to do.

Students with autism do require structure and guidance, so we need high expectation structure, predictability, and consistency in following instructional routine.

Pursue structured teaching, individual folder activities at this time, or play a group game, or a group art activity, or a group music session, and this is a great time to practice things using a game format which will create the fun element or the break, so-called brain break, but use play vocabulary games that are fun or math games that are fun and that could be for 15, 20 minutes, and instead of having half a day set aside as Fun Friday, so what happens is students get confused, and there are uncertainties, and how and when things happen, and that doesn't work well with students with autism.

Now I'm moving on to another extremely important element of that instructional support, and that is the role the paraeducator plays.

I call it a delicate dance because that support, the para-educator support, must be very careful choreographed, because they spend a lot of time in close proximity to students they support, so they can play an important role in preventing the tantrum and advance the student's behavior, and all the students outcomes.

What are they doing?

They're reteaching the skills.

For that, they need to make sure they're consistently using all the adaptations, the task adjustments every time they are reteaching those skills, and if visuals are used, they have to make sure the visuals and the visual schedule is consistently used in all the setting.

This is where the paraeducators play a critical role.

They have to make sure effective use of prompts and cues, and I cannot overemphasize that because what happens is frequently, based on my observation, there is overuse of intensive prompts.

You know what I'm talking about is handover prompt or completely verbally prompting.

Let me share an example.

What happens is you show a vocabulary card to the student, and the student is not able to recognize the word or read the word, so the paraeducator states the word, and the student repeats what the para-educator says, and the para-educator says, "Good job.

" It was completely a prompted response.

So the child, the student thinks, "Okay, if I've got good job as a recognition for a prompted response, maybe that's the way I have to respond.

" So it is important that the paraeducators get lot of guidance and training on how to use the prompts appropriately so that the student is not becoming prompt dependent and the variety of prompts from too intensive, to just giving verbal cues, to understand the diversity of prompts, and how to promote the students independent thinking and action, and that is the other thing that I have often observed is sometimes paraeducators hold the students hand

while they're walking to the gym, or to the lunchroom, and this happens even at the middle school and the high school level.

That is too intrusive.

We want the student to have self dependence.

Also the way other people look at the student.

the perception changes when you see a para-educator holding and walking the student from one setting to another, so these are all important things that the paraeducator need to be guided in.

And just like everyone else, the para-educators should have very high expectation and make sure those expectations are met, pursue them intensively.

One critical role that paraeducators can play is they can do that close supervision and monitoring, what I call zone monitoring.

Then they can kind of come to the student and say, "Looks like you need a little break.

How about taking a little break, go, and calm down.

" I mean when you see fidgety behaviors, that may be a time they can through visuals or with silent cues, or silent actions, they can guide the student through this close monitoring.

So these are all important ways the paraeducators can actually enhance the skills.

Sorry.

The other important thing in terms of instructional support is to identify the behavior that the student is exhibiting.

Even if it is approximation of an appropriate behavior, be sure to recognize, be specific in your recognition, in your feedback.

Instead of just saying, "Good job", which is kind of a very global term, "Oh, you have really learned how to hang your backpack," or, "You've really learned how to walk back to the classroom from recess.

Oh you have worked so hard on this writing.

I can see you're been putting in a lot of effort.

" When you say things like that, you are getting the student to repeat that behavior again and again because you are being specific, and you are being precise in identifying the behavior you want to see again, so use positive and encouraging statements to build your student self-concept, and to repeat that behavior that you saw.

It may be just an approximation of the behavior, but start saying, "Oh, I like the way you walked, or I like the way you played very nicely.

I like the way you handed over all those snacks.

That was very nice.

" When you identify them, you are bringing a lot of joy into the mind of the student, and it will encourage the student to repeat that behavior.

Now we are moving on to the social support.

We all know that students with autism spectrum disorders, they need help with group interaction and friendship skills because they have difficulty reading body language.

They may not know how to take turns, how to engage in a conversation, and later on I'll be sharing with you how you can use video modeling and social stories to encourage, to enable students to use appropriate language when communicating.

In other words, when to join a conversation, when to keep quiet in a conversation.

