

UNIVERSITY OF
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KENTUCKY AUTISM
TRAINING CENTER 

Teaching Functional Community skills to individuals with Autism

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Teaching functional community skills

1. Talk about functional skills
2. Discuss interventions
3. Discuss what to do in certain situations

Teaching functional community skills

- The first step involves selecting the skills to be taught.
- Ask yourself, “Will this individual be able to function without this skill when they are an adult?”

Community Goals

- Once you set the goals you have to consider...
- ✓ skill level
- ✓ age of student
- ✓ environment

Community Skills

- Teach skills in several settings
- Teach the skill not only in the classroom, but generalize it to the natural environment
- How do we teach these skills?

Task Analysis

- The process of breaking down a complex skill or series of behaviors into smaller, teachable units.
- Purpose is to determine the sequence of behaviors that are necessary and sufficient to complete a given task.

(Cooper and Heron, 2007)

Task Analysis

- The sequence of behaviors that one person might have to perform may not be identical to what another person needs to achieve the same outcome.
- The task analysis should be individualized according to age, skill level, and prior experience of the person in question.

(Cooper and Heron, 2007)

Components of a Task Analysis

- Three methods to develop the components of a task analysis:
 - Steps are developed after observing the individual perform the desired sequence of behaviors
 - Consult with experts or persons skilled in performing the task
 - Perform the behaviors yourself and determine the steps needed to teach the behavior

(Cooper and Heron, 2007)

Criteria to back up modify: Requiring full physical prompts on a step for 5 days

Instructions: In a calm and encouraging manner, give the instruction to “take your pants off”. Support the student through the chain of behaviors involved in the taking their pants off program. Provide Least to Most Prompting for each step and record the prompt required to complete the step.

+	Correct/unprompted	V	Verbal
GM	Gesture/model	P	Physically Prompted (shaped)

<i>Step</i>	<i>Component Skill</i>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	Grab waist of pants							
2	Pull pants down							
3	Sit down							
4	Cross midline and grab opposite pant leg							
5	Hold ankle of pants and pull leg out							
6	Cross Midline and grab ankle of other pant leg							
7	Hold ankle of pants and pull leg out							

Teaching a Task Analysis

- Three choices when attempting to teach a task analysis.

These include:

- Backward Chaining
- Forward Chaining
- Total Task Presentation

(Cooper and Heron, 2007)

Backward Chaining

Involves all the behaviors identified in the task analysis are prompted, except the last behavior in the chain. The child completes the last behavior. Then contacts reinforcement.

(Cooper and Heron, 2007)

Backward Chaining

Example

When teaching a child to tie shoes, they will be prompted throughout the sequence and then required to complete the last step of ‘pulling the loops together snug.’ When they complete this step they contact reinforcement.

(Cooper and Heron, 2007)

Forward Chaining

Involves the child completing the first step independently, then contacting reinforcement. The other steps are then prompted by the trainer.

(Cooper and Heron, 2007)

Forward Chaining

Example:

A child learning to tie their shoes would be reinforced for the first step which is “pinch lace” and the other steps in the sequence are prompted.

(Cooper and Heron, 2007)

Video Modeling

A form of observational learning in which desired behaviors are learned by watching a video demonstration and then imitating the behavior of the model.

Video self-modeling

Individuals observe themselves performing a behavior successfully on video, then imitate the targeted behavior.



Individual Schedules

- Visually tells the “what, where, and when” of the day
- Tells how to move through the physical space purposefully & independently
- Provides structure/routine to help the student cope with changes
- **Must be taught**

How to introduce schedules

- Know what type of schedule you will be using
 - Object, picture, written
- Develop materials
 - Gather any/all possible activities that may occur that day if using pictures or objects --- BE PREPARED!!!!
- Decide where the schedule will be located
 - Portable – student takes it with him/her
 - One location – schedule is in same place every day (transition area)
 - Teacher will supply schedule to student – least preferred as it restricts independence

How to introduce schedules

- Teach steps to checking schedule (see next slide)
- Reinforce, Reinforce, Reinforce – remember to pair tangible or edible reinforcers with behavior specific praise!!!

