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Promoting Social Emotional Engagement through a Universal Design for Learning

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EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Promoting Social Emotional Engagement through A Universal Design for Learning



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What is "Student Engagement?"

- Student Engagement ...
- The degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education.
- "Student engagement" is predicated on the belief that learning improves when students are inquisitive, interested, or inspired, and that learning tends to suffer when students are bored, dispassionate, disaffected, or otherwise "disengaged."

Glossary of Education Reform
<http://edglossary.org>



What is "Student Engagement?"

- Student Engagement ...
- Essentially, "non-cognitive skills" that have a connection to or impact "cognitive" learning results.
- Examples: motivation, interest, curiosity, responsibility, determination, perseverance, attitude, work habits, self-regulation, social skills.

Glossary of Education Reform
<http://edglossary.org>



Georgia Department of Education Initiatives and Strategic Plan

- Student Success: Imagine the Possibilities
 - For students with disabilities
 - **Goal 1** - Increase high school graduation rate, decrease drop out rate, and increase post-secondary enrollment rate.
 - **Goal 2** - Strengthen teacher quality, recruitment, and retention.
 - **Goal 3** - Improve workforce readiness skills.
 - **Goal 4** - Develop strong education leaders, particularly at the building level.



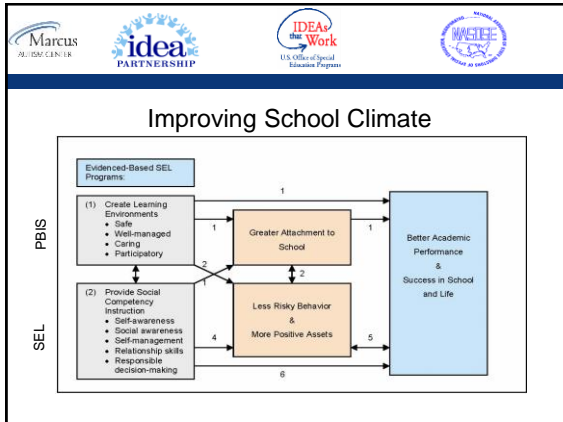
Georgia Department of Education Initiatives and Strategic Plan

- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
... The premise of PBIS is that continual teaching, combined with acknowledgement or feedback of positive student behavior will reduce unnecessary discipline and promote a climate of greater productivity, safety and learning.
- The Autism Early Intervention Project
... State Personnel Development Grant for GA's PreK Program
... Currently partnering with the Marcus Autism Center's Educational Outreach Program,



Social Emotional Competencies

- Programs designed to foster social and emotional competencies (Social Emotional Learning) complement existing programs designed to promote Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports
- Fostering SEL requires school communities to gain knowledge in the normative social and emotional scope and sequence of skills and strategies to provide instruction in these domains.



Incidence of Autism

- Current (2010): 1 in 68
 - ~60% increase from 2006
 - ~120% increase from 2002
- 2008: 1 in 88
- 2006: 1 in 110
- 2004: 1 in 125
- 2002: 1 in 150

▪ <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/data.html>

Core Challenges of Students with Autism

- Difficulty attending to social stimuli
- Difficulty initiating/seeking out social stimuli
- Difficulty anticipating/predicting the intentions of social stimuli
- Difficulty acquiring language about social stimuli
- Difficulty maintaining social relationships through use of appropriate social conventions

Symptoms Exhibited

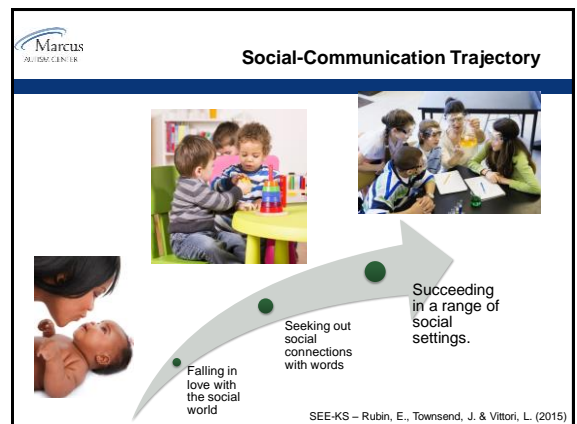
- Stereotyped and Repetitive behaviors or motor movements (coping strategies)
- Rigidity, including narrow interests and activities
- Noncooperation
- Inflexibility

