

Effective Parent & Family Communication and Training

August 3rd, 2017
National Autism Conference
State College, PA
Kerri Collins, M. Ed.



Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network

PaTTAN's Mission

The mission of the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) is to support the efforts and initiatives of the Bureau of Special Education, and to build the capacity of local educational agencies to serve students who receive special education services.

PDE's Commitment to Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Our goal for each child is to ensure Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams begin with the general education setting with the use of Supplementary Aids and Services before considering a more restrictive environment.

Today's Focus:

- Parent & Family Involvement
- Parent & Family Collaboration
- Parent & Family Training
- National Standards
- PaTTAN Autism Initiative Site Review
- Before the School Year Starts
- IEP Meetings
- Communication Beyond the Classroom Teacher

Here is My Heart

- “Here is my heart. Please, take care of it. It’s so precious, so special to me. I don’t know what I’d do without it. Please don’t let it get hurt.”
- “What can we do to make sure every school, every classroom, every student, every child, will thrive?”
- Parents & families are the best advocates for their children!

What is Parent & Family Involvement?

- “Parent Involvement generally refers to the participation of significant caregivers (including parents, grandparents, stepparents, foster parents, etc.) in the educational process of their children in order to promote their academic and social well-being.” (Wolfendale, 1983)





Always Evolving

- The true definition of parent & family involvement is constantly evolving.
- Research is quite extensive in the area of the importance of the role of parents/families in children's academic achievement, yet still has limits and areas for advancement.
- The actual effect of the relationships between families/teachers/schools on children's actual outcomes is still developing as an area of study.

What is Parent & Family Collaboration?

- "Home-school collaboration refers to the relationship between families and schools where parents and educators **work together** to promote the academic and social development of children." (Christensen, Rounds, & Franklin, 1992).
- Shepard and Carlson (2003) acknowledged the positive impact of improved communication between home and school

Parent & Family Collaboration

- One Way
 - Teacher  Parent
 - Parent  Teacher
- Two Way
 - Teacher  Parent
 - Parent  Teacher





Parent & Family Collaboration- Additional Things to Consider

- Families may find it difficult to be involved in activities that require participation at the school
- Barriers to family engagement

What is Parent & Family Communication?

- May involve impressions created or words expressed
- Loosely put, families and teachers (including other school personnel), collaborating to address academic, social, and behavioral needs of a child.
- Within school psychology, parent communication is sometimes referred to as “parent consultation”
- **Aim for the interactive dialogue between teachers and families!**

Expressed Parent & Family Communication

- One Way
 - Teacher  Parent
 - Parent  Teacher
- Two Way
 - Teacher  Parent
 - Parent  Teacher

What is Parent & Family Training?

- Working with parents & families to increase a desired behavior in their child
- Improving parent-child interactions
- Educating parents & families

Parent & Family Training

- Parents and families must have opportunities to support the educational process at school and in the home **in ways that work** (Eccles & Harold, 1993).
- Explicit parent and family training yields more success for students!

Parent & Family Involvement

- Meaningful family engagement is associated with:
 - Better school attendance
 - Higher test scores
 - Higher grades
 - Better social skills
 - Better adaptation to school
 - Post secondary education more likely(Top Five Reasons Schools Need to Engage Parents, PaTTAN publication & Henderson & Berla, 1994)

Parent & Family Involvement

- “Evidence suggests that active parental involvement in the schools is a critical factor in a child’s educational success at all grade levels.” (Eccles & Harold, 1993)
- Schools that have parental involvement benefit from:
 - Improved teacher morale
 - Increased support from families; and
 - Improved collaboration across the schools’ communities

And Most Importantly...

