Autism Awareness Training for School Nurses

Description: With the increase in the prevalence of autism, it is important for school nurses to be knowledgeable about autism, including how autism is diagnosed and treated. Awareness of possible dietary constraints, sleep issues, medication, and other therapies will assist a school nurse in properly attending to a student with autism who may need medical assistance. This two-hour training provides information about autism, treatment approaches, and implications for school nurses.

Learning Objectives:
1. Understand the characteristics of autism spectrum disorders
2. Understand the diagnostic process and tools used to evaluate individuals
3. Be aware of different intervention options
4. Understand the implications of ASD for a school nurse

Target Audience: This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for school nurses and anyone interest in learning more about this topic.

Autism Awareness Training for School Transportation Personnel

Description: School personnel often attest that many problems arise for a student with an autism spectrum disorder at the bus stop or on the bus. Bus drivers are faced with the difficulty of driving the vehicle and handling emergencies while appropriately responding to children and their unique needs. This two-hour training provides bus drivers and support staff with an introduction to the core characteristics of autism spectrum disorders, and how these characteristics may impact a student’s ability to behave appropriately and safely on a school bus. Attention is given to effective strategies bus drivers can utilize with all students as well as with students on the spectrum to ensure a positive and non-distracting driving environment.

Learning Objectives:
1. Increase knowledge of autism spectrum disorders, including core and associated characteristics
2. Recognize common behaviors seen in students with autism
3. Learn prevention strategies to minimize unsafe or inappropriate bus behavior
4. Discuss responding to behavior crises

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for bus drivers, school support staff and anyone interested in learning more about this topic.

**Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Brief Overview**

**Description:** This two-hour training provides an introduction to the core and associated characteristics of autism spectrum disorders and how these characteristics impact a student’s success within a learning environment. The training also covers a description of possible causes of autism spectrum disorders. Attention is given to understanding current treatment methods, ranging from evidence-based strategies to more controversial and alternative approaches.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Understand the core and associated characteristics of autism spectrum disorders
2. Recognize possible causes of autism spectrum disorders
3. Be familiar with evidence-based and non-evidence-based interventions used to treat autism spectrum disorders

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for general and special education teachers, educational support staff, pre-school and kindergarten teachers, support coordinators, in-home caregivers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists, and school administrators.

**Creating the Optimal Classroom for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder**

**Description:** Children with autism spectrum disorders need a carefully designed and highly structured learning environment. This two-hour training focuses on arranging a classroom’s physical environment and establishing routines and schedules to incorporate the strengths and address the deficits of autism spectrum disorders. Participants will be provided with examples and organizational strategies to help students become successful, independent learners.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Define the deficits impacting a student’s performance in the classroom and understand why supports are needed
2. Learn what evidence-based strategies and supports facilitate growth in individuals with these deficits
3. Learn implementation techniques that promote the development of independence in individuals with ASD
Target Audience: This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for general and special education teachers, educational support staff, related-service providers (SLP, OT, PT, counselors, social workers and school psychologists), support coordinators, in-home caregivers, and school administrators.

Encouraging and Shaping Desired Pro-Social Behaviors in Students with ASD

Description: Systematic teaching of pro-social behaviors can reduce challenging behavior in students with ASD and lead to an increase in independence and an improvement in overall quality of life. The purpose of this two-hour training is to discuss how to select appropriate pro-social goals, develop effective and motivating teaching plans, and expand upon success. **Pre-requisite:** Interested participants must complete Helping Students with ASD Overcome Challenging Behaviors and Improve Their Quality of Life before requesting this training.

Learning Objectives:
1. Identify desired behaviors that will impact quality of life at home, school, and/or community
2. Develop strategies to ensure success through environmental modifications and/or peer support
3. Describe ways to motivate students to perform desired behaviors and build on learned skills

Target Audience: This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for general and special education teachers, educational support staff, related-service providers (SLP, OT, PT, counselors, social workers and school psychologists), support coordinators, in-home caregivers, and school administrators.

Executive Functioning Strategies to Keep Individuals with ASD Organized and On-Target

Description: Executive functions are the cognitive tasks that allow us to plan, organize, initiate, attend to task, and regulate and monitor behavior. They are the key building blocks to learning! In this training, participants will learn how challenges with executive functions can impact academic achievement and social success. Participants will learn how to create supports to help teach executive functioning skills.

Learning Objectives:
1. Describe how executive functions impact individuals with autism spectrum disorder
2. Become familiar with interventions that support executive functioning difficulties
3. Choose 2-3 supports to create and use at home, in school, or in the community

Target Audience: This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for general and special education teachers, educational support staff, related-service providers (SLP, OT, PT,
counselors, social workers and school psychologists), support coordinators, in-home caregivers, and school administrators.