If somebody is sharing a story about either their dog is sick, or something they have lost or something, a sad incident, and if my student with autism starts talking about, oh, the new toy that he got, which has nothing, no connection, they need to learn how do you make a comment?

How do you show your empathy?

How do you take a turn during that conversation to continue the conversation?

So they do need guidance, teaching step by step how to engage appropriately in group interaction and also, as part of this, they need to have emotional competence.

I'm gonna be looking at all that in the next slides.

So how do we promote group interaction and appropriate social skills?

We have to teach them step by step.

This is not something that's going to come naturally to them.

How do you sustain the attention of a peer or an adult?

Provide specific cues, practice with a script, role play.

Role play a typical situation in multiple settings and then of course as I said, provide positive feedback when they are engaging in this kind of appropriate behavior.

What are some tools and techniques you can use.

Many of you would've heard about, I'm sure every one of you may be heard about Carol Gray's social stories, that's one element.

You can also find what are called social narratives.

These are visually represented stories, very similar to the social story.

You will find them at the autism internet modules.

I have included that in the resources section, and you will find examples and much more information how to use social narratives, visually represented stories, to guide students with autism in social communication and group interaction.

The other important thing that you can use, video modeling.

It is an evidence based practice.

What you do is you capture clips of specific behavior, or a sequence of behavior, and that model the target behavior, and then either the student is engaged in that appropriate behavior or a peer can do the video or adults.

The paraeducator, for example, can do the video, and that video is shown to the student, the target student with autism, and not just one time, and expect that the student will learn.

You have to show that multiple times, and remind the student how to think about that and pursue that kind of action and behavior.

The other things is to use role play and drama, and I'm always very fond of role play and drama and action, and I don't see that much in the classroom, but it can be fun.

For example, instead of brain break you can have a role play and drama of different situation and the different emotions associated with it, and that way you are enabling, empowering, and enhancing the emotional competence of your students.

And a couple of examples of behaviors, and what student specific support you can provide.

For example, Amina reaches across and touches other children and occasionally scratches them, and other children get scared.

Sophia another student, a younger student, she grabs toys and blocks from her peers seated next to her, and when the paraeducator tries to stop her, she tries to pinch or bite the adult.

So what she needs, she needs to learn how to use fidget toys, and this is where your occupational therapist, those of you who have joined, can provide the guidance to teachers in terms of how to use fidget toys to gain the sensory input that the child may be seeking.

Watch the student, remind the student also with a picture, with a visual of hands to self, and then redirect the student to the fidget toys, and this is not going to happen just with one or two demonstration.

It will take time, but it has to be pursued, and when you have achieved the student remembering hands to self and reaching for the fidget toy, that means the student has gained competence in that particular thing at least.

So instead of reaching out and scratching others, she's reaching out and using the fidget toy.

The other thing that will help is teaching personal space.

Both the children, Amina and Sophia, you have to teach them how to maintain personal space, and what do you do for that?

Two feet space all the way in front, and all the way around.

This will require again several practice session where they have both hands, right and arms and hands in front of them and you show them all around two feet of space between her and the adult or any other child they're working with or playing with, so they practice this again and again, and another thing that you can do also is to draw a boundary around the desk, especially in the case of an older student, you can definitely, if they're sitting at a desk and not in a kind of a circular table or rectangular table, their independent, individual desk, you can have that masking tape showing their spot, and they have to stay within that space, and take a photograph of that both with your arms outstretched in front, and also the desk space.

Model it with gestures and train the children to use personal space, those who reach across and hurt others, and of course they can also pair it with some social stories, which is what I'm coming to strengthen the emotional competence, teaching about feelings, teaching about the feelings of others, and I have here for example, a social story that's about being with friends and how to be kind to the friends, how to be nice to the friends, how we can hurt their feelings in very simple language, in very simple sentences, using either the social narrative model or the social story model, and go over that social story again and again.

And if, for example, I'm sure several of you are familiar with it, one example I say, "When I swing around with my arms out, my arms hit my friends.

That hurts my friend.

" Let me share another.

"I get upset and hit my friends.

That hurts my friends.

