



Strategies for Effective Teaming for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

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Building and sustaining collaborative educational teams is an effective approach for meeting the diverse needs of students with ASD. Effective teaming amongst educational teams can be beneficial to a broader group of people including family members, students, administrators, educators, and ancillary staff members.

There are numerous advantages in using a team approach when educating students with ASD. These advantages can include the following:

- Team members work together to achieve a common goal, which can be program or student specific.
- Effective team meetings can provide professional development opportunities regarding evidence-based practices and interventions.
- Generating and implementing educational plans that are tailored to meet the specific needs of the student (i.e. IEP and BIP). This component can improve student success because everyone is knowledgeable and responsible for the plan.
- Progress monitoring among various educators and other providers to improve the implementation of IEP goals, effectiveness of interventions, and instructional strategies
- Teaming opportunities allow professionals to share their knowledge and expertise with each other to provide effective educational programming for the student (s).

- Generalization of interventions and skills across settings and people can occur through collaborative programming. This can occur when team members discuss ways to implement interventions, share strategies and ideas, and collect data.
- Data collection systems are reviewed and shared by team members weekly or bi-weekly

Creating effective teams involves the following:

- Establishing support from administrators to meet and function as a team is an absolute essential
- Creating an atmosphere that welcomes all team members to include multiple disciplines
- Defining roles and responsibilities amongst team members (i.e. roles/responsibilities associated with administrators, educational and ancillary staff members)
- Developing common goals which can include team and student goals.

Strategies to promote collaboration:

- Create a consistent schedule to meet as a whole team (i.e. bi-weekly or monthly - plan to meet for approximately 1 hour)
- Include administrators in the planning and implementation of team meetings.

Tips for Success

Components of effective and collaborative teams include:

- Building a team structure
- Acquiring teamwork skills
- Implementing action plans
- Working together in collaborative ways
- Improving communication and develop ways to handle conflict

Create equity and positive interdependence among team members:

- Teams can be comprised of two or more people that share a common goal. Teams can be also be as large as 10-15 with administrators, professionals, and paraprofessionals.
- Create an inclusive environment/atmosphere where everyone feels a part of the team.
- Invite all team members to scheduled meetings and give advanced notice of changes.
- Encourage and demonstrate active listening during consultations and team meetings.
- Rotate and share responsibilities during the team meetings so all team members fill the following roles: meeting facilitator, timekeeper, and note taker. Sample agenda template is included in this information brief.
- Keep a binder of agendas and notes in a centralized location to reference and access if absent from the meeting.



Resources:

- Heflin, L.J., & Alaimo, D.F. (2007). *Students with autism spectrum disorders: Effective instructional practices*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder (NPDC): <http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/>
- Snell, M.E., & Janney, R. (2000). *Collaborative teaming*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

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Sample Agenda

Team Meeting _____

Date/Time: _____

Location: _____

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Facilitator: | Timekeeper: | Note taker: |
| | | |
| Attendees: | | |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Meeting Objective | |
|-------------------|--|

Agenda/Discussion Items

| | |
|----|--|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

Action Plans

| Description | Person Responsible | Due Date |
|-------------|--------------------|----------|
| | | |
| | | |

Next Meeting Date/Time: _____

Facilitator: _____

Timekeeper: _____

Note taker: _____



For more information about this resource or to inquire about the Autism Programs
call **(505) 272-1852** or **1-800-270-1861** <https://cdd.health.unm.edu/autismportal/>
