

NEWS & VIEWS

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STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN CAREER EDUCATION & TRANSITION PLANNING FOR ***STUDENTS WITH AUTISM***



In this month's webinar, Karla Wade dove into strategies for success specifically when working with students with neurodiverse abilities, including autism, ADD, and ADHD.



Dr. Karla Wade was our [March Webinar Wednesday](#) guest speaker! She joined the Transition Team at Emory Autism Center in early 2022. She began her career as a Special Education paraprofessional, and has worked as a classroom teacher, a career coach, a Transition Coordinator for her school district, a university adjunct, and a Statewide Transition Coordinator for the VR organization in her area. Dr. Wade is a proud early contributor to the Education Associates Project Discovery Curriculum. She is a native of Atlanta, Georgia, where she lives with her family, four dogs, three fish, and a snail.



FOUNDATIONS OF CAREER EDUCATION

When working with any population of students, it is crucial to understand the type of environment that allows them to learn and thrive. **When it comes to students with autism, keep these things in mind when lesson planning:**

Real Is Better

Students with autism often find it hard to imagine themselves in a hypothetical scenario while simply looking at a worksheet. Having real actions & objects from the situation, or better yet, actually being in the situation, makes learning about it much easier.

Seeing Impacts Motivation

If you ask a student if they want to do something, they may answer “no” simply because they can’t picture themselves in the situation. If you can show the student what it looks like to participate, they may become more motivated to be involved.

Sensitivities are a Struggle

Often, students with autism are not lacking the skills to complete a task; rather, they are experiencing sensitivities that hinder their success. These can be social, environmental, or have to do with requirements (like task order or speed).

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Tom is feeding Mrs. Jones her lunch. Strained peas and corn are all over Mrs. Jones. Tom should:	
A	Wash Mrs. Jones' face and hands and get clean clothes.
B	Leave
C	Clean

Beth is working as a caregiver. Her patient, Mr. Wade, hits his leg against the bed and when she is helping him into his wheelchair, his leg begins to bleed. She should:	
A	Keep on with her day. The bleeding will stop.
B	Call for help. The nurse in charge will come check Mr. Wade.
C	Yell at Mr. Wade for being so clumsy.



BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Students with autism may experience many barriers to their success, but most of them can be sorted into four different categories. **Here, we have compiled a list of abilities that exemplify each category:**

Executive Functioning

- Task initiation
- Self-monitoring
- Problem solving & flexible thinking
- Emotional & impulse control
- Planning & prioritizing

Self-Awareness

- Self-advocacy & self-efficacy
- Choice making & problem solving
- Goal setting
- Self-regulation & self-knowledge

Daily Living Skills

- Money management
- Cooking skills
- Household cleaning
- Household maintenance
- Daily hygiene
- Health & wellness
- Dressing & laundry

Social Skills

- Greetings conversation skills
- Recognizing social cues
- Handling conflict
- Taking others' perspectives
- Accepting criticism
- Figurative language taken literally

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OVERCOMING BARRIERS

There are many practical ways to help students overcome barriers to their success. Some of them are resources or strategies, while others involve building scenarios in a safe space for students to explore. It is important to allow students to fail in a supportive environment. **Here are some of our favorite ways to overcome barriers:**

- Use a checklist to manage daily tasks. Use a tool like goblin.tools to create a task analysis for you. Instead of nagging about doing regular activities, blame the checklist for the constant reminder.

- Model conflict resolution for the students, then ask them to practice the things they have seen you do.

“ Value the dignity of risk and let them fail now... and then teach them resilience.

- Karla Wade

- Put students in social situations. This could be a scripted practice for making doctor appointments, asking for an accommodation, or trying a new group activity. Then, use situation cards to practice different aspects of the scenario.
- Give students options where appropriate so they develop a sense of self efficacy and allow their voices to be heard.

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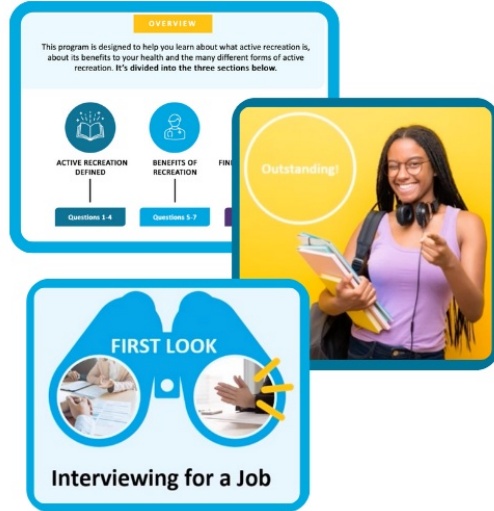


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CHECK OUT OUR FRESH NEW LOOK!

We are passionate about providing quality resources that empower educators as they support their students' journeys to life-long success. We've made some improvements to our website & curriculum that we are excited to share with you!

[NEW GRAPHICS](#)



Our Achieve Life Skills curriculum just got a brand new look! We've updated the graphics in our Achieve Life Skills product line to bring a modern feel to the same great curriculum that you've been able to trust for over 40 years!

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Education Associates | P.O. Box 23308, Louisville, KY 40223

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Sent bytimothyhagan@educationassociates.com