Ensure the student is successful – provide prompts (gestural, physical, modeling, verbal, etc) as needed

Introduce Schedule to the child

1st – Model the act of checking schedule, moving to activity, completing activity, checking schedule

- ✓ Remember – Model the steps EXACTLY as you want the child to do it
- ✓ Limit verbal directions – purpose of schedule is to facilitate independence

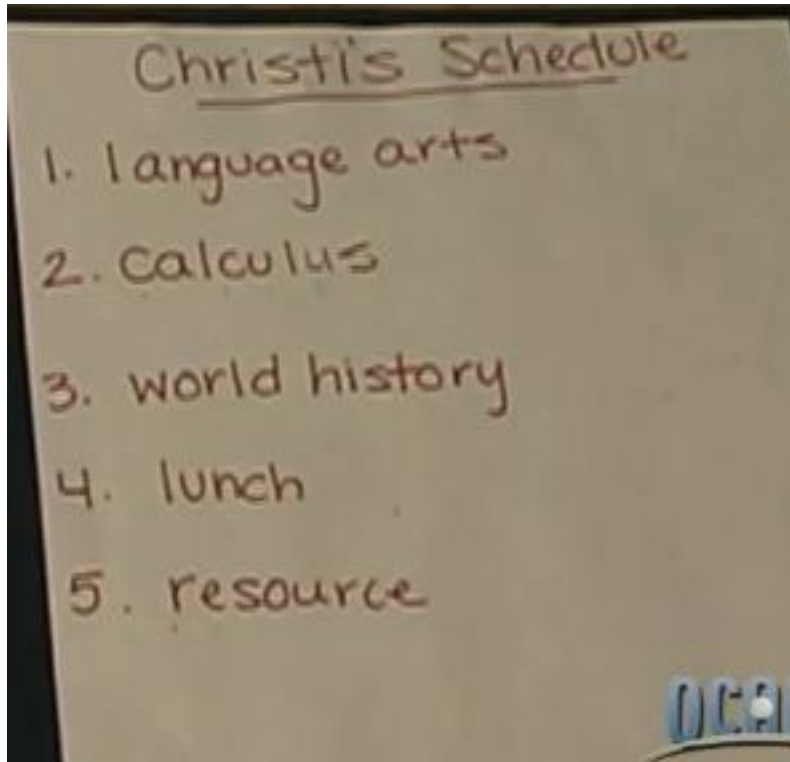
2nd - Guide child through schedule – assist/prompt as needed through steps, including taking schedule, object, or picture with them if needed

- ✓ *Limit verbal directions* – you do not want child to become dependent on your prompts!!!!