" So those are kind of examples that you can put in your scripted story.

Make it simple, make it brief, make it personal to that student, and then pursue that several times for the student to gain that self-control, and also pair it with a video modeling to strengthen friendship skills.

The other thing is the calming support and self-management tools.

What we want is for our students to have lifelong tools that they can use throughout, for that they need self-management, so create a toolkit with calming and self-monitoring tools.

This is where working together as a team, and especially your occupational therapist would be most helpful in assembling this kit with various tools.

Teaching mindfulness-based breathing practices so that they know how to calm down when they feel anxious or agitated, so that it'll reduce their anger and aggression.

The other thing associated with that is the mindful movement, which I call it mindful movement.

It's really yoga and there are several school districts that are pursuing it; however, you have to make sure the parents are aware because some parents may object to that, but it does help relax, reduces stress and anxiety, and helps to calm down, and a lot of evidence is emerging to support that.

The other thing is musical intervention.

You can have music woven into your routine throughout the day.

It actually brings some predictability, and later on I'll have a slide where I'm going to share with you the research supporting using music as an intervention, and one of the other thing is using a kind of a set of calming cards.

I call it color coded calming cards, and like for example, the student is feeling agitated, so call it crabby, and then the student goes into the calming space, and is becoming more cautious, and then gradually he's in the green, and so he's coping and then finally calm down, and then returns back to the work he or she left.

So you can use and the student can be taught to use, to go through these stages while they're in the calming space or safe space.

The other thing, that's a very well known technique in teaching young children, the Turtle Technique, to control anger and frustration.

This Turtle Technique, it's called "Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think".

There are kind of four stages.

In other words, recognize that there is a problem, and then calming down, taking breaths, and then staying there in that thinking, calming, it is the turtle is pulling his or her head in, and staying there, and then coming out when feeling calm.

If you go to the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovation, National Center Pyramid Model Innovation, you will find "Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think.

", and you can just put that, and you will find on the Google in your online search, you will find it, and there are beautiful pictures and a social story, social skills story, I should say, also available.

So coaching self-regulation as I said, how to calm down, how do we develop self-regulation? Make sure there is a space, practice it daily, build it into your routine, reduce the stress and anxiety of the student, enable the student to gain calmness so that the student has attention control, and is able to pay attention, and gradually you are strengthening the student's self management, and also inform the parents so that they can practice all these things at home, because quite often what I have heard is when they come back on a Monday after the weekend, their behavior is much worse than when they maybe left on Friday is one of the concerns I have heard from many schools.

So it is helpful to guide families also to use some of these calming techniques and self-regulation techniques, and for all of us, all of these techniques, personally I have found mindfulness helps me a lot, and I do the meditation and the yoga every day.

As I mentioned, music has proven, when it is consistently used, is helping children with autism, and it has multiple benefits.

It brings predictability, it lowers anxiety and frustration.

It increases their ability to focus attention, and engage, and play, and of course this one part of the research was done with younger children, but I think music has a benefit, and definitely in the early childhood and the elementary classroom, it is easier to weave a little bit a few minutes of music into the schedule, and you heard a little piece from this musical transition CD that music therapist and I put together several years ago and I just want to share just a few seconds of it.

This is when they're transitioning from center time to center, what happens, what are some thing, and you can even make up your own song as I mentioned last time.

♪ Circle time is over ♪ ♪ Now it's time for centers ♪ ♪ Show me which center that you choose.  
♪ ♪ Choose your center ♪ ♪ Choose your center ♪ ♪ Show me which center that you choose ♪

- So you can make up your own song just like that based on a song, a tune that you're familiar with to just, especially with younger children in the early childhood classroom, in kindergarten and first grade, it would be easier to do that, and that's when sometimes you see a lot of the behavior issues, and if those behavior issues are overcome in those earlier years, you will find that it is a lot easier for those children to adjust to later in the school as they move up.

And as I said, one of the important things that children with autism need is the cultivating growth in executive function.

And executive function, it has been more recently recognized as an important element for all children to have in order to be successful in school, in order to be able to learn, in order to have self-control, and it has lifelong impact.

I'm delighted to share with you that I received just a little personal one, personal thing.