- Parental & family involvement leads to **positive student outcomes.**
- “When we know that meaningful family engagement has a direct positive impact on student achievement, it leaves us with the responsibility to make engagement ***meaningful.***”

Parent & Family Involvement

- Parent & family goals, perspectives, and concerns should be considered in educational planning
- Parent & family training and communication will assist parents in becoming an **active participant** in their child’s education
- Should be consistent with evidence-base & what is best for student

Important to Note:

- It's not always easy!
- Establish a partnership!
- Parent & family involvement makes a bigger difference when it is **collaborative** and with all those involved (school staff, community members, etc.)
- You are working toward a common goal!
- More progress will be made and will be easier to achieve when everyone is on the same page

Barriers to Engagement

- Some but not all barriers:
 - Schools have been the target of negative reports
 - Cultural differences
 - Parents' own negative school experiences
 - Economic and time constraints
 - Lack of technology
 - Use of "jargon"
 - Lack of knowledge/feelings of incompetence
 - Failure to understand the role parents can play
 - School and teacher practices/characteristics themselves!

It's Essential!

- “Effective communication is essential to create strong school-home partnerships to increase parental involvement.” (Graham-Clay).
- **Every positive interchange will help increase trust and build stronger relationships!**

Questions for Parents & Families to Ask

- Encourage parents & families to ask these questions (or address for them!)
 - Quality- Is my child getting a great education?
 - Ready for success- Will my child be prepared to succeed in whatever comes next?
 - Safe and healthy- Is my child safe and cared for at school?
 - Great teachers- Is my child engaged and learning every day?
 - Equity and fairness- Does my child have the opportunity to succeed and be treated fairly?

Enhancing Parent & Family Engagement

- IDEA
- State Performance Plan – Indicator 8:

Using the NCSEAM Survey, the percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities

Enhancing Parent & Family Engagement

- IDEA
- State Performance Plan – Indicator 8:
 - How the data is collected:
 - Each year, parents of school-aged students with disabilities in approximately one-fifth of the state's LEAs receive the NCSEAM survey by mail and are asked to complete it. The survey consists of 25 questions designed to measure schools' efforts to partner with parents.

NCSEAM Survey

Parent Survey – Special Education

This is a survey for parents of students receiving special education services. Your responses will help guide efforts to improve services and results for children and families. For each statement below, please select one of the following response choices: very strongly agree, strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, very strongly disagree. In responding to each statement, think about your experience and your child's experience with special education over the past year. You may skip any item that you feel does not apply to you or your child.

Please turn over for Spanish version. - Vuelvete para la versión española.

Use pencil only. Fill in circle completely.

Schools' Efforts to Partner with Parents

1. I am considered an equal partner with teachers and other professionals in planning my child's program. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
2. I was offered special assistance (such as child care) so that I could participate in the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meeting. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
3. At the IEP meeting, we discussed how my child would participate in statewide assessments. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
4. At the IEP meeting, we discussed accommodations and modifications that my child would need. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
5. All of my concerns and recommendations were documented on the IEP. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
6. Written justification was given for the extent that my child would not receive services in the regular classroom. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
7. I was given information about organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
8. I have been asked for my opinion about how well special education services are meeting my child's needs. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
9. My child's evaluation report is written in terms I understand. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
10. Written information I receive is written in an understandable way. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
11. Teachers are available to speak with me. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
12. Teachers treat me as a team member. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Teachers and administrators...

13. ...seek out parent input. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
14. ...show sensitivity to the needs of students with disabilities and their families. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
15. ...encourage me to participate in the decision-making process. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
16. ...respect my cultural heritage. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
17. ...ensure that I have fully understood the Procedural Safeguards (the rules in federal law that protect the rights of parents). ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

The school...

18. ...has a person on staff who is available to answer parents' questions. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
19. ...communicates regularly with me regarding my child's progress on IEP goals. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
20. ...gives me choices with regard to services that address my child's needs. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
21. ...offers parents training about special education issues. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
22. ...offers parents a variety of ways to communicate with teachers. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
23. ...gives parents the help they may need to play an active role in their child's education. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
24. ...provides information on agencies that can assist my child in the transition from school. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
25. ...explains what options parents have if they disagree with a decision of the school. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Thank you for your participation.

