

CARD NEWSLETTER

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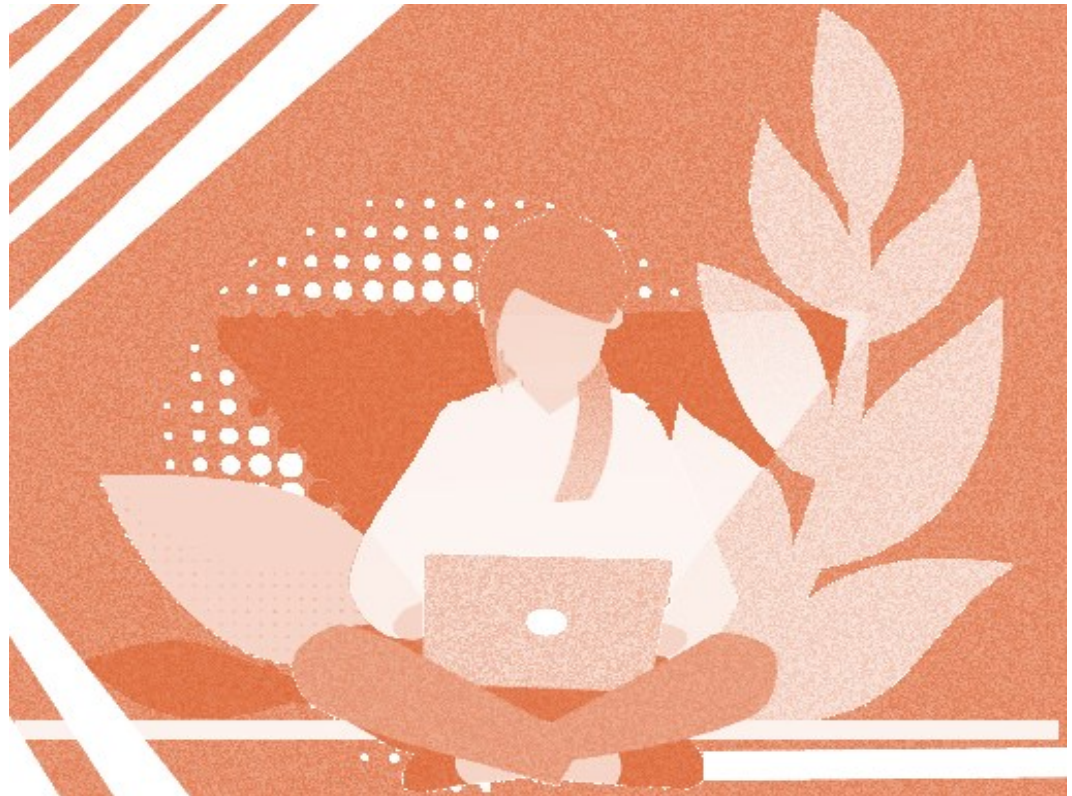
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The UF-JAX CARD program provides support and assistance with the goal of optimizing the potential of people with autism spectrum disorders and related disabilities. Services are provided at no cost. The UF-JAX CARD program provides services to Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, and St. Johns counties.

Keeping Children Focused and On-Task During Distance Learning

by Ashley Parker, MS CCC-SLP

Many parents, including myself, have found themselves in uncharted waters with the introduction of distance learning in order to complete the 2019-2020 school year. Education Week (2020) estimates that 50.5 million students will be impacted this school year. As parents reel from the



Upcoming Events

Oct 22 **PEPSA—Strategies for Transition Back to Classroom Instruction from Extended Absences**

Jan 15-17 **28th Annual CARD Conference**

Keep up to date on events. Join the CARD Weekly Update Email Newsletter.

To sign up please email Anthony.Rhodes@jax.ufl.edu.

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CARD's Mission

To educate and empower individuals and families throughout the lifespan by providing support, assistance, and awareness within the community; with the goal of optimizing the potential of all individuals with autism and related disabilities.

challenges they now face as a new role of not just a parent and employee, but now as a facilitator of learning, children also find themselves with a new normal, and many struggle to meet the demands and expectations. This is especially true of children with exceptional educational needs, though even typically developing children who do not generally require additional assistance with accessing the curriculum may also find their own struggles with staying on task and completing assignments. Combined with the disruption of routines, the inability to socialize with friends or run around on the playground to find that “break” during their school day, and the general uncertainty of the world during a global pandemic, families across the country need strategies to increase student success and decrease student frustration. Here are a few tips from experts to help keep kids focused and parents (hopefully!) less stressed.

