

Slide 1




Slide 2

 **What does school success look like for the child with autism?**

- The child is as ready to learn as possible
- They enjoy going to school and
- Like their teacher, school staff, and fellow students who accept the child on the spectrum
- School placement and learning demands are appropriate to the child's developmental level
- The child is making progress emotionally, socially, and intellectually
- Learning promotes curiosity and is fun!

Slide 3

 **What does school success look like for a child with autism?**

No different than any other child!

What's different may be the autistic child's developmental & learning needs

Slide 4

The Path of Learning
Leads to the 7 Habits

Slide 5

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective
Kindergarteners

1. Going along with the gang
2. Auditory process from a distance
3. Get the main idea
4. Perform connected sequences of actions
5. Use active memory
6. Process information quickly
7. Know when to ask for help


Slide 6

Meet Julian


Slide 7

The 7 Habits

- Define characteristics of good learners and are aspirational
 - They are **goals based on the child's capacities**
 - Not** prescriptions or demands
- I will describe the path that leads to **the joy of learning**
- That accepts and respects the child's abilities and potential
- And **leads to** the 7 Habits



Slide 8



The Acceptance Paradox

It all starts with...
The
Acceptance
Paradox

Accepting the child exactly where they're at developmentally, is the best and fastest way to help the child make progress toward their full potential!

Slide 9

Amygdala
This is responsible for all emotional responses including aggression.

Hypothalamus
This is responsible for all autonomic responses such as hunger, thirst, and temperature.


Brain Stem
The brain stem is located at the base of the cerebellum and serves as the major pathway for sensory messages from the rest of the body to the brain.

Cerebral Cortex
The cerebral cortex is the outer layer of the brain. It is responsible for all higher level functions, including perception, thought, and conscious awareness.

Basal Ganglia
This is located in the center of the cerebral hemisphere that controls the voluntary movements of the body.


Corpus Callosum
This is the bridge between the two hemispheres of the brain. It is responsible for all communication between the two hemispheres.

Slide 10



Autistic Children Often Learn Differently

- They learn based on their dominating interests
- They like order, predictability, and keeping the world the same
- They often have 'sensory' and self regulation challenges
- They often acquire language and social skills on a different timeline.
- They often qualify for special education services (Individualized Education Plan)



Slide 11



Be Strengths Oriented!

Difficulties & Strengths


Difficulties

- Dominated by sensations
- Want to keep the world the same.
- Trouble with transitions:
- Difficulties with social interactions
- Anxious, easily overwhelmed by demands

Strengths/Potential


- Neuroplasticity: Great potential
- Experts, savants
- Often hyperlexic: Can read early
- Often have great memories
- Learn facts well
- Technologically inclined

Slide 12




Child Centered Learning*

IF A CHILD CAN'T LEARN
THE WAY WE TEACH,
MAYBE WE SHOULD
TEACH THE WAY THEY
LEARN.



*Especially important for children with ASD

Slide 13



Autism: The Path to the 7 Habits

1. Effective intensive early intervention

2. A developmental, relationship-based approach

- Promotes social-emotional thinking and imagination

3. Is my child with autism ready for kindergarten?

4. Parents: Be school savvy!


- Teaching the way the child with autism learns

5. To Tell or Not to Tell:

- The importance of *belonging*

6. Promoting the '7 Habits'

Slide 14




What is 'Intensive Early Intervention'?

National Research Council (2001)

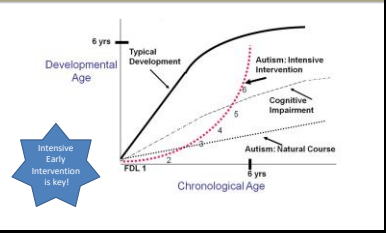
- Begin early: 18 month-5 years
- 10-15 (10-40) hours/week
- 1:1 or 1:2 Adult to child ratio
- Engaging
- Strategic & Evidence-based
 - Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)
 - Developmental Relationship-based
 - Parent implemented vs therapist delivered
- Comprehensive programs address ASD

Slide 15




Developmental Course of Autism

Intensive Early Intervention is key!