For more information about this survey, please call: www.ncseam.org/ncseamsurvey
If you don't have web access or require help with this survey, please call: 1-800-333-2222.

Version 2.0
National Center for Special Education
Accountability Monitoring
http://www.ncseam.org/ncseamsurvey

Enhancing Parent & Family Engagement

- <http://penndata.hbg.psu.edu/>

Pennsylvania Department of Education

Bureau of Special Education *Inspiring productive, fulfilled, lifelong learners*

[Data At a Glance](#) | [Home](#) | [Contact Information](#) | [IU Contacts](#) | [PennData Home / SEDR Home / Public Reporting School District List](#)

State Report

State Performance Plan
Public Reporting for
SD/CS (2005 – Current)

School District / Charter
Schools SEDR (Archives
2002-2004)

Gifted Students as % of
Total Enrollment

PA Department of
Education Sites:

School District Public Reports (Alphabetic)

Select a School District:

School District Reports: No Reports found

National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

- Building family-school partnerships for student success
- *“When families are involved in their children’s learning both at home and at school, their children do better in school.”*
 - Finding 1: Involvement programs that link to learning improve student achievement
 - Finding 2: Speaking up for children protects and promotes their success

National Standards for Family-School Partnerships (continued...)

- Finding 3: **All** families can contribute to their children’s success
- Finding 4: Community organizing gets results

National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

- PTA's National standards for Family-School Partnerships
 - Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community
 - Standard 2: Communicating Effectively
 - Standard 3: Supporting student success
 - Standard 4: Speaking up for every child
 - Standard 5: Sharing power
 - Standard 6: Collaborating with community

Work Together

- “In this complex world, it takes more than a good school to educate children. And it takes more than a good home. It takes these two major educational institutions working together.” – Dorothy Rich

Are Teachers Prepared?

- Many teachers are not specifically trained in the skills they need to communicate effectively with parents (Hradecky, 1994; Lawrence, Lightfoot, 2004)

Site Review

- Parent & family communication and training section of site review

	Yes	No
Parent/Family Engagement		
25. Is there a system of training for parents, caregivers, and other community members that regularly interact with the students? Evidence of this item needs to be documented. Trainings must focus on content that is relevant to students' instruction and that allows an increased collaboration and involvement as well as enhance parents' ability to make informed decisions.		
26. Is there a system of communication with parents/caregivers? 2/2 of the following criteria must be met to receive credit for this item.		
a. Communication is designed to keep parents informed about their child's specific program and progress.		
a. Communication allows parents to provide feedback and information to teacher.		

Where to Begin?

- Prior to school starting:
 - Send home to families:
 - Preference assessments & caveats!
 - Parent Handbook
 - Information about the teacher
 - Meet with families & students:
 - Invite them to come in to classroom/school, begin initial pairing!
 - Obtain information on family priorities
 - Communicate...communicate...communicate with families all year!!

Communication

- “Written communication is probably the most efficient and effective way we can provide valuable ongoing correspondence between school and home.” (Williams & Cartledge, 1997).
- Consider the format and content
- The goal is to organize concise, accurate information for parents & families to read and understand

Communication

- Initial positive, collaborative interactions set the stage for more continued collaborative interactions as the school year progresses.
- Parents & families want to be treated with respect and as equals
- Develop a “personal touch” in your communication style
- Parents & families have an authority and wisdom of their child that is **EXTREMELY** valuable to you as the teacher!
- **The parents & family are an ally!**

Put Your Heart Into It!

- Truly committing to parent & family communication, collaboration, and training requires your heart!
- When you do this, it's so much easier to keep parents & families in the loop, support what you do, and trained (if needed!)
- Without parent & family support and involvement, the job is much more difficult!

Beginning of the Year Communication



August, 2015

Dear Families,

Welcome back! I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer! My name is Mrs. Collins and I will be your Autistic Support teacher at Rounddown Elementary this year. For some of you, I am a familiar face, and for others, I am brand new!