Routine, routine, routine! Kids love it, parents often do not even realize that they rely on their own routines, and when they are disrupted, chaos ensues. During this time, educational expert Jessica Suss (2020), recommends getting children up at a reasonable time, getting dressed, and eating breakfast, just as a child would do getting ready to head to school on a typical day. Ask your child’s teachers what they do to transition from one activity to the next and implement that; often times using a visual timer so children can visually monitor how much time they have on each task (or during a break) can help motivate them to complete a task, transition from one task to another, or to

visually see when a break time will end and school time can resume.

Another way to help children focus is to set up a “school area” within the home. This does not require a large house or even a room with a door; even if it is in the child’s room, setting up a place where they know their books, paper/pencils, and computer are easily accessible and clearly outlined that this area is for schoolwork only can help children feel more calm and shift their brains into “school mode” (Fabiano 2020).

For children with identified Specific Learning Disabilities, Developmental Disabilities, and ADD/ADHD, breaking assignments up into well-defined pieces or sections may help. Perhaps a child has been assigned an online article to read at their instructional level and answer questions to answer about it. They may benefit from reading one paragraph, and then telling you what they read. Have them do this for each section so that you can be sure they are understanding what they have read and lessen frustration. Teachers often have children refer back to the text, and utilizing tools through Microsoft Word, for example, such as the highlight feature, can also assist students who are more accustomed to highlighting a printed text in order to find information.

The following are a couple of websites that our very own Gina Bauer (UF Jax FDLRS-MDC) has found that may help educators and parents:

[www.pdfcandy.com](http://www.pdf candy.com) is a website that allows files to be uploaded and converted into different types of files. For example, if a child typically struggles with handwriting answers to an article, or if an article is

given in pdf format, that file can be converted into a Microsoft Word file, where highlighting is easily done, and answers to questions may be typed instead of hand-written. If the teacher requires it is submitted as a pdf, it is easily converted back into that format. This website is free and does not require any specialized software downloads besides what you would normally need in order to access the type of document (for example, your computer would need Microsoft Office in order to access a Word document anyway, or Adobe to access a pdf).

www.naturalreaders.com is a website that can be used to assist parents if their children benefit from hearing directions, a text, or assignment read aloud.

Some of you are also becoming therapy assistants during this time! Speech/Language, Occupational, and Physical therapies do not cease during school shut-downs, but they certainly look different. Teletherapy means reduced service times for many students, but take an active role in your child's therapies, helping to redirect their attention to the therapist on the screen, and taking instruction from the therapist in order to implement activities at home. Remember that especially during crisis situations, the goal of therapy is to help children access curriculum and maintain skills; if you do not see an increase in skills during this time it does not mean that you or the therapist are failing.

These are uncertain times for everyone, and implementing structure, strategies, and keeping in close communication with your child's teachers and therapists can help reduce overall frustration and keep

your children on task. Please also note that many companies and institutions, including UF Jax FDLRS-MDC are offering webinars for educators and parents to help support during COVID-19.

Sources:

Education Week (2020). Map: coronavirus and school closures. Retrieved April 22, 2020 from <https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/map-coronavirus-and-school-closures.html>.

Fabiano, J (2020). 9 tips for parents navigating online learning with their children due to coronavirus. Retrieved April 22, 2020 from <https://www.theladders.com/career-advice/tips-for-parents-online-learnign-with-children>.

Suss, J (2020). Teachers share their top tips for distance learning at every age. Retrieved April 22, 2020 from <https://www.marinmagazine.com/teachers-share-their-top-tips-for-distance-learning-at-every-age/>.

Chores: The Secret to Success

by Audrey Bringman, M.Ed.