- Education Costs:
 - \$8,600 extra per year to educate a student with autism. (Lavelle et al., 2014)
 - Average cost of educating a student is about \$12,000. (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014)

<http://www.autism-society.org/what-is/facts-and-statistics/>

Impact of Nature and Nurture: The Neurology of Social Emotional Engagement

- Current neuroscience illustrates that:
 - Children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) show limited neural sensitivity to social stimuli, tend not to look toward people's faces and show limited gaze shifting.
 - Other developmental differences and the caregiving environment also compromise social and emotional neurodevelopment.





The Neuroscience of Autism and Social Emotional Engagement

- Neurological Differences in Children with ASD
 - Research: fMRI studies
 - Social stimuli processed in different part of the brain
 - Limited neural sensitivity to social stimuli
 - Implications of neurological differences ...
 - Connections in the brain fail to form in regards to social stimuli, interactions, and finding people interesting.
 - The focus and connections on objects strengthen.
 - There is a potential impact of environment factors as a result.



SEE-KS: A Developmental Framework to Foster Social Emotional Engagement

- Marcus Autism Center Program:
 - Social Emotional Engagement – Knowledge and Skills
- Supports Critical Priorities at Each Stage of Development
 - Stages of Social Emotional Development
 - Stages of Communication Development
- ... Fostering Social Emotional Engagement in Children at All Ability Levels in all Classrooms within a School
 - Children who are "Before Words"
 - Children who exhibit "Emerging Language" skills
 - Children who exhibit "Conversational" skills



Meeting these Challenges: A Universal Approach *Today's Discussion*

- Educational Outreach Program, Marcus Autism Center
 - Overview and Goals
- Social Emotional Engagement – Knowledge and Skills (SEE-KS)
 - EOP Staff Development Program
 - Universal Design for Learning Framework
 - Based on Normative Social Emotional Guidelines
 - Appropriate for all developmental levels, all ability levels, all ages, and all classrooms



Challenges in the Schools

- Financial Resources
- Personnel and Staffing Resources
 - Training
 - Building and Maintaining Staffing Capacity
 - Long-Term Sustainability
- Time Challenges of School-Based Staff
 - To meet the wide variety of needs in the classroom throughout the school day
 - To collaborate with related service providers



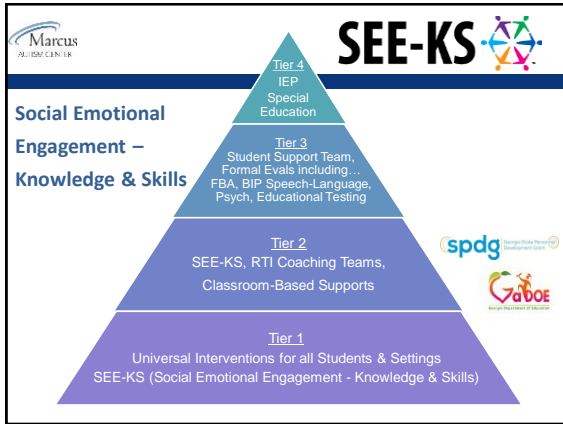
Educational Outreach Program *in Georgia's Public Schools*

- Purpose ...
 - Dedicated to the provision of community viable models of professional development that enhance the on-site capacity of each school system served, resulting in better outcomes for students and our school systems.
 - Focused on disseminating the most current social neuroscience related to students with autism spectrum disorders.



