



ausm[®]

autism society of minnesota

Minnesota's First Autism Resource[®]

Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): MN Swimming

Presented by:

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What is the Autism Society of Minnesota?

The Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to enhancing the lives of individuals and families affected by ASD.

Advocacy

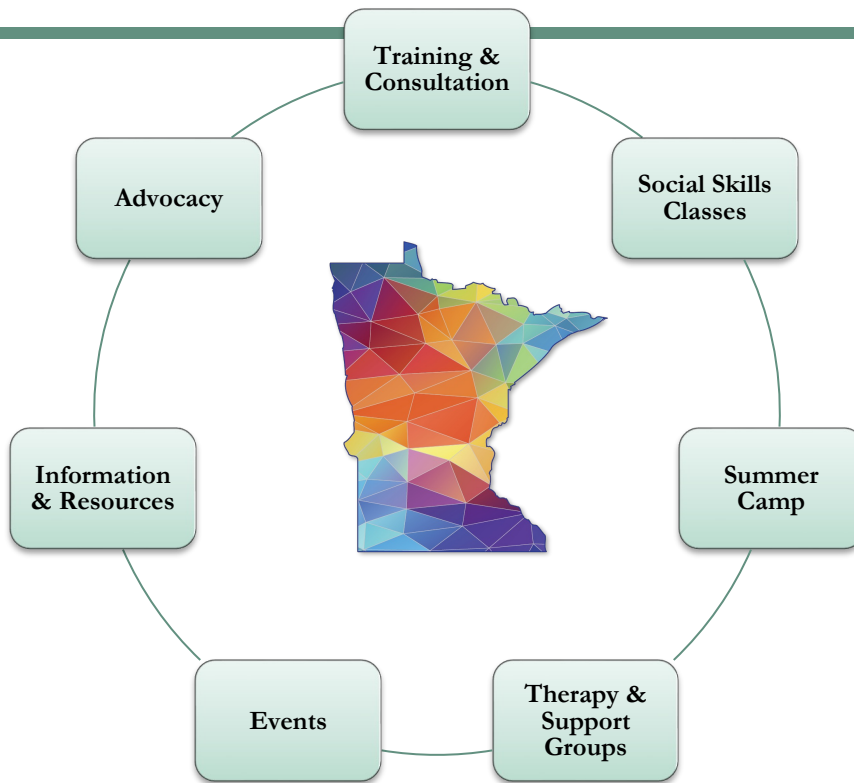
Education

Support

Collaboration

Community

AuSM Programming at a Glance

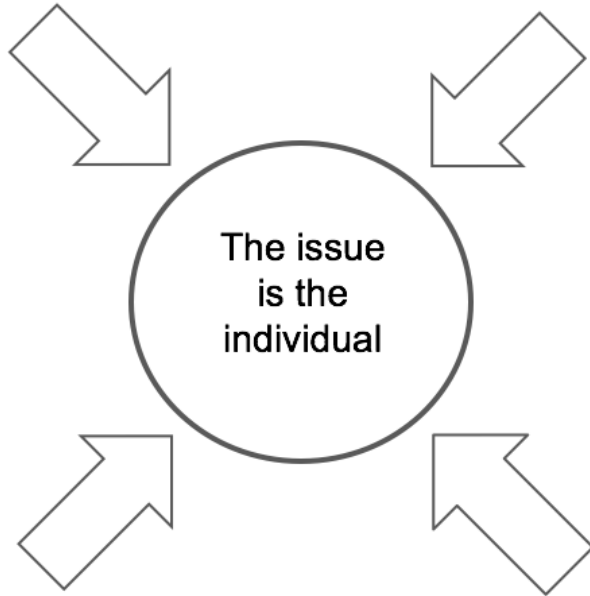




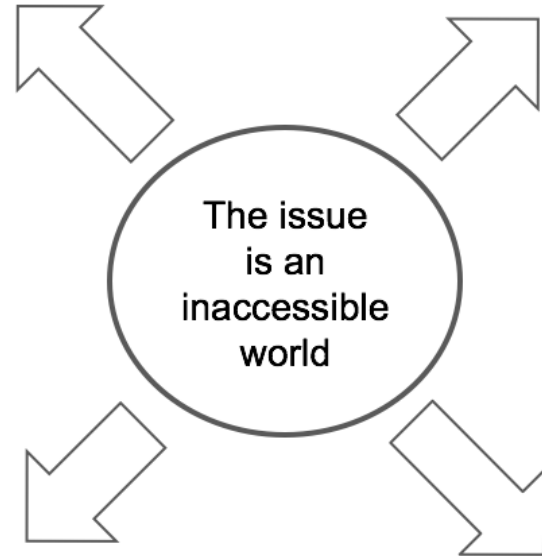
Training Objectives

- Understand that Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a diverse condition that is a part of all communities
- Learn how ASD can impacts individuals in different ways
- Review ways you can provide support for autistic individuals

What is a Disability?