**First Responders: Autism Awareness Training**

**Description:** Individuals with autism spectrum disorders are seven times more likely to come into contact with police than their typical peers; therefore, it is imperative that first responders recognize persons with this disorder. This two-hour training provides an introduction to the core and associated characteristics of ASD and how these characteristics impact an individual’s functioning abilities within the community. This training also includes appropriate strategies for responding, as well as methods for first responders and parents/caregivers to work together to keep individuals with ASD safe.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Understand the core and associated characteristics of ASD
2. Be familiar with reasons a first responder may be called to a scene involving an individual with ASD
3. Learn strategies on how first responders and parents/caregivers can work together to keep individuals with ASD safe

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for police, EMS, firefighters and parents/caregivers.

**Helping Students with ASD Overcome Challenging Behaviors and Improve Their Quality of Life**

**Description:** Too often prevention strategies are put into place to decrease challenging behaviors without determining which skills should be taught to replace that behavior. This two-hour training focuses on how to identify an individual’s strengths and difficulties to establish meaningful goals and teach practical skills to replace challenging behavior.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Define the new DSM-5 criteria for Autism Spectrum Disorders
2. Establish meaningful goals based on areas of need and challenging behaviors
3. Identify the steps to teach practical skills to replace challenging behavior

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for general and special education teachers, educational support staff, related-service providers (SLP, OT, PT, counselors, social workers and school psychologists), support coordinators, in-home caregivers, and school administrators.
**How to Be an Effective Paraprofessional in the School Environment**

**Description:** Paraprofessionals play a crucial role in their daily interactions with students with autism spectrum disorders. Over the years, the duties of paraprofessionals have significantly increased. This two-hour training provides the paraprofessional with the tools needed to successfully support students with autism spectrum disorders in the classroom. The core characteristics of autism spectrum disorders and effective educational supports are presented.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Understand the core cognitive characteristics of children with autism spectrum disorders and recognize the challenges emerging from these unique characteristics
2. Be familiar with a wide variety of classroom supports, including successful behavioral support strategies
3. Identify an effective and positive support style for the student, in contrast to problematic support strategies

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for educational support staff, other school personnel, related-service providers (SLP, OT, PT, counselors and social workers), in-home caregivers, and school administrators.

**Learning Better Ways to Cope: Teaching Individuals with ASD Skills to Replace Challenging Behaviors**

**Description:** This training focuses on practical ways to teach coping skills to individuals with autism spectrum disorders. Techniques to assist with anxiety and problem-solving difficulties are discussed. Emphasis is placed on evidence-based strategies that can be taught and used in both the home and school environment.

**Please note:** This training is provided in two versions. One version focuses on children with ASD, and the other version focuses on adults with ASD. When requesting this training, please specify which version you prefer.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Identify reasons why it is necessary to teach coping skills to individuals with ASD
2. Describe different techniques to assist individuals on the spectrum with anxiety and problem-solving difficulties
3. Identify at least one strategy that could be taught to your child and used in a home and school environment

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for general and special education teachers, educational support staff, related-service providers (SLP, OT, PT,
Mealtime and Children with Autism

**Description:** This two-hour training addresses the various eating challenges children with autism spectrum disorders experience. The assessment of underlying or co-occurring medical issues is discussed. This training focuses on behavioral and environmental problems that affect feeding and eating and successful strategies for addressing problems in these areas.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Understand the nature of eating and feeding problems, and factors influencing their development
2. Become familiar with strategies for improving the eating habits of a child with an autism spectrum disorder

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for support coordinators and in-home caregivers, and anyone interested in learning more about this topic.

The Do’s and Don’ts of Effectively Changing the Behaviors of Children with Special Needs

**Description:** This training describes common pitfalls experienced by teachers, other professionals interacting with individuals with special needs, and caregivers when attempting to achieve positive behavior change with a focus on compliance. The training addresses how to avoid these pitfalls, and discusses essential cornerstones of behavior change such as relationship building and compliance development.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Become familiar with the long-term consequences of problem behaviors
2. Understand the factors influencing the problem behavior of individuals with special needs, and understand the characteristics of ineffective behavior change strategies
3. Learn two pivotal behavior change strategies, which build the foundation for successful skill and behavior development

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for general and special education teachers, educational support staff, related service providers (SLP, OT, PT, counselors, social workers and school psychologists), service coordinators, caregivers, school administrators, and anyone interested in learning more about this topic.
The Path to Success Begins with Self-Advocacy

**Description:** It is never too early to teach self-advocacy skills to your child. This two-hour training will discuss the importance of being able to advocate for oneself, ways to teach self-advocacy skills, and supports that will help individuals with autism learn about themselves and their specific likes and dislikes.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Participants will understand the importance of self-advocacy
2. Participants will learn how to teach an individual to advocate for him/herself
3. Participants will learn about supports to increase independence

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for educational staff, service providers, in-home caregivers, support coordinators, and anyone interested in learning more about this topic.