Educational Outreach Program

- Goals ...
 - Enhancing the provision of educational programming for *all* students through a universal design for learning framework that is aligned with normative social and emotional guidelines.
 - Building capacity within a school district at 2 levels to maintain systematic methods for in-service training, coaching, and peer-to-peer mentorship
 - District-Wide Level
 - School-Based Level



Universal Design for Learning

- Universal design for learning (UDL) is a scientifically valid framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all students based on research into how humans learn (www.cast.org)
- UDL's Purpose:
 - To minimize barriers to learning
 - To maximize learning for all students

Student Success and the Learning Climate

- Creating an *equitable* learning environment that offers successful outcomes for *every* student can be facilitated by understanding why children may or may not be compelled to *actively engage* in the classroom.
- Research in the neuroscience of social emotional engagement fosters our ability to create a universal design for learning.

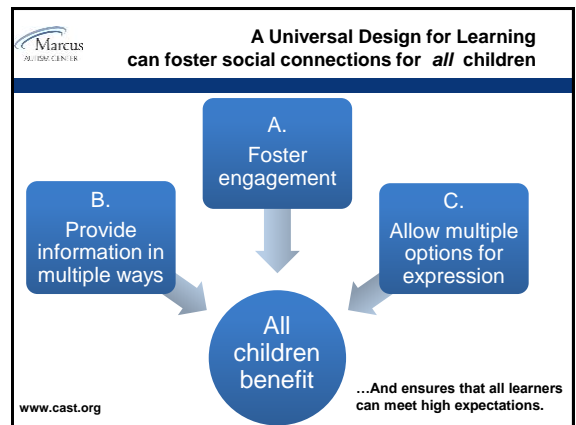
What is Social and Emotional Learning?

- Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.
- SEL programming is based on the understanding that the best learning emerges in the context of supportive relationships that make learning challenging, engaging, and meaningful.

<http://www.cast.org/social-and-emotional-learning/>

The Neuroscience of Autism and Social Emotional Engagement in Schools

- Why is knowledge of the neuroscience important?
 - All students arrive to the classroom at different levels of social emotional engagement and emotional regulation.
 - These levels can often fluctuate due to a variety of factors for different students at different times.
 - Low levels of engagement and difficulties with remaining emotionally regulated impact academic learning and overall classroom performance.
 - Allows us to select priorities for educational programming at the appropriate developmental for students.





The Intersection of the Neuroscience of Social Differences, Social Emotional Engagement, and UDL

ASD is not a disorder of problem-behaviors ... the problem-behaviors arise when their learning differences are not accommodated.



UDL Framework to Foster Social Engagement

- If you teach to these domains, you are also likely engaging all of your students not just those with learning differences
- Reward-based system not as longitudinally effective as teaching that the learning activity is intrinsically rewarding
- We have to work harder for those kids with autism, because they don't respond as readily to social interaction

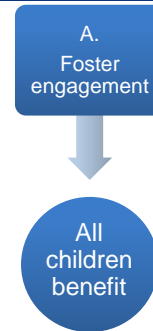


Initial Baseline Video

1. J and R, transition without visual supports



A Universal Design for Learning can foster social connections for *all* children



www.cast.org



3 Stages of Communication

Knowing the student's stage of communication is key to identifying the most appropriate instructional supports...

- Communication Stage of the Student
 - Identifies the priorities appropriate for the student's level of development
 - Identifies the appropriate supports that must be in place for appropriate social engagement to facilitate learning.
 1. Before Words
 2. Emerging Language
 3. Conversational

Video Describing Each Stage
<https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/Language-Strategies-for-Parents.aspx>




UDL Framework in SEE-KS Program A. Fostering Engagement



Predicting the Sequence of Steps Going to the Bathroom

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UDL Framework in SEE-KS Program
A. Fostering Engagement



Predicting the Sequence
Basket of Materials for Each Activity
Video – R & B Transition with Supports

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A Universal Design for Learning
can foster social connections for *all* children

B.
Provide information in multiple ways

All children benefit

www.cast.org

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UDL Framework in SEE-KS Program
B. Presenting Information in Multiple Ways

Visuals Paired with Verbal
Video – Circle Time

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A Universal Design for Learning
can foster social connections for *all* children

C.
Encourage child expression


All children benefit

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UDL Framework in SEE-KS Program
C. Allowing Multiple Options for Action and Expression

Core Vocabulary Board
And Use of Hands-On
Materials



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UDL Framework in SEE-KS Program
C. Allowing Multiple Options for Action and Expression

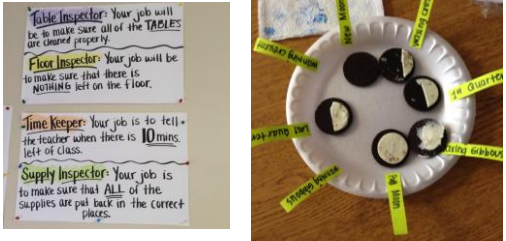


Table Inspector: Your job will be to make sure all of the TABLES are cleaned properly.