Medical Model



Social Model

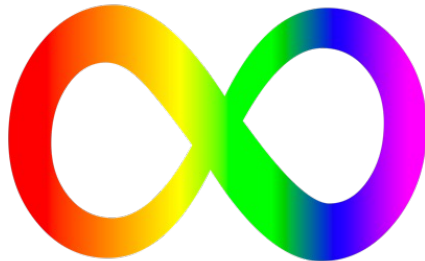
What is a Disability?



When environmental supports meet personal characteristics,
the outcome of disability is reduced

Neurodiversity

- Neurological differences are to be recognized and respected as any other form of human variation
- Neurodiversity is a natural and valuable form of human diversity
- There is not a “normal” or “right” type of brain



What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

- **Pervasive neurodevelopmental disorder**
 - Pervasive = affects all aspects of life
 - Neuro = brain
 - Developmental = lifelong
- ***Not a disease or mental illness***
- **Current Prevalence Estimates:**
 - 1 in 44 nationally
 - 1 in 36 in Minnesota
 - 4:1 male/female ratio*



What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

Autism is characterized by:

- Differences in **communication and socialization**
- The presence of **restricted, repetitive behaviors**

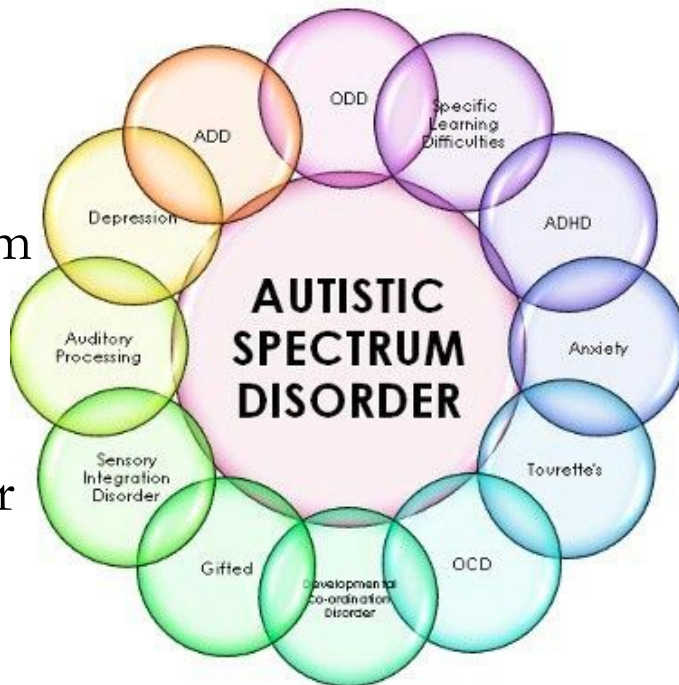
And is often accompanied by:

- Sensory processing differences
- Co-occurring physical and mental health issues
- Difficulty with executive function and emotional regulation
 - Executive function: organization, prioritizing, time-management, etc.
 - Emotional regulation: ability to manage own emotions and behavior