Setting the Stage: Creating Environments to Enhance Outcomes for Students with ASD

**Description:** This two-hour training discusses the impact that ASDs have on the entire educational community. School professionals and family members will learn how the characteristics of ASD affect student learning, the role that the structure of the learning environment plays in ensuring student success, as well as how quality communication between primary providers and the support team can positively impact students with ASD and the educational community in which they learn.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Learn how characteristics of ASD affect student learning
2. Examine the factors within the learning environment that impact student success
3. Learn how quality collaboration between school and home can positively impact students with ASD

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for educational support staff, other school personnel, related-service providers (SLP, OT, PT, counselors and social workers), in-home caregivers, and school administrators.

Strategies to Motivate: Using Positive Approaches to Teach Social, Academic, and Daily Living Skills to Individuals with ASD

**Description:** This two-hour training focuses on the basic theories of motivation, basic principles of reinforcement, and how these theories and principles can be applied to increase motivation in
school-age individuals with autism spectrum disorders. Discussions include ways to teach, reinforce, and motivate to develop social, academic, and daily living skills in a variety of settings.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Gain a better understanding of the theories of motivation in individuals with ASD

2. Understand reinforcement principles and how the principles are applied for use in motivating individuals with ASD

3. Recognize evidence-based practices and tools for increasing motivation in students with ASD in multiple settings

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for general and special education teachers, educational support staff, related-service providers (SLP, OT, PT, counselors, social workers and school psychologists), support coordinators, in-home caregivers, and school administrators.

**Supporting Individuals with ASD to Meet Their Full Potential in Meaningful Employment**

**Description:** With the appropriate supports in place, individuals with ASD can have successful, meaningful employment where they are a true asset to their employer. However, at this time, many individuals with ASD are unemployed or underemployed, and struggle with the social aspects of the workplace. Additionally, without a working knowledge of ASD characteristics and supports, co-workers of individuals with ASD may find that working with someone with ASD is frustrating because they do not understand their differences and do not know how to support them. This two-hour training briefly describes the definition, characteristics and misconceptions that are common to individuals with ASD, some of the challenges they may face in the workplace due to social deficits, and suggestions and tips for working with individuals with ASD in the workplace so that they may reach their full potential.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Understand how the core and related characteristics of ASD may impact individuals in the work environment

2. Discuss some of the life skills needed to be successful with social aspects of working with others

3. Determine strategies to support and work with individuals with ASD in the workplace

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for co-workers and supervisors currently working with young adults with ASD.
**Tantrums, Tears and Timeouts: Helping Your Child with ASD Overcome Challenging Behavior**

**Description:** The focus of this training is on learning how to define your child’s challenging behavior in observable terms and learning ways to track that behavior. You will also learn about user-friendly tools that help determine the function of behavior along with strategies based on that function. Emphasis will be placed on evidence-based strategies that can be implemented in the home environment.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Establish broad and meaningful goals for themselves and their children
2. Learn how to define behavior in observable terms
3. Be introduced to user-friendly tools to assist with determining function of behavior
4. Be given strategies to aid in decreasing challenging behavior

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for support coordinators and in-home caregivers, and anyone interested in learning more about this topic.

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**Thinking Differently: Social Cognition and Social Motivation of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders**

**Description:** In this two-hour training, participants will learn about ongoing research regarding the way individuals with ASD process social information and engage socially. How a student processes information can lead to challenging behaviors, impacting his/her learning. Intervention programs and strategies used to teach adaptive skills to replace the challenging behaviors will be presented.

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Describe latest research relevant to the way individuals with ASD process social information and engage socially
2. Identify challenging behaviors that students may display related to how they process information
3. Identify strategies that can be used to teach adaptive skills to replace the challenging behaviors

**Target Audience:** This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for general and special education teachers, educational support staff, related-service providers (SLP, OT, PT, counselors, social workers and school psychologists), support coordinators, in-home caregivers, and school administrators.
Waking Up to a Better Day

Description: The effects of prolonged sleep difficulties can have serious consequences not only for a child with an autism spectrum disorder, but for the entire family. This two-hour training covers the nature of sleep and common sleep problems. Attention is given to effective interventions that improve even the most difficult sleep behavior.

Learning Objectives:
1. Understand the nature of sleep problems and factors influencing the development of sleep difficulties

2. Become familiar with strategies to assess sleep problems

3. Learn a variety of strategies for reducing sleep difficulties

Target Audience: This training is designed as a basic course and is appropriate for support coordinators and in-home caregivers, and anyone interested in learning more about this topic.