

## Use instructional strategies which support successful outcomes.

Adapted from <https://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/Motivating-Students-Who-Have-Autism-Spectrum-Disorders>

- Assemble materials, or teach the learner to assemble materials, in task- appropriate sequences.
- Teach new tasks by providing examples or modeling so the learner has a clear vision of task sequences and expected outcomes.
- Incorporate learning tasks into preferred topics and activities.
- Plan tasks and activities that result in meaningful outcomes from the perspective of the learner.
- Vary tasks and activities frequently as opposed to requiring boring repetition. Conversely, capture opportunities to expand learning when interest is high.
- Plan and present tasks and activities at an appropriate level of difficulty for the individual involved.
- Provide instructions or information visually as opposed to verbally to decrease distraction and to make information more user friendly for the person.
- Introduce unfamiliar tasks in a secure environment so that later learned familiarity will capture the individual's attention in more challenging environments. For example, if science class is going to discuss the stars during class time, parents might observe a night sky with their son/daughter. This provides a familiar link to subsequent school experiences.
- Assign specific models for the individual to observe and imitate when in group activities such as circle time or group exercises. When in more fluid group situations, assign or help the individual to select a specific role, which he or she can perform. Teach the individual how to perform selected roles.
- Plan for successful outcomes that can be achieved "here and now" rather than at some more distant time. Rather than pushing for a perfect response, reinforce all goal-directed attempts.
- Structure motivating event sequences in which the less familiar, less preferred activity is followed by the familiar, preferred experience (First \_\_\_\_\_, Then \_\_\_\_\_). Structure short, successful experiences with less preferred activities and longer, equilibrium

restoring experiences with more preferred, easier-to-tolerate activities. This strategy works particularly well for very hesitant learners who have extremely restricted repertoires of interests.

- For learners with broader repertoires of interests and skills, build motivational momentum by beginning with highly preferred, success-guaranteed tasks and alternating such tasks and activities with less preferred, more challenging tasks throughout the day. This strategy also works for individuals who are so highly aroused by anticipated preferred events that they cannot focus on other tasks until the highly stimulating need has been addressed.
- Focus on errorless learning. Teach, perhaps by modeling or having a peer model, the person to do the task right the first time.
- Avoid having the learner undo or disassemble products which he or she perceives as finished. Erasing work or taking apart finished products often makes no sense to the learner and may result in a "Why do it?" response mode. Plan ways to correct or repeat work that do not involve undoing what has been done.
- Offer attention-getting choices which stimulate personal involvement