Chores give youth a sense of responsibility and are a great predictor of success in adulthood. Chores are also an important independent living skill and crucial for preparing adolescents as they transition to adulthood. Further, chores help youth work on following instructions, sequencing activities, and can help with visual spatial skills. It is important to consider chore expectations according to your child's developmental level. For students with intellectual and cognitive differences, there often is a difference between chronological age and developmental age, and understanding this will help you set your child up for success. The chronological age is how old your child is based on his or her birthdate. The developmental age is a measure of your child's intellectual, cognitive, language, adaptive, and behavioral abilities. Therefore, it is possible for a child with a developmental disability to be chronologically 7 years old, but developmentally closer to a 2-3 year old level. If we move forward with this example, a child with a 2-3 year old developmental level would be reasonably expected to make his own bed, put dirty laundry in the hamper and put toys away. Additionally, a child who is developmentally 6-9 years old should be able to do what a 2-3 year old can do, and more complex chores, such as putting away groceries, loading or unloading the dishwasher, sweeping or vacuuming. For more information on reasonable chore expectations, check out the resources below.



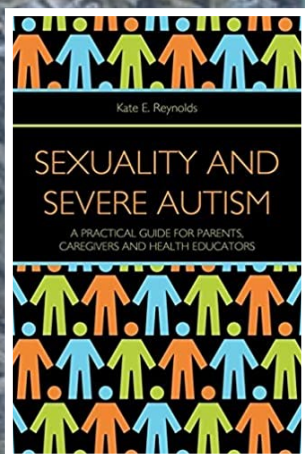
It is important to teach your youth these skills according to your household expectations. Each family has different processes and expectations for dusting, vacuuming, doing dishes, laundry, etc. When you involve your child from a very early age, you will probably get more buy-in and commitment from your child. Use praise and encouragement and show appreciation for their contributions to the household. When teaching your child a chore, you can model, show videos, and practice doing it with your child. Try the "Tell, Show, Do, and Review" model for teaching and understand repetition is crucial to learning and improving. During the "review" phase, parents can take a brief video of your child doing the chore so that the steps can be reinforced and you can discuss ways he can improve.

A simple search shows a plethora of chore charts online; choose a chart that is good for your family, developmentally appropriate, and may contribute to the motivation of your child.

References & Resources:

- LiterallyLuke. (2015, January 12). Tell Show Do Review [Video]. Youtube. https://youtu.be/g4iw_Z_YPLw
- Myers, R. (2019, October 14). The Ultimate List of Age-Appropriate Chores. Child Development Institute. <https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/chores/the-ultimate-list-of-age-appropriate-chores/#gs.9a31jo>
- Various Authors. (2017, November 3). Teach your children how to make their own beds. Focus on the Family. <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/teach-your-children-how-to-make-their-own-beds/>
- Vinopal, L. (2019, August 5). Kids who do chores are more likely to be successful. Here's why. Ladders| Fast on your feet. <https://www.theladders.com/career-advice/kids-who-do-chores-are-more-likely-to-be-successful-heres-why>

Now available in the CARD Lending Library:



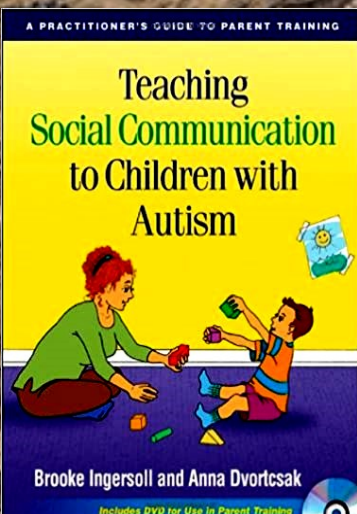
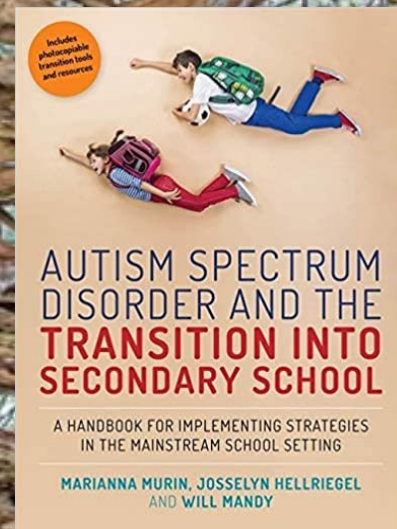
Sexuality and Severe Autism: A Practical Guide for Parents, Caregivers and Health Educators *By Kate E. Reynolds*

This practical handbook guides you through the process of teaching about sex and sexuality, answering all of the most crucial questions, including: Why is it necessary to teach this subject to my severely autistic child? When is the right time to start talking about these issues? How detailed and explicit should I be? And more.