I received a email this morning, and I have a book on executive function, and I had done a presentation for region 18, one of the big regional service centers in Texas, and I heard that my four hour video that I did 18 months ago was rated the highest in the all of the things that they were shared, and they were asking me if they could share the video with everybody in their conference.

So I have found executive function to be very critical, and of course I cannot share the four hour presentation here, but I just thought it is important to recognize the importance of executive function.

What are the various elements involved?

How do we train our children with autism spectrum disorder in some of these things?

First, we need to make sure we strengthen their social emotional competence.

What is that?

To be able to identify their feelings, to be able to get in touch with their feelings, to be able to express their feelings safely, and then it goes along with that is the impulse control, and for that we have to make sure we use role play and problem solving.

The other things that I already mentioned about that helps with executive function is the calming techniques like yoga and breathing exercises and mindfulness based strategies.

One element of executive function is the self-regulation, and the inhibitory control, or impulse control.

Another element of executive function is what is called cognitive flexibility.

In other words thinking flexibly, and thinking about different perspectives, and one of the things that helps strengthen cognitive flexibility, one of the elements of executive function is playing games that require certain amount of reflection.

That requires waiting, that requires taking turns, and that requires reflecting, and then responding rather than responding impulsively, and this has to be taught deliberately to children with autism spectrum disorder.

The other thing of course is, as I already mentioned, engage them in musical activities to reduce their anxiety levels, and encourage every effort that they make, however small they may be, in exercising self-control.

So what are some things we can do to strengthen their emotional competence?

Could you have a vocabulary word wall, a feelings wall, and then face different situations?

This could be a combination of role play.

This could be a combination of action like that role play, and then have a vocabulary wall.

For that, you come up with different situations and emotions associated with that situation.

A great book, even though it is a simple picture book, this book called "On Monday When it Rained".

It is a beautiful book with lots and lots of beautiful photographs that very simple words.

We may think it is not appropriate at a higher grade level, but some of these photographs are so professional that the students can come up with different situations that talk about, for example, this one is embarrassed.

That's not necessarily an easy word, but the picture speaks a thousand words indeed.

So you can use that to build your student's feelings vocabulary.

You can use it to build social skills.

You can use it for making up your social narrative, combining the photographs, and combining the emotions, and then as I mentioned, you can use the color coded calming cards to teach self-regulation and self-monitoring, because ultimately your goal is self-management.

And then stories, drama, role play to teach self-control, problem solving, anger management and to calm down.

And one of the things, I mean these are all things that can be done when you have a few minutes, or at the end of the day, or in between two activities, and there is a little gap of time instead of having students wander around the classroom, you can play a little bit of charades game, you can use music, you can use movement, you can do one of the things that helps, for example with cognitive flexibility is doing the freeze dance or doing musical chairs, and make the musical chairs with a little twist, and maybe change the rules a little bit and you can use those to build cognitive flexibility and impulse control, two elements of executive function.

You can infuse physical activity as part of the daily routine even if they're standing up and doing two minutes of a yoga type of movement, that will help because what they have found, based on a study, these were several physical therapists who were involved, who looked at this, they found that physical activities help children to have better self-control.

Integrate yoga, as I said, there is evidence emerging on the benefits of incorporating yoga exercise as part of your daily routine, and one of the things that you may find interesting yourself is using super brain yoga, and then of course you have to teach calming down breathing exercises that will help increase their focus, but one thing I do want to emphasize some of these things, if we do it once in a while, that's not going to make a difference.

It has to become part of the routine, so that the students are totally familiar with it and know how to pursue it, and of course we also engage with the parents to see if they can continue it.

Okay, we have another poll.

Okay, what do you plan to initiate to reduce tantrum behaviors based on some of the things I have shared, or you've been able to reflect on what I have shared from the last two webinars, and you want to introduce something new, enhance something.

I notice all of them are getting a lot of your words, but one thing that you have pointed out in the next few slides, I will share with you how critical it is to provide advanced warning of changes to the routine.

I cannot overemphasize you will prevent great many tantrums and meltdowns if you prepare in advance.

Yes, teaching social behavioral skills is just as important.

Maintaining personal space, especially for those students who are reaching across.

You have to teach them through modeling, gesturing, and pairing it with visual.

Adjusting the task demands and role play.

We don't use role play that much, but that is something that needs to be used more, and I hope you have the opportunity to meet regularly to go over what is working, and what is not, and we will talk about it a little bit more.

So that's the result of the poll, and I'm moving on.

This is a student.

He's a six-year-old in kindergarten, and is physically aggressive towards others, so what are some things, he will hit, push, and pinch the children and grab the items from them, including grabbing sometimes the snacks.

So what are some things, from what we have looked at, we can do to help David?

To help him get in touch with his emotions, label them, and act on them with restraint and compulsion, and he has to learn what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior in social interaction.

That is where you will find the Turtle Technique will help.

You will find that the social narrative or the social skill story type will help, and he has to learn to move to the calming space to calm down, and he has to gradually learn to self-regulate his behavior through breathing and calming practices, so we have to make sure we follow all of these things, not just one thing in order to prevent that kind of physical aggression.

This is another situation where this eight-year-old with autism spectrum disorder gets terrified. He gets terrified during a fire or a tornado drill.

By the way, these are based on situations that I have observed in the classroom where they have become so agitated that, when the paraeducator is with them, she gets hurt because they get so scared that they're scratching her, or even sometimes biting her when they get under the table during a tornado drill.

So to be able to get outta the classroom during the fire, to get under the table during a tornado, what do you have to do?

Many of you pointed out the reason why it is important to have advanced preparation.

This is a situation where you have to have advanced preparation even though you might say, "How can you prepare for a fire or a tornado?" We have to prepare through exposure and teaching the child.

For example, in this case, prepare for a fire drill with photos and objects related to that.

Teach everyone using a video about the sequence of steps, but with Sanjay you may need special visual to show quiet mouth, lining up to go outside, waiting outside, and returning back to the classroom.

And in addition to that, you may have to show a video of the various sequence of steps involved, and he will need a lot more practice than any of the others who do not have autism spectrum disorder.

And then for example, if you have to leave the classroom to go because of the fire drill, point to the fire truck photo that may be put somewhere on your whiteboard, a blackboard, whatever you use, Smartboard, it should be hanging next to it.

It should be in a key ring.

You should be able to take that, point to that.

Bring Sanjay or the student's attention to that, and point to the pictures, point to the firetruck photo, talk about the siren, but have the set of visuals in a ring.

Hang it prominent location where he can see it, and bring it to his attention just as you hear the fire drill, so that it reminds him what the steps he has to take.

And this may require several attempts at practicing for it.

Finally, the crisis support.

If all else fail and there is a crisis, what do we do?

The first stage is rumble.

The next stage is rage, and then meltdown.

At the rumble stage you can prevent a crisis.

You can intervene before the meltdown occurs, but once you reach that rage stage, very little can be done, but after that rage stage, and there is a meltdown, you can help the student to come down, but this is what requires a collaborative action plan so that you work together to take notes on what happened, assuming there has been some documentation, and how you can work as a team to prevent such incidents in the future.

I know I am running out of time, but I will still share this with you so that you can see the slides, and you are going to get the slides anyway, the handouts.

So the first stage is the rumble stage.

At that stage, identify the triggers, monitor closely, see if you can use the cue cards to remind the student of appropriate behavior.

I think of it as the volcano rumbling.

And at the rage stage, the student will become totally out of control.

There's not much that you can do, but it is important to be reflective, not react strongly towards the student.

Provide the student some assurances.

Show empathy, minimize, of course, talking to the student and don't take it personally, but monitor for safety.

And then when the meltdown is over, it's usually followed by a recovery.

Provide reinsurance, provide some motivating activity.

And once the student has recovered, support the student with relaxation and calming techniques.

It's important that during this rage and meltdown stage you do not discuss the behavior, but much more later on when the student has calm down or another day, you work on helping the student to gain calming control.