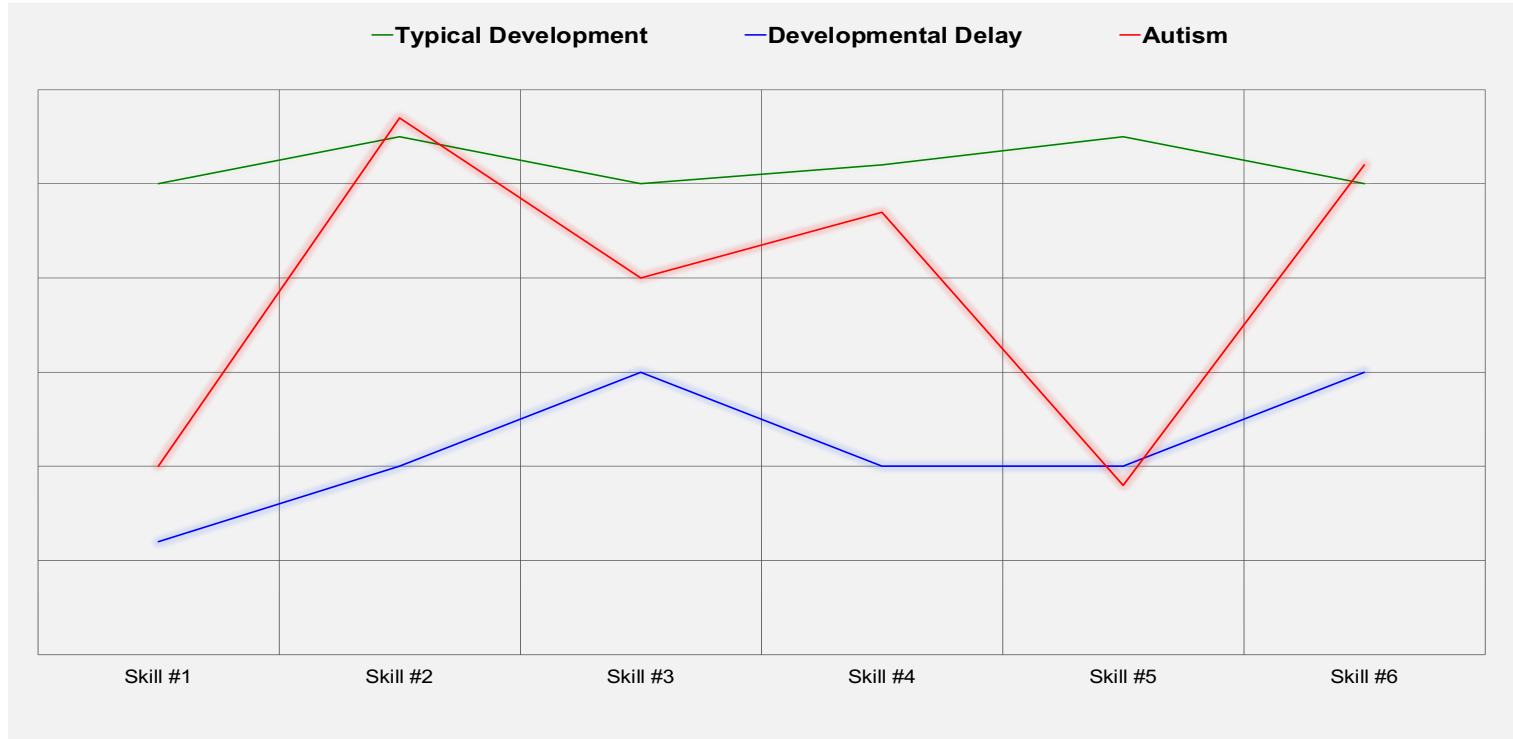
Overlapping Conditions

- Intellectual Disability (ID)
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)
- Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)




- Mental Health:
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - OCD
- Physical Health:
 - Epilepsy/Seizure
 - Gastro-intestinal
 - Sleep
 - Motor

Patterns of Development



Understanding ASD



**IF YOU'VE MET
ONE PERSON
WITH AUTISM, YOU'VE MET
ONE PERSON
WITH AUTISM.
-STEPHEN SHORE**

ASD Strengths

- Detail-oriented
- Focused
- Honest
- Loyal
- Kind
- Rule-bound
- Punctual
- Humorous
- Intelligent
- Creative



Communication Differences

- Expressive
 - Speech Delay
 - Echolalia (scripting)
 - Prosody
- Receptive
 - Processing Delay
 - Literal Thinking



Example: Literal Thinking

**This Door Must
Remain Closed
At All Times**

Fire Marshall

Socialization Differences

- Reduced interest in socializing
- Reciprocity (give and take) in conversation
- Eye contact
- Social expression, affect
- Implicit social learning (unwritten rules/hidden curriculum of social norms)
 - Interpersonal boundaries
 - Public vs. private behavior