Also returning this year are our wonderful classroom aides, Mrs. Zellers and Mrs. Kibler. We are also very excited to welcome a new personal care assistant to our room as well! This summer was quite busy for me! In June, I worked at a summer camp for children with special needs, called Aaron's Acres. Each year, it is one of the highlights of my summer. Also in June, my husband and I went on our annual family vacation. This year, we went to Lake Harmony. It is always a great time with family! I am fortunate to have the time to spend with my four nephews, Evan, Tyson, Quinn, and Ben. They keep us on our toes! Then, in July, my husband and I celebrated our anniversary with a trip to St. Lucia. We have been looking forward

to visiting this island for quite some time now and are glad we can finally check it off our travel bucket list! We had a wonderful time, but were eager to return to our favorite felines, Sophie, Basil, and Mills (see picture below).

In August, the three other Autistic Support teachers and I met to plan and really advance our various programs. We are looking forward to implementing our ideas in our classrooms! Additionally this month, I had the honor of speaking at the National Autism Conference in State College, PA. Without a doubt, the experience was a highlight of my teaching career thus far! Rounddown Autistic Support is delighted to continue our participation in the PaTTAN Autism Initiative! Enclosed with this letter, you will find additional paperwork such as a Reinforcement Survey to complete, and the Parent Handbook. Please complete these as soon as possible and return to school the first week. Additionally, various consent forms will be sent home the first week of school.

Here are a few reminders to help get the school year off to a smooth start.



- Please try to label everything with your child's name to keep our Lost and Found items at a minimum: lunches, backpacks, jackets, sweatshirts, etc.

Name of parent/guardian: _____

Name of student: _____

Dear Families,

We're off to a great year! One of the activities in our classroom at the beginning of the year is to develop hopes and dreams for the school year. I would like for you to begin to think about your most important hopes and dreams for your child. I invite you to join this activity by sharing those hopes and dreams. Please take a few minutes to answer these questions:

- What do you feel is most important for your child in school?

- In what ways would you like to see your child grow socially?

- In what ways would you like to see your child grow academically?

As the year progresses, I look forward to talking with you about your goals for your child and your child's progress/plan towards meeting them!

Please send this letter back with your child by September 4th. Thank you!

Truly,

Kerri Collins, M. Ed.

Preference Assessments

APPENDIX 3.

Reinforcement Assessment Form

Child's Name: _____ Date: 8/22/17

Completed by: _____

Prior to beginning intensive teaching it is important to identify ALL of your child's motivators or reinforcers. Many children have very specific reinforcers and some like to use them only in a particular way. Please provide as much detail as possible about your child's reinforcers. This information will help expedite the transition to intensive teaching.

Using a scale of 1-5 (1 being the most favorable) please indicate your child's preferences below:

1. What are your child's favorite indoor activities?

Puzzles _____	Games <u>4</u>
Books <u>3</u>	Sensory toys <u>2</u>
Musical Instruments _____	Computer games <u>1</u>
Action Figures _____	Painting _____
Bowling _____	Play dough <u>2</u>
Other: _____	
Notes: _____	

2. What are your child's outdoor playtime activities?

Bicycle <u>2</u>	Swing set <u>1</u>	Trampoline <u>2</u>
Theme Parks <u>4</u>	Swimming _____	Slide <u>3</u>
Roller-skating _____		

3. What are your child's favorite video preferences?

Disney movies <u>1</u>	Animated movies _____	Cartoons <u>1</u>
Real-life animal videos _____		
List some of your child's favorite videos: _____		

4. What are your child's favorite snacks?

Candy <u>1</u>	Fruit <u>4</u>
Cookies <u>2</u>	Crackers <u>3</u>
Cheese <u>1</u>	Pretzels <u>1</u>
Chips <u>2</u>	
Ice cream <u>1</u>	
Other: _____	
List your child's favorite brand names: _____	