Autism Spectrum Disorder and the Transition into Secondary School

By Marianna Murin, Josselyn Hellriegel, & Will Mandy

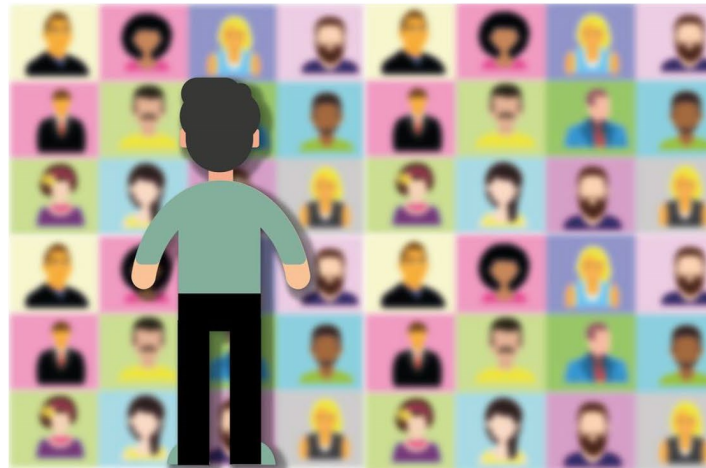
The first part of the book explains how to create individualized transition plans for each child, and describes how school staff can collaborate successfully with parents and careers. Part two contains a wealth of practical, easy to copy resources for use directly with pupils on the autism spectrum that help to address their most frequent support needs, including sensory sensitivities, anxiety issues and difficulties with planning and organization.



Teaching Social Communication to Children with Autism, Second Edition: A Manual for Parents *By Brooke Ingersoll*

This book and DVD present a parent training approach that is accessible, evidence based, and highly practical. Grounded in developmental and behavioral research, it takes proven techniques for promoting the social-communication skills of young children (up to age 6) and breaks them into simple yet effective steps for parents to follow. Also includes 30 reproducible handouts and forms.

Drop in. We are here for you!



The staff of the **UF Health Jacksonville Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD)** and **Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System-Multidisciplinary Center (FDLRS-MDC)** are happy to announce a new method of connecting with families and agency personnel in Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau and St. Johns counties. **Zoom Office Hours** are a great way to touch base with a clinician, ask questions about our program or services, and troubleshoot concerns you have for yourself, or on behalf of your loved one diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, dual-sensory impairment, social communication disorder or related disability, or other learning, behavioral or social-emotional disability.

- You must join from the web browser and not the Zoom App. <https://zoom.us/join> then enter the Clinician's Meeting ID

Register to meet with a specific clinician or select any day/time that works for your schedule.

Clinician Zoom Schedules, Contact information, and Connection Details:

Clinician Name	Email Address	Zoom Meeting ID	Zoom Office Hours	Start Date
Marlena Jenkins	marlena.jenkins@jax.ufl.edu	946 8603 9137	Wednesday 2p-4p	July 29, 2020
Audrey Bringman	audrey.bringman@jax.ufl.edu	910 7434 0785	Wednesday 11a-12p Thursday 11a-12p	July 29, 2020
Gina Bauer	gina.bauer@jax.ufl.edu	978 8199 0383	Wednesday 3p-5p	August 7, 2020
Katrina Ressa	katrina.ressa@jax.ufl.edu	993 4281 5821	Wednesday 9a-10a Thursday 9a-10a	Sept 9, 2020
Anne Wilson	anne.wilson@jax.ufl.edu	994 0007 0601	Monday 10a-11a Wednesday 10a-11a	August 3, 2020
Chanel Baldwin	chanel.baldwin@jax.ufl.edu	918 3392 2952	Monday 3p-4p Thursday 3p-4p	August 3, 2020

Instructions: Log into Zoom and enter the meeting ID for the meeting you wish to join. After completing the brief registration form, you will be admitted to the Waiting Room. When the Clinician is available, they will admit you into the session and begin your appointment. Messages will be sent to those in the Waiting Room to update participants on the anticipated start time of their session.

The above listed Zoom office hours are good through December 18, 2020

Note: Prior attendance at a CARD Orientation is required to become a registered constituent with CARD.