And as I said, it is important to have team time so that the teacher and the paraeducator teacher and the physical therapist and the teacher and the speech therapist, and the administration work together to provide support to the student, and to address the tantrum behaviors with student specific application, and I cannot overemphasize the role of the occupational therapist in providing the tools like the flexible seating, therapy balls, sensory table, fidget tools, calming space, working with the teacher and the paraeducator, and the rest of the team.

They can help collaboratively to prevent the triggers, and to address calming behaviors and the executive function and all that, and also it is important to regularly work with the families, share the resources with families, and what kind of issues that they face when they go shopping, or when they go to any kind of group gathering, or if they go to any places where there are certain rules, that they have to follow.

What kind of situations, what kind of problems do parents encounter?

And if you can share some of those resources that would be helpful to the family as well, for example, families can have a mini photo album with visuals of different places they go to, and before they enter, let's say the grocery store, they remind the child about what are the things that's going to happen, what the student will do, what their child will do, what the parent will do, and showing it through pictures will help.

And what they have found is there is reduction in challenging behavior when there is collaboration between the teacher and the parent, and that paired intervention is very beneficial.

One of the things that I've added to this webinar, it's called a Proactive Intervention Checklist for a student with ASD.

This is something I have developed and it is part of my autism book, so this gives you a way to check if you have some of these support prevention proactive techniques in place to evaluate yourself, to make sure that you are reducing the triggers for tantrum behaviors and you are enabling the skill building opportunities.

That's what this checklist is.

I hope you find it helpful.

So let us work together to enhance the quality of life for children with autism spectrum disorders.

Let us personalize the supports.

Let us name their strengths, honor their preferences, celebrate their achievements, big or small.

So the visuals, preventive strategies, teaching new skills, and then reflecting and then responding to the challenging behaviors, and these are all the sources for which I'm using in this webinar.

All of these video guides and books provided some of the materials for this webinar, and I have added many other helpful resources that you can use in the next couple of slides, and that is the end of my presentation.

I thank profusely AbleNet University for hosting this webinar, and giving an opportunity for all of us to come together.

The next two webinars, one is in June, I'm gonna talk about a totally different topic.

This is Art Experiences Integrated with Academic and Functional Outcomes for Students with Significant Learning Needs.

And then in October on Bolstering Family Involvement with Tools and Techniques to Advance Learner Outcomes.

Again, thank you to each and every one of you for joining this webinar, and thank you to AbleNet University for hosting the webinar.

I will be happy to answer any questions.

I know I am past the one hour mark, but that's the way it happens usually.

Okay, what are some examples of structured activities for downtime?

First of all, one of the things, as I mentioned, even during the presentation, you can have a game, a vocabulary game.

It can be with, for younger children you are practicing letters.

For slightly older children, it could be rhyming words, and for students in middle school or high school, or it could be naming activities.

It could be teaching feelings through playing the charade game.

With younger children, you could play musical chairs, you could play freeze dance.

These could be 10 minutes, 15 minutes, and really the unstructured time should be very limited, but at the same time it should be highly engaging, so that is one way.

You could also have art activities where they are drawing, or they are painting, or they're making three dimensional things.

Come to my June 22nd, I'm still in the process of developing ideas, but you can find different art activities that you can do, so that's one thing.

Okay, what are some resources for video modeling?

One of the great resource that you will find is through the autism internet modules.

If you go there, you will find whole segment on video modeling.

You can use a specific behavior, take a clip of that.

You can have a peer demonstrate that skill, or an adult can demonstrate the skill, or the student can do the skill, and you can guide the student as the student needs, or it could be a sequence of skills.

Another place where you would find some information is the AFIRM.

That is also listed in the resources section.

So those are all various resources for video modeling.

With that, I am done answering those questions, and I'm just finishing up, and if you have any more questions, I'll be here, and I hope you will use the checklist that I have provided, so that it'll be something for you to continue to check how you are providing those supports to enable skill building opportunities for your students.

With that, I think that's the end.

Oh, let me see.

There seems to be a new question.

Yes, this question is about ABA therapy.

Yes, it is a well-known therapy.

I don't personally provide ABA therapy and it does align.

It does align with my views and there is a great deal of support for it, but I don't know if ABA therapy alone will do it.

You will have to do it along with a comprehensive type of support, along with that.