Floor Inspector: Your job will be to make sure that there is NOTHING left on the floor.

Time Keeper: Your job is to tell the teacher when there is 10 mins. left of class.

Supply Inspector: Your job is to make sure that ALL of the supplies are put back in the correct places.

Video ... Core Vocabulary Boards to verbally and gesturally "read-along"

Video ... Whole Group Activity – Visual Supports for Expression

- **Communication Ability:**
... generally communicates through behavioral, pre-symbolic, nonverbal means
- **Neuroscience:**
 - Often do not find initiations with social stimuli intrinsically rewarding
 - As a result, have difficulty predicting that a caregiver or teacher is a source of engagement or assistance
 - Facial and gestural forms of communication are initially delayed.

- **Increasing functional, spontaneous communication** to a high rate of nonverbal communication.
- **Increasing conventional gestures that have a shared meaning** (e.g., giving, pointing, pushing away, head nods, and head shakes).

See-Through Container
With S+V
Sentence Strip



- **Communication Ability:**
... generally communicates through early symbolic means (e.g., verbal language, signs, pictures, emerging ability with other AAC methods).
 - Shows a preference for object labels (i.e., nouns).
- **Neuroscience:**
 - Shows increased initiations when motivated for preferred items and objects, but continues to show decreased orientation towards social stimuli and people.
 - Exhibits continued difficulty predicting the intentions of others and in predicting what will happen next within interactions and activities.

Emerging Language Communication Stage

Critical Priorities

- Increasing range of **spontaneous communication involving others** (e.g., requesting social actions and social routines, commenting on actions, and sharing experiences with others).
- Increasing range of **word combinations for subject + verb + obj/descriptive**
- (e.g., “Ms. Jessie go,” “John do fast,” “Ms. Diane open juice.”)

AAC and Core Vocabulary

UDL Support for Receptive / Expressive Communication



Emerging Language Video

Manual Core Word Board

1. R and M with teacher, presenting information in multiple ways, S+V+obj

Emerging Language Video

Manual Core Word Board



Conversational Communication Stage

Communication and the Neuroscience

- **Communication Ability:**
... conversational communication for a variety of pragmatic functions to share thoughts, ideas, and emotions.
- **Neuroscience:**
 - Shows difficulty with predicting the intentions of others
 - Impacts the development of self-efficacy as a communicator and the ability to establish and maintain peer relationships.
 - Limits the development of more sophisticated syntax to clarify intentions, knowing how to pick topics, when to initiate, how to balance conversational turns, and collaborating and negotiating with others.

Conversational Level Communication Stage

Critical Priorities

- Increasing spontaneous communication with **one's peers and a sense of self-efficacy.**
- Increasing awareness of **social norms of conversation** (e.g., balancing turns, vocal volume, proximity, conversational timing, and topic selection and maintenance).



Data Collection

Determining Progress: Building Capacity and Sustainability

- SEE-KS Implementation Scale
 - Establishment of Effective Coaching Teams
 - Recommending of Effective UDL/SEE-KS Supports by Coaching Teams
 - Demonstration of Effective Coaching Strategies of district and school teams
 - Collection of Data to Determine overall Fidelity of SEE-KS Implementation of district and school teams



Social Emotional Engagement

Putting It All Together

Peanut Butter!!!
Video



Educational Outreach Program Marcus Autism Center

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- With Special Thanks to:
 - Emily Rubin, M.S. CCC-SLP
 - Director, Educational Outreach Program
 - Marcus Autism Center



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