5. What are your child's favorite beverages?

Soda <u>1</u>	Juice <u>1</u>	Water <u>1</u>
Milk <u>1</u>		
List your child's favorite flavors and brand names: _____		

6. What are your child's favorite books?

Pop-up books <u>4</u>	Picture books <u>3</u>
Books with sound cards <u>3</u>	Sensory books <u>1</u>
Puzzle book <u>3</u>	Coloring books _____
Sticker books _____	
Notes: _____	

Preference Assessments

7. What are your child's preferences for pets?

Cats <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dogs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hamsters <input type="checkbox"/>	Fish <input type="checkbox"/>
Guinea pigs <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
Notes <input type="text"/>	

8. What is your child's special strength?

Art <input type="checkbox"/>	Math <input type="checkbox"/>
Music <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Spatial <input type="checkbox"/>
Reading <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Computer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
Notes <input type="text"/>	

9. What activity does your child prefer when using the computer?

CD Rom games <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Internet Sites <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
List your child's CD Rom games <input type="text"/>	
List your child's favorite Internet sites <input type="text"/>	

10. What are your child's favorite songs?

Song 1. <input type="text"/>
Song 2. <input type="text"/>
Song 3. <input type="text"/>
Song 4. <input type="text"/>
Song 5. <input type="text"/>

Developed by Allen McVeigh and the VERN

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When Communicating

- Establish what information will be communicated via each source by whom, and how often
- Honesty
- “Good news” and “~~bad news~~”.
 - It might just be challenging news!
- Avoid “jargon”
- Use titles (Mr. Mrs. Ms., etc.)
- Consider when a face-to-face meeting is more appropriate!

Home and School Communication

- Letters/Newsletters
- Communication log
- Monthly letter
- Weekly probe sheets
- IEP documents
- Report cards/Progress Reports
- Conferences/IEP Meetings (more to come!)
- “Summer” bags
- Use available technology!!!

Home and School Communication- “Real Time”

- Website
- Twitter
- Blogs
- Phone calls
- Text
- Email
- Go To Meetings
- Video Conference
- FaceTime/Skype
- “Good News Calls!”



Sample Family Communication

Mrs. Collins Home


- Weekly Home
- Additional Forms & Letters Home
- Communication Logs
- Weekly Photo Sheets
- Classroom Web List
- Parent Meeting Survey Link
- Helpful Links
- Roundtown P.O.U.D. Song
- Get to know Mrs. Collins
- Email Mrs. Collins

MRS. COLLINS HOME


Roundtown Elementary • Staff/Teacher Websites • Instructional Support Teacher Websites • Autism Support Teacher • Mrs. Collins Home

Welcome to Mrs. Collins' Autistic Support Classroom with the Cool Cats!



Room 101



September 30th, 2015

Dear Families and Friends,

We are off to a great start here at Roundtown Elementary School! Since the first day of school, we've been very busy assessing skills we had previously mastered as well as any new skills we may have acquired over the summer. We have also set up new programs for the year. We would not have been able to do this without the help of our wonderful PaTTAN consultants!

The first couple weeks of school have been spent learning and practicing the rules and structure of the classroom and of Roundtown. As new things pop up each day, the students are doing super and being flexible! We are so proud! Having 3 kindergartners and 3 third graders this year has really brought a great variety in instruction. Some friends have started material sorts, while others are doing direct instruction reading and language programs, as well as the Sensible Pencil curriculum!

Continuing this year are our classroom jobs! Each day, a student is assigned to a classroom job at the beginning or end of the day. These help to not only build life skills, but also help us learn some academic content! Right now our classroom jobs include: calendar (to help learn math skills), watering plants (to help learn parts and features of plants), sharpening pencils (to help build hand strength), librarian (to help build literacy skills), and messenger (to help build social skills).

One of the highlights at the beginning of the year here at Roundtown is having students create hopes & dreams for the school year. These are then compiled into a list and displayed in the cafeteria all year. Thanks to our wonderful families, we were able to create a hope and dream for each student for this year! What a wonderful collaboration between home and school! Let's keep it up!

We are currently working with our specialists to provide the best treatment for our kiddos! Right now, the speech schedule Mrs. Duckworth has set up is (look for your child's initials)

- Day 1
 - SD @ 9:10-9:30
 - DM @ 10:30-10:50
 - BM @ 11:00-11:30
- Day 2
 - SR @ 9:30-10:15
- Day 3

Sample Family Communication

HELPFUL LINKS

Roundtown Elementary • Staff/Teacher Websites • Instructional Support Teacher Websites • Autism Support Teacher • Mrs. Collins Home • **Helpful Links**

Follow our class on Twitter!

Sensible Pencil

Science Trumps Junk in Treating Autism
Click here for a September article from Penn State University regarding treatments for Autism. The treatment mentioned that is most effective is the one our classroom utilizes daily!

PA Autism Initiatives ABA Support Videos
Videos from the PaTTAN website including teaching procedures, segments from the National Autism Conference, and much more!

PaTTAN
The Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network is who we work very closely with as part of the Autism Initiative and the Verbal Behavior Program.
Beginning Guide to the Intensive Teaching Process of the Verbal Operants
This is a link to a PDF on the PaTTAN website. The guide contains various terms and procedures that are used daily in your child's classroom.

National Autism Center
The National Autism Center promotes evidence-based practices for children and adolescents with Autism. Check out the National Standards Report!

Autism York
Autism York "Provides Support, Education and Awareness in our Community".

PA Department of Public Welfare
Information about Autism services in PA.

ASERT
The mission of the ASERT Collaboratives is to enhance the lives of Pennsylvanians with autism, of all ages and abilities, by improving regional access to quality services and interventions, providing information and support to families, training professionals in best practices and facilitating partnerships among providers of services throughout the Commonwealth.


Autism Speaks
Autism Speaks is a science and advocacy organization.

Grades K & 3 Favorite Links
A collection of favorite Kindergarten and First Grade educational websites.

SRA Direct Instruction
Read more about Direct Instruction.

Responsive Classrooms
Educators creating safe, challenging, and joyful elementary schools

News Update for Room 101
Week of: May 23rd



Dates to Remember:

- Field Day is Friday, May 27th
- NO SCHOOL, Monday, May 30th
- LAST DAY of school is now Friday, June 3rd. This is a full day for students.

Cycle Day Schedule for next week:

- Monday: Day 1
- Tuesday: Day 6
- Wednesday: Day 1
- Thursday: Day 2
- Friday: Day 3

Other Updates:

- For Field Day on Friday, please have your child wear their class color. (Kindergarten/Decker: red; 3rd Grade/McCormick: Flamingo shirts.)
- This week our contraptions turned into butterflies and were released outside!
- Dates for Extended School Year this summer are: 6/27-7/21 (No 7/4 & 7/5, ESY is Monday-Thursday from 8:30-11:30. Location is North Hills Elementary.)
- If your 3rd grader is attending field trips, please take note of information and reminders that are sent home regarding these trips.
- Information regarding the Walk for Autism and Autism Expo can be found here: [Walk for Autism](#)
- School lunch menus are available here: [School Lunch Menus](#)
- Please make sure your child has an extra set of clothes either in his/her backpack or kept here at school. Accidents can happen, and the nurse does not always have the matching size clothes to home. We want our kiddos to be as comfortable as possible!
- Occupational Therapy with Miss Ems, O.T. will typically be on Monday mornings. If there is no school on a Monday, O.T. sessions will be made up another day.
- Click the link for the Autism York May Newsletter: [Autism York May Newsletter](#)
- Roundtown is collecting the following items for the Panther Party:
 - Cleanly used toys
 - Paper goods (paper towels, toilet paper, napkins)
 - Household supplies (all purpose cleaner, dish soap, laundry detergent)
 - Personal care items (toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo)
 - Food items (vegetables, fruit, sauce, pasta, rice, cereal, nuts, granola, peanut butter, jelly, etc.)

Sample Family Communication

School to Home Communication Log			Home/School Communication Log		
Student: _____		Date: _____		Date: _____	
				Completed by: _____	
Skills Addressed Today <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Mastered <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	In Progress <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Practice these skills at home: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
Handing (Requesting): <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Please practice having your child ask for these things at home. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
Visual Perceptual/Match to Sample: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Mastered # of block designs: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
Imitation: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Imitation targets: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
Tacting (Labeling): <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Tacting targets: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
Peer to Peer Handing: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
Listener Responding: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Listener Responding targets: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
Other (OT/PT, SLP, etc.) <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
Your child's behavior was _____ within expectations _____ not within expectations DESCRIBE _____ _____ _____			TOMORROW Activities/Schedule: _____ Gym _____ Art _____ Music _____ Library _____ Speech _____ OT/PT _____ Assembly _____ Other (Please list): _____ _____ _____		

Last Night:
 Did you child participate in any activities you'd like to share (eg, community, church, family, sports)?

This Morning:
 Did your child have difficulty sleeping or waking? _____ yes _____ no
 Comment: _____
 Did your child eat this morning? _____ yes _____ no
 Comment: _____
 Does your child have any medical/physical concerns you'd like to share? _____ yes _____ no
 Comment: _____
 Were there any changes in your child's daily routine (eg, change in child care)? _____ Yes _____ No
 If so, please describe: _____

Are there any upcoming changes in your child's routine (eg, doctor appointment, family visit, change in parent work schedule)?
 If so, please describe: _____

Please remember to contact the teacher directly if you have information that needs to be shared immediately

Communication Take Away

- Strive to use a variety of effective communication strategies
- Make communication with families as informative and interactive as possible
- Incorporate new communication methods
- Maintain the “human touch”!
- Daily and honest communication is key!
- Communication should be thoughtful, planned, and promote the home-school partnership to better student learning!

Site Review

- Parent & family communication and training section of site review

	Yes	No
Parent/Family Engagement		
25. Is there a system of training for parents, caregivers, and other community members that regularly interact with the students? Evidence of this item needs to be documented. Trainings must focus on content that is relevant to students' instruction and that allows an increased collaboration and involvement as well as enhance parents' ability to make informed decisions.		
26. Is there a system of communication with parents/caregivers? 2/2 of the following criteria must be met to receive credit for this item.		
a. Communication is designed to keep parents informed about their child's specific program and progress.		
a. Communication allows parents to provide feedback and information to teacher.		

Parent & Family Training... But When?!

- In person opportunities:
 - Volunteer opportunities
 - Older learners- job trainings
 - Meetings
 - Back-to-School Night
 - Parent-Teacher Conferences
 - Parent Visitation Day
 - Boot Camps
 - Reach out to your PaTTAN consultants
 - National Autism Conference

IEP Meetings

- Parents & families are a **CRITICAL** member of the IEP team!
- According to federal law, the IEP meeting *“serves as a communication vehicle between parents and school personnel, and enables them as **equal** participants to **jointly decide***
 - What the child’s needs are,
 - What services will be provided to meet those needs, and
 - What the anticipated outcomes will be
- Remember- it’s a draft!

IEP Meetings

- Again- It’s a **DRAFT**!
- Send the draft home ahead of time for parents and families to review
 - Allows parents and families to provide adequate input
 - Allows parents and families to prepare for the meeting
 - Avoids surprises at the meeting!

Heward's Metaphor for the IEP

- “The IEP is a system for spelling out...where the child [is] with current skills, where she should be going, how she will get there, how long it will take, and how to tell if and when she has arrived. Thus, a good IEP serves as both a road map and a guidebook for meeting the challenges posed by a student's disability. The annual goals and benchmarks developed by the team identify the destinations for the journey and provide signposts along the way.” (Heward, 2006)

IEP Meetings

- