

# AUTISM NEWSLETTER

## 10 Critical Components for Success in the Special Education Classroom

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Summarized from Chapter 10

### Component #10 - Related Services and Other School Staff

#### Rationale

You are the instructional authority in your classroom. However, some of your students will have needs that require the expertise of additional professionals who have specialized training and experience that most classroom teachers do not have. These specialists support not only students but also staff through consultation and direct support in their specific areas of expertise. You have a team with whom you can consult with, observe, and learn from.

#### Direct vs. Indirect Service

Direct Service refers to hands-on, face-to-face interactions between the related services professional and the student. These interactions can take place in the classroom as well as in the cafeteria, in the gym or on the playground.

Indirect Service refers to the service provider typically working with the student's parents, teachers, para professionals, or other school personnel. The provider may integrate a combination of teaching, training, supervising or consulting with these adults to build their skills in supporting student progress.

#### Summary

It is often difficult to find time to consult with the other staff members working with your students. Carving out time to meet is important and a great opportunity to compare notes on skills, communication, behavioral needs and overall progress. These related service professionals are a great resource to the teacher and students.



### Autism Prevalence

Information taken from the Autism Speaks Website

- In 2023, the CDC reported that approximately 1 in 36 children in the U.S. is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), according to 2020 data.
- Boys are four times more likely to be diagnosed with autism than girls.
- Most children were still being diagnosed after age 4, though autism can be reliably diagnosed as early as age 2.
- 31% of children with ASD have an intellectual disability (intelligence quotient [IQ] <70), 25% are in the borderline range (IQ 71–85), and 44% have IQ scores in the average to above average range (i.e., IQ >85).
- Autism affects all ethnic and socioeconomic groups.
- Minority groups tend to be diagnosed later and less often.
- Early intervention affords the best opportunity to support healthy development and deliver benefits across the lifespan.
- There is no medical detection for autism.

#### What Causes Autism?

- Research indicates that genetics are involved in the vast majority of cases.
- Children born to older parents are at a higher risk for having autism.
- Parents who have a child with ASD have a 2 to 18 percent chance of having a second child who is also affected.
- Studies have shown that among identical twins, if one child has autism, the other will be affected about 36 to 95 percent of the time. In non-identical twins, if one child has autism, then the other is affected about 31 percent of the time.
- Over the last two decades, extensive research has asked whether there is any link between childhood vaccinations and autism. The results of this research are

clear: Vaccines do not cause autism

### Interventions and Supports

- Early intervention can improve learning, communication and social skills, as well as underlying brain development.
- Applied behavior analysis (ABA) and therapies based on its principles are the most researched and commonly used behavioral interventions for autism.
- Many children affected by autism also benefit from other interventions such as speech and occupational therapy.
- Developmental regression, or loss of skills, such as language and social interests, affects around 1 in 5 children who will go on to be diagnosed with autism and typically occurs between ages 1 and 3.

### Executive Functioning Skills

The Autism Helper

#### Prompt Hierarchy