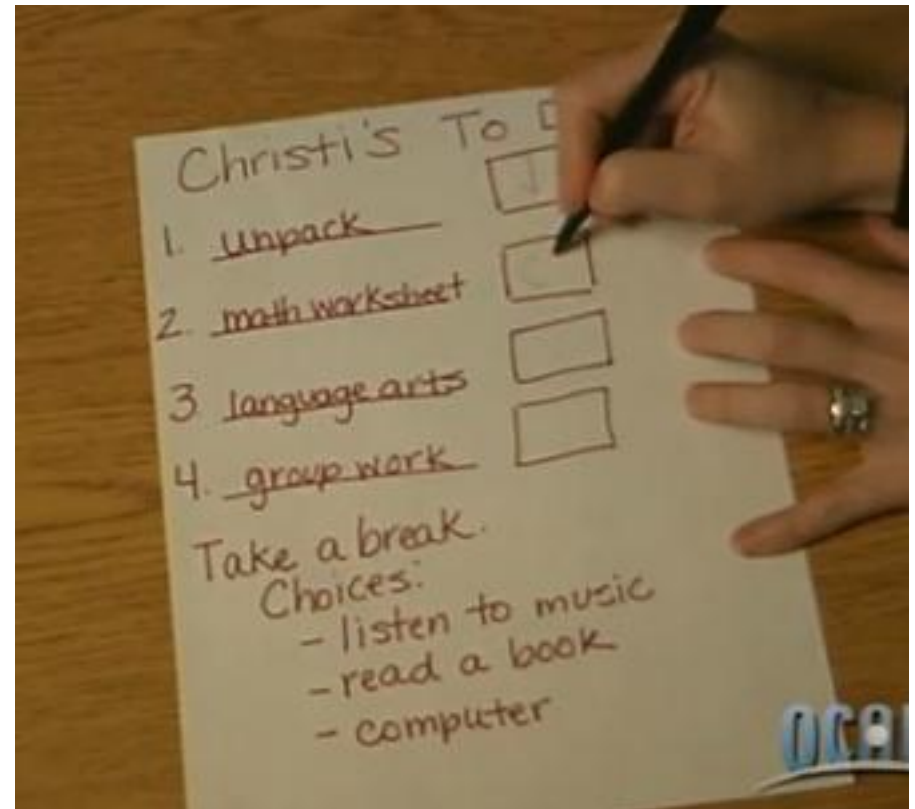
Introduce Schedule to the child

- ✓ Provide prompts and support student through schedule – be there every step of the way to ensure they learn how to do it correctly the first time – **ENSURE SUCCESS!!!**
- ✓ Reinforce! You want the student to know that the schedule is a good thing!!!
- 3rd – step back and allow the student to do schedule independently
- ✓ Be there to support if needed – **ENSURE SUCCESS!!!!**
- ✓ Reinforce!!!

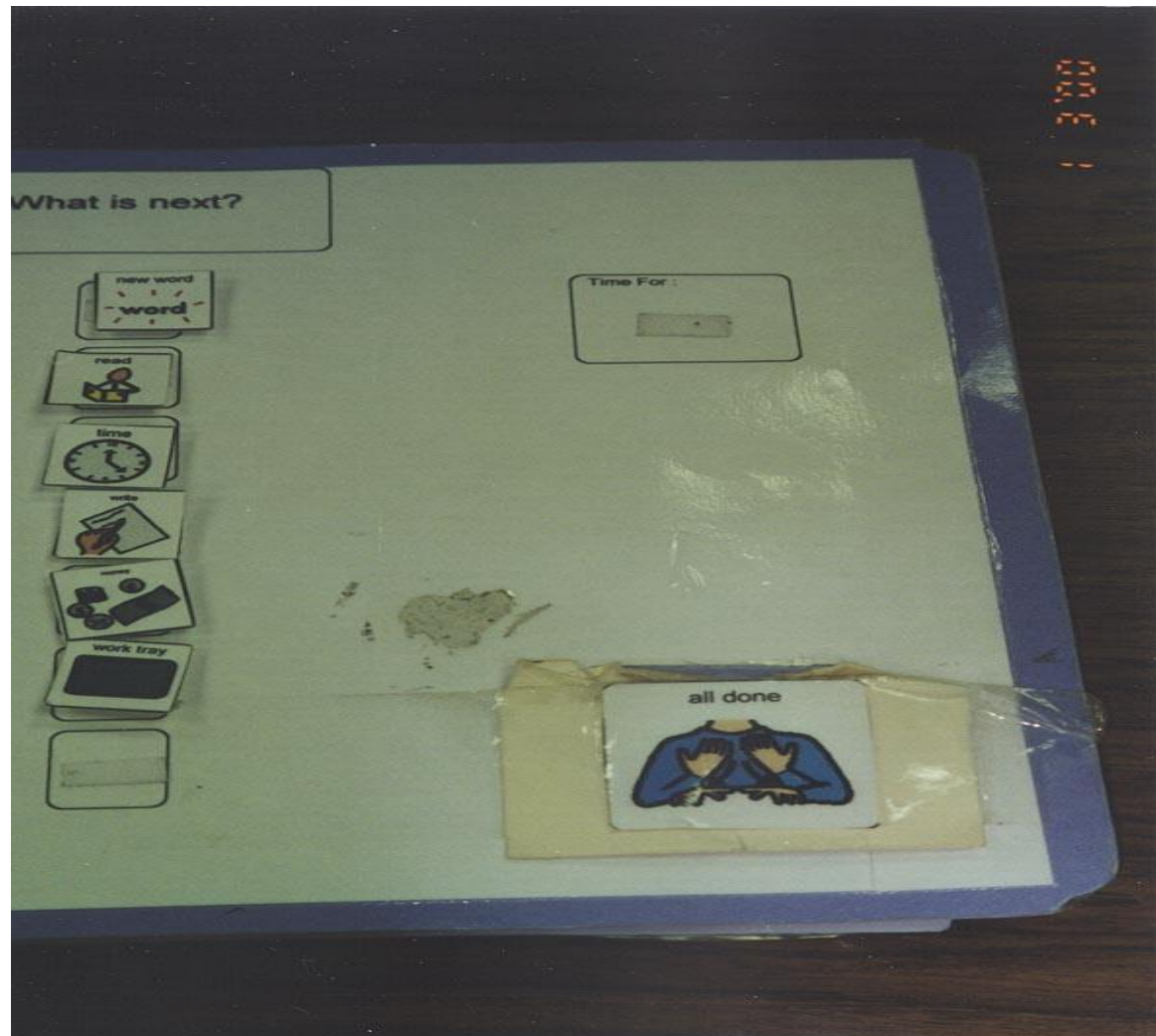
Individual Daily Schedule



To Do Schedule – Mini/Activity Schedule



Part-day Picture Schedule (Icon Level)



Now we have interventions... Who can help?

- Generalize skills and activities
 - Practice with different peers/adults and places

- Make sure you involve all environments in the training and interventions (i.e., home, school)

- Make sure to use peers as much as possible
 - Peer tutoring

Peer tutoring

Involve peers in instruction
peer tutors

Peer tutoring allows individuals to get....

- ✓ one on one help
- ✓ allows time to practice and learn

Peer tutoring

Practice skills in one on one setting then move skills to the natural environment as quickly as possible.

Determine a fading process for prompts, so they move towards independence as quickly as possible.

We know strategies...now what?

- Let's think of some ideas for community behaviors we deal with daily
 - Grocery shopping
 - Dining out

Grocery shopping

For your first trip you do not want to....

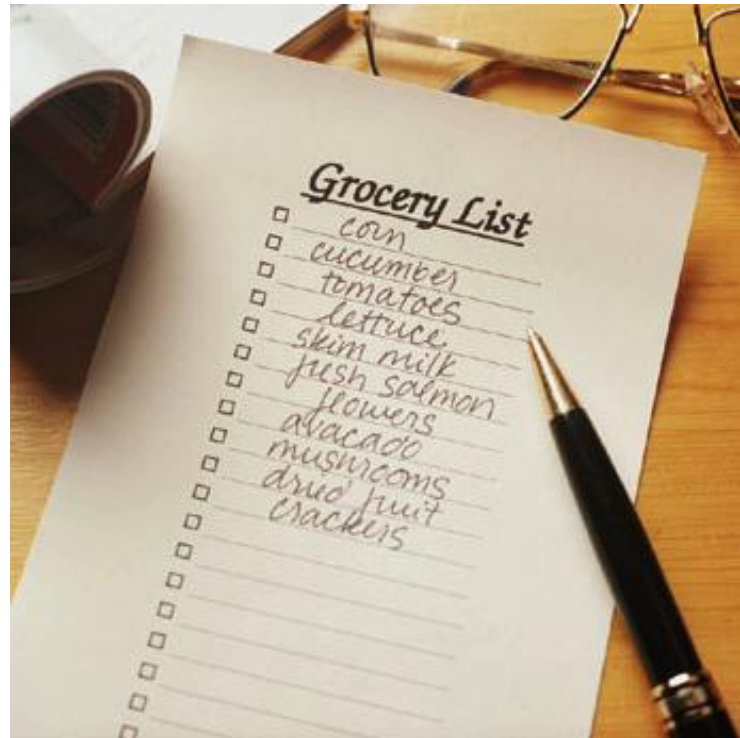
- ✓ go at the busiest time of the day/week
- ✓ Go when you are in a rush or need a lot of items

Grocery shopping

You do want to....

- ✓ Go at a time when it is less crowded
- ✓ Select a time when few items are needed, so the first trip will be reinforcing.
- ✓ Have a “job” for individual to participate in

Grocery shopping



Dining out

For your first trip you do not want to....

- ✓ Go when the restaurant is crowded
- ✓ Order something that will take a long time
- ✓ Choose a restaurant that is loud or over stimulating

Dining out

For your first trip you want to.....

- ✓ Select a restaurant that has their favorite food
- ✓ Prepare them ahead of time with the rules/expectations and the schedule
- ✓ Bring items or activities that they can have while waiting
- ✓ Have shown them the menu or items before the trip.

Thank you so much for coming!!

Questions??

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