Slide 16




9 Functional Developmental Levels*

1. Self regulation and shared attention (FDL 1)
2. Engagement (FDL 2)
3. Two-way Communication (FDL 3)
4. Complex two-way Communication (FDL 4) (18m)
5. Shared Meanings & Symbolic Play (FDL 5—2y)
6. Emotional Thinking (FDL 6—3-5 year olds)
7. Multi-causal Thinking (FDL 7—5-7 years old)
8. Shades of Gray Thinking (FDL 8—8-12 year old)
9. Thinking off an Internal Standard (FDL 9—13+ year old)


*Greenspan and Weider

Slide 17



Early Intervention: FDLs 1 & 2

Slide 18



Developmental Progress

Slow

Medium

Fast

Slide 19

Developmental Progress

- For faster developmental movers, the path leads to high school diploma and a college education.
- For middle movers, the path leads to h.s. certificate, self sufficiency with or without full time work
- For slower movers, the path leads to reaching for one's fullest potential along the lines that I will describe

Slide 20

Climbing the Language Mountain

Conversations

Expressive Sentences

Expressive Single Words

Receptive: Give/Get Commands, Realizes

Expressive Gestural Communication


Two Way Back and Forth Communication

Engagement

Shared Attention

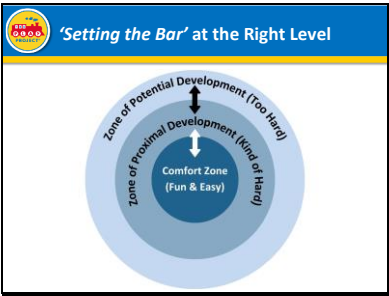
Early Intensive Intervention is working on these FDLs

Slide 21



FDL 3 & 4 with Coach


Slide 22



Slide 23

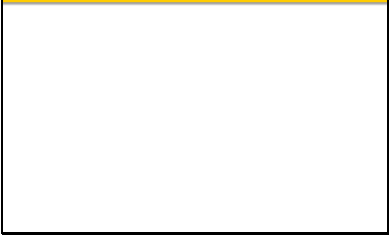
The Values Families Hold Dear

- All parents want two things:
 - A better relationship with their child
 - Their child to reach their full potential
- Marked by continuous developmental progress
- Improved social connectedness
- A life that is playful, meaningful, and growth oriented
- All parents want their child to flourish & be happy



Slide 24

FDL 4 with Mom



Slide 25

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Kindergarteners

1. Going along with the gang
2. Auditory process from a distance
3. Get the main idea
4. Perform connected sequences of actions
5. Use active memory
6. Process information quickly
7. Know when to ask for help


Slide 26

The Paradox of Personal Growth

Beware The Paradox of Personal Growth

Accepting your child exactly where they are at developmentally does **not** mean lowering expectations

Slide 27



- Parents with high expectations have children who achieve high levels of success
- Very good parents hurt their child's feelings—by saying 'No'.
- By making appropriate demands you give your child a 'message of competence'.
- By not expecting them to do what they can—the philosophy of can—they internalize weakness and often become 'little tyrants'. They MUST have what they want, or they fall apart (secretly feel weak).
- Poor frustration tolerance, lowered self efficacy (esteem) are the result of too much tenderheartedness & permissiveness

Slide 28

The Path to Kindergarten

- The initial period of 1-2 years of intensive intervention hopefully has helped the child move up to FDL 4-5 by age 3. Like Julian
- The child is more connected socially, but receptive and expressive language are still developing
- As the child leaves early intervention and the child turns 3 years old, parents are considering pre-school.
- Special education services now include an IEP, Individualized Education Plan
- Parents enter the public school system.

Slide 29


The Philosophy of 'Can'

- The years before kindergarten are big growth years for all children
- This is a time to work in that Zone of Proximal Development
- Here's some guidance: "Ask yourself: '**Can my child do this?**' **if they can, then they should.**"
- THIS IS THE PHILOSOPHY OF 'CAN'
- It helps parents understand their child's potential.

Slide 30

P.S. Limit Screens (1-2 hours max). . .

Slide 31



Autism: The Path to the 7 Habits

1. Effective intensive early intervention
2. **A developmental, relationship-based approach**
 - Promotes social-emotional thinking and imagination
3. Is my child with autism ready for kindergarten?
4. Parents: Be school savvy!
 - Teaching the way the child with autism learns
5. To Tell or Not to Tell:
 - The importance of *belonging*
6. Promoting the '7 Habits'

Slide 32

A Developmental, Relationship-based Approach

- Functional social development follows a natural course described by Greenspan and Weider regardless of age
- The affect diathesis hypothesis
 - **Like a growing flower**
- We should embrace the child's unique profile
- It's all about relationship

Slide 33



Relationships

- Drive development
- Individualize interaction
- Lead to engagement and interaction

When you do what the child loves
the child will love
to be with you
and others!




Slide 34

Hopefully Through Early Intervention You child is Getting to FDL 4-6

1. Self regulation and shared attention (FDL 1)
2. Engagement (FDL 2)
3. Two-way Communication (FDL 3)
4. **Complex two-way Communication (FDL 4) (18m)**
5. **Shared Meanings & Symbolic Play (FDL 5—2y)**
6. **Emotional Thinking (FDL 6—3-5 year olds)**
7. Multi-causal Thinking (FDL 7—5-7 years old)
8. Shades of Gray Thinking (FDL 8—8-12 year old)
9. Thinking off an Internal Standard (FDL 9—13+ year old)

*Greenspan and Weider

Slide 35

EQ is More Important than IQ

- As the child progresses to FDL 4-5 and turns 4-5 yrs old
- The Big 3 Developmental Domains:
 - Interaction
 - Imagination
 - Emotions
- Imagination
 - Pretend/Make believe
 - Sense of humor
 - Imagining the past and future
 - Imagining how others feel

Slide 36

Simple Play

Simple (One Idea)
Imaginative Play

- Everything come alive
- Trains that make train noises
- Animal sounds and pretending to be an animal
- Babies that eat
- Swords
- Monster chase
- Puppets with big mouths that talk and eat
- Doctor shots

Slide 37

Imaginative Play

More Complex
(Two Idea)
Imaginative Play

- Role playing
- Doctor
- Teacher
- Good guys and bad guys
- Taking care of babies

Slide 38

FDL 5 and Social Imagination

Slide 39



The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Kindergarteners

1. Going along with the gang—connecting to people
2. Auditory process from a distance—understands what people are saying
3. Get the main idea—Still early for Julian but he's getting there
4. Perform connected sequences of actions—he knows he's scaring her when he does something
5. Use active memory—he knows what dinosaurs are for
6. *Process information quickly—emerging*
7. Know when to ask for help—not yet

Slide 40

Putting Words on Feelings



- When we recognize our children's feelings by 'mirroring' back to them what they are feeling. . .
- . . .they learn to put words on their feelings
- Recent studies show that the amygdala which is the seat of strong feelings is less regulated in children with ASD
- They can be overwhelmed with impulses
- This leads to misbehavior



Slide 41

Mirror Feelings

- *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk*—Faber and Mazlish
- Mirrors ***don't ask questions***. They express facts and make statements:
- "You think this work is too hard! That you can't do it."



Slide 42

Hopefully Through Early Intervention
You child is Getting to FDL 4-6

1. Self regulation and shared attention (FDL 1)
2. Engagement (FDL 2)
3. Two-way Communication (FDL 3)
4. Complex two-way Communication (FDL 4) (18m)
5. Shared Meanings & Symbolic Play (FDL 5—2y)
6. **Emotional Thinking (FDL 6—3-5 year olds)**
7. Multi-causal Thinking (FDL 7—5-7 years old)
8. Shades of Gray Thinking (FDL 8—8-12 year old)
9. Thinking off an Internal Standard (FDL 9—13+ year old)

*Greenspan and Weider

Slide 43




Promoting Social/Emotional Thinking


The All Important FDL 6!

- Talking in short to long sentences
- 'Why' and 'when' questions.
 - Understands cause and effect; Builds bridges between ideas
 - Two ideas connected logically
 - Lives in time. Can recall the immediate past (what did you eat for breakfast?)
- Identifies own and others' feelings
- Recognizes relationship between feeling, behavior, and consequences
- Two thematic pretend play
- Can carry on simple to complex conversations
- Can play with peers
- Misbehavior as developmental accomplishment

Slide 44



Climbing the Language Mountain



Conversations

Expressive Sentences

Expressive Single Words

Receptive Give/Get Commands, Routines

Expressive Gestural Communication


Two Way Back and Forth Communication

Engagement

Shared Attention

Kindergarten readiness should focus on these levels

Slide 45



Development of Social Skills

Hint: Over time EQ will lead to IQ

Social and Academic Ability


Language

Emotion

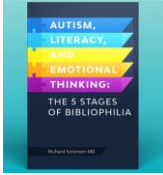
Imagination


Interaction

Slide 46



Books & Reading Comprehension







Hint: It's free and only 25 pages!


- See my new eBook: *Autism, Literacy and Emotional Thinking*
- **Bibliophilia:**
 - The book (tastes good)
 - The picture on the page
 - The story on the page
 - The story in the book

Slide 47






Slide 48



Julian: An Emotional Thinker

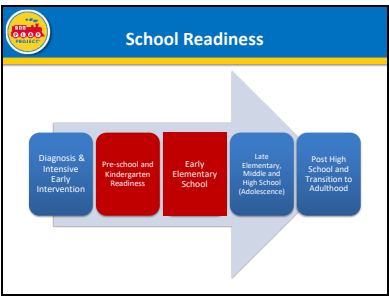
Slide 49




The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Kindergarteners

1. Going along with the gang
2. Auditory process from a distance
3. Get the main idea
4. Perform connected sequences of actions
5. Use active memory
6. Process information quickly
7. Know when to ask for help

Slide 50




Slide 51



Autism: The Path to the 7 Habits


1. Effective intensive early intervention
2. A developmental, relationship-based approach
 - Promotes social-emotional thinking and imagination
3. **Is my child with autism ready for kindergarten?**
4. Parents: Be school savvy!
 - Teaching the way the child with autism learns
5. To Tell or Not to Tell:
 - The importance of *belonging*
6. Promoting the '7 Habits'

Slide 52




Today's Kindergarten

- Today's kindergarten is not your grandmother's kindergarten
- Preschool is more like the old kindergarten
- Play and social interaction are not the main focus anymore
- All day programming is standard
- The bar for academics is set high
- The bar for compliance is set high



Slide 53




Ready for Kindergarten?

Schools will help you determine if your child is *academically ready*

- Can they pass kindergarten screening tests?
- Do they have basic 3 R's skills?
 - Knows colors, shapes, numbers, letters etc.
 - *Perform connected actions*
 - Fine motor skills, beginning to be able to form letters
- Is toileting completely on their own?
- Able to follow multiple step commands?
 - *Auditory process from a distance*
- Behaviorally ready to comply with demands?
 - *Use active memory*
 - *Process information quickly*
- Socially adept?
 - *Go along with the gang*

Slide 54



If not. . .Delay Kindergarten!

- Once in a lifetime chance to gain a year on peers
- One year at this age is huge in terms of development.
 - The developmental curve is steep
 - The child can move solidly into FDL 6 or even 7
- The law requires the child to be in school by age 6 if their birthday is before September 1st
- *I've **never** had parents who regretted waiting*


Hint:

What kindergarten's last birthday and one birthday for that's 6?


Slide 55


Slower & Medium Developers

- Gaining a year is great for slower and medium developers too!
- The 'just right challenge'. Set the bar at the Zone of Proximal Development and hit the nail on the head
- Keep working on the FDLs!
- When they go to kindergarten consider more support
- Be strength's oriented and
- Go for the 'Philosophy of CAN'
- Parents with high expectations have children who make progress!




Slide 56

 P.S. Limit Screens (1-2 hours max) . . .



Slide 57




Overview

Autism: The Path to the 7 Habits


1. Effective intensive early intervention
2. A developmental, relationship-based approach
 - Promotes social-emotional thinking and imagination
3. Is my child with autism ready for kindergarten?
4. **Parents: Be school savvy!**
 - **Teach the way the child with autism learns**
5. To Tell or Not to Tell:
 - The importance of *belonging*
6. Promoting the '7 Habits'

Slide 58




Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

- IEPs (if needed) give parents power to individualized your child's learning.
- **Know your rights!**
 - Think of the IEP as a menu of options (restaurant analogy)
 - You can get whatever you want (within reason)
- Parents rarely feel empowered by the school systems
- Know these terms:
 - IEP, FAPE (Free and **Appropriate**), LRE (**Least Restrictive Environment**)



Hint! Go to Wrights Law for more about IEPs

Slide 59



Least Restrictive (More inclusive) Environment (LRE)

General Ed with peers + Push in or Go out for (SLP, OT, MSW, Special Ed Teacher)

Gen Ed + Resource Room + Push in/Go Out


General Ed + a Part-time Aide/Parapro push in/go out

Gen Ed + Full Time Aide/Para + push in/go out

Self contained class with peers with mixed disabilities with mainstreaming for gym, recess, music, art (noisy)

Small self-contained class with all children on the spectrum and little mainstreaming

Slide 60




"Thou Shalt Not Be
The Highest Functioning Child
In Thy Classroom!"

Slide 61

- The less restrictive the better in kindergarten
- The child will model after other children
- Being with a range of children helps all children
- There is a growing sense of acceptance of differences and a feeling of belonging


Belonging

Slide 62




School & IEPs

- The teacher is *THE* most important factor: **Structured and Nurturing** (*can't pick*)
- Parents: Trust your intuitions when choosing schools
 - There is often school of choice
- The most important thing: **Put all requests in writing!***
- Individualize the learning process by giving m&m's!




Get it in WRITING!




*Writing makes it LEGAL!

Slide 63




Give them m&m's

- meaning and motivation
- Learning is a lifetime of joy or a school career of unhappiness and boredom
- IEPs should be built around the child's interests
- Move, go into nature, be project oriented, work with your hands, plant a garden
- Make learning/reading fun
- Use the 'stone in the pond approach'





Slide 64




The Stone in the Pond

- Start with what the child loves
- Planets, dinosaurs, Captain Underpants, American Girl Dolls
- Individualize the curriculum
- Expand their interests (ripples out to the edges)
 - Thomas the Tank Engine
 - Other types of trains
 - Where trains go
 - Stories about trains
 - Drawing trains




Slide 65




School & IEPs

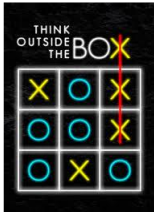
- Think about the **positive** educational outcomes you want your child to achieve.
 - Interactional
 - Imaginative
 - Emotional
 - Developmental
 - Social
 - Self regulation
 - Academic
- **Write out** what you want and give it to the school *at the beginning* of the school year to create your child's IEP (see handouts)



Slide 66



Create a Creative IEP



Slide 67



PS. Have Fun Learning







KEEP CALM
AND
KEEP HAVING FUN

Fun is more important than...




Not having fun.


Slide 68

Rewards Are Not Reasons

- Beware of 'The Stop Light' approach to motivation in schools (Red, Yellow, Green)
 - Rewards are incentives not reasons
- Intrinsic motivations/reasons are best
 - To learn, to get smarter, to create
- **Exhort children to love learning**
- **Teach the way the child learns**
 - That's what great teachers do




Slide 69



FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
fldoe.org

Teach Self Regulation Skills

- Build in sensory breaks
- Create a micro-environment
 - Headphones
 - Sun glasses
 - Hats
 - Soothing music
- Playing video games
- Progressive relaxation
- Breathing
- Yoga
- Meditation



Slide 70


Slide 71

Slide 72

Slide 73




Slide 74



Autism: The Path to the 7 Habits

1. Effective intensive early intervention
2. A developmental, relationship-based approach
 - Promotes social-emotional thinking and imagination
3. Is my child with autism ready for kindergarten?
4. Parents: Be school savvy!
 - Teach the way the child with autism learns
5. To Tell or Not to Tell:
 - The importance of *belonging*
6. **Promoting the '7 Habits'**

Slide 75



The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Kindergarteners


1. Going along with the gang
2. Auditory process from a distance
3. Get the main idea
4. Perform connected sequences of actions
5. Use active memory
6. Process information quickly
7. Know when to ask for help

Slide 76

Barriers to the 7 Habits

- Poor school placement
- Teacher/child mismatch
- Medical conditions
 - Genetic disorders (Fragile X, Retts, etc.)
 - ADHD
 - Specific Learning Disabilities (LD)
 - Anxiety disorder
- Low average IQ—a fooler
- Poor self regulation/behavioral problems
- Medications side effects

Slide 77



Conclusion

- The path to achieving the **7 Habits of Highly Effective Kindergartners** begins with a solid foundation of functional emotional development starting as early as possible.
- I hope I have successfully provided you with all the key milestones along that path
- Whether children with autism developed more slowly or quickly the essential elements of the path do not change
- Good luck in challenging your children to achieve their full potential in school in a way that is joyful, fun, & meaningful.
- With a curriculum designed to teach them in the way they learn best!

Slide 78

The Joy of Learning

fun easy
share software
beautiful reflection
exciting anonymous
knowledge
ice breaker
ideas
brainstorm
thoughts
live
inclusive presentations
cool