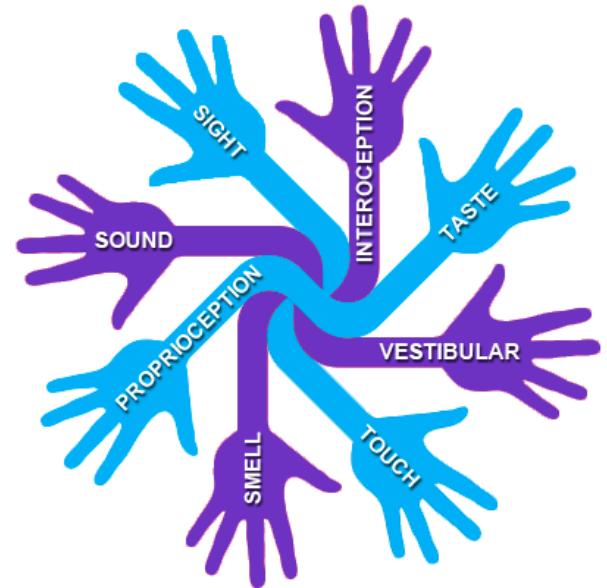
Cognitive Flexibility Differences

- Detail oriented hyper focus, deep knowledge of certain topics
- Difficulty multitasking and/or tolerating interruptions
- Dependence on highly structured directions/activities/environments
- Strict adherence to routine or steps
- Difficulty adapting behavior to changes



Sensory Perception

- Hypersensitive (**too much**) vs. hyposensitive (**need more**)
 - *Tactile/Somatosensory System*: touch
 - *Visual System*: sight
 - *Auditory System*: hearing
 - *Gustatory System*: taste
 - *Olfactory System*: smell
 - *Vestibular System*: balance
 - *Proprioceptive System*: body position
 - *Interoceptive System*: internal response



Stimming Behavior

Individuals with *ASD* experience the world differently.

Stimming behaviors are a way to regulate, including:

- Fidgeting
- Rocking
- Pacing
- Flapping
- Scripting
- Other repetitive behaviors



Strategy: Define Positive Expectations

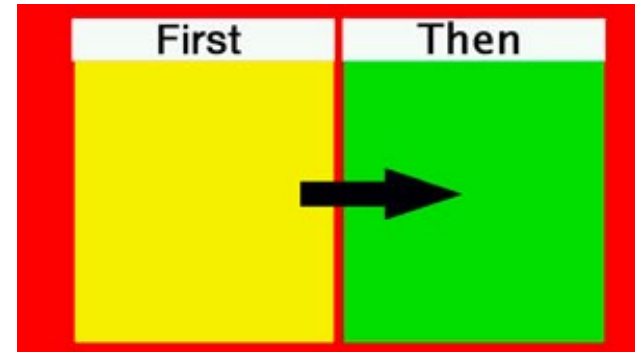
- What TO do, instead of what NOT to do
- Defined across settings and routines
 - Instruction
 - Modeling
 - Rehearsal
 - Feedback

*“Telling does
not equal
teaching”*



Strategy: Adjusting Language and Interaction

- Use language that is simple, clear, and literal
- Allow for additional processing time
- Break tasks down into smaller steps
- Offer choices to promote decision making
- Use written or visual communication

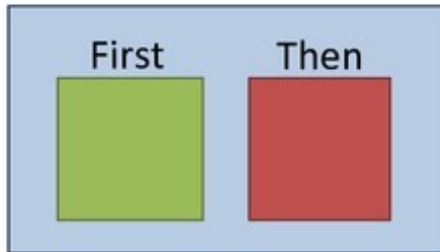


Visual Supports

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- Concrete cues that provide information about an activity, routine, or expectation.
- Some examples of common visual supports are visual cues, visual schedules, work systems, graphic organizers, and scripts.
- Recall: Verbal communication and “mentalizing” are often challenges.

Visual Schedules







Choice Boards






- Shared control
- Helps organize but still allows you to follow their lead
- Accommodates executive functioning challenges
- Fosters independence and self-determination



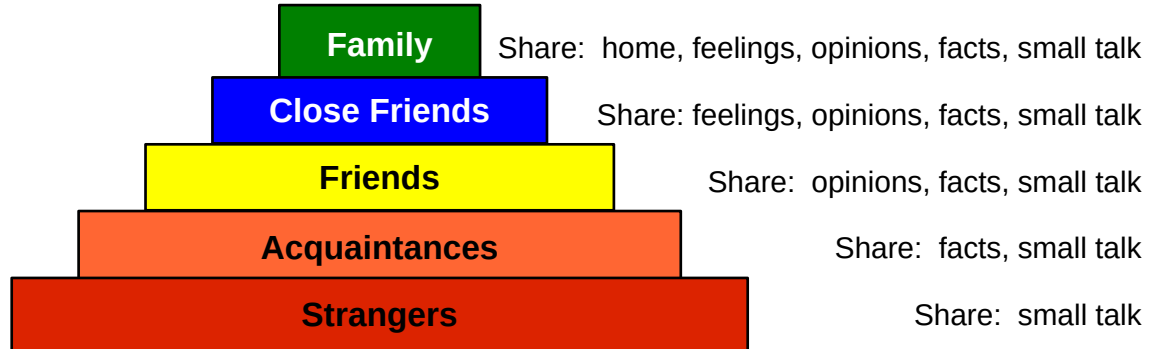
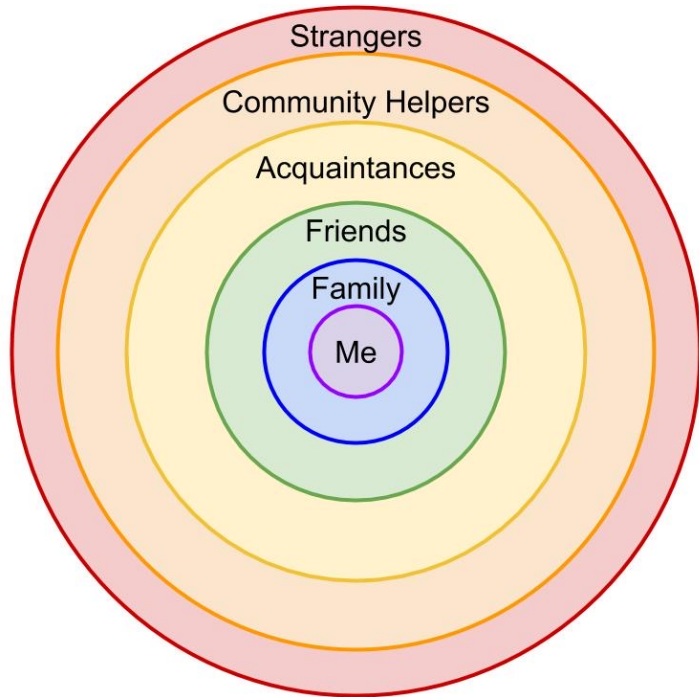
Regulation Tools

The ZONES of Regulation®

			
BLUE ZONE Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	GREEN ZONE Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	YELLOW ZONE Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	RED ZONE Mad/Angry Mean Terrified Yelling/Hitting Out of Control







5		Angry I've lost control. I'm not listening anymore. I could hit, kick or bite. I need a quiet place to calm down.
4		Overwhelmed Everything is too hard. I'm losing control and need to leave the environment I'm in. Give me space
3		Frustrated I'm not getting it, I'm showing signs of stress. I should take a break now.
2		Anxious Trying to stay focused, but having a hard time staying on task. Use calming strategies now
1		Happy Ready and willing to Work

Relationship Circles



Task Analysis

- The process of breaking down a complex or “chained” behavioral skill into smaller components in order to teach a skill.
- Other practices can be used to facilitate learning of the smaller steps.
- Promoting independence.

 Washing hands	
	Water on
	Hands wet
	Rub hands with soap
	Rinse
	Water off
	Dry

Strategy: Make It Visual



Strategy: Sensory Considerations

- Accommodate sensory sensitivities as requested
- Allow or provide sensory tools that can aid in focus and regulation
- Allow or provide breaks as needed, especially in prolonged sessions
- Designate space that can be used for sensory regulation purposes



Social Narratives

- Social narratives are simple stories that visually represent social situations and appropriate social behaviors.
- The social narrative connects **the important details** of a setting or social situation to support a person in **understanding the social context** and in developing new social skills.
- Individualized to the person it is being written for
- Usually written from first-person perspective (I or proper noun)
- Combines text and pictures (visual support)

Social Narrative: Example

I am going to the museum with my group.

At the museum, we will see many interesting things.

While I am there, I should stay with my group.

If an area is too noisy, I can put on my headphones.

Some items and exhibits can be touched, but others should not be touched. I can look for a sign to tell me if something is ok to touch.

During the trip to the museum, I can take a break if I need to. There is a quiet area on the second floor that I can ask to go to with a staff member.



Resources

- Spectrum News:
 - [spectrumnews.org](https://www.spectrumnews.org)
- ASD Modules:
 - afirm.fpg.unc.edu/afirm-modules
 - autisminternetmodules.org
- Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
 - askjan.org
- Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN): autisticadvocacy.org
- Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network: awnnetwork.org
- Lydia X. Z. Brown: autistichoya.net
- Stephen Shore: researchautism.org



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Minnesota's First Autism Resource[®]

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Established in 1971, the Autism Society of Minnesota is committed to education, advocacy and support designed to enhance the lives of those affected by autism from birth through retirement.

The Autism Society of Minnesota is a 501(c)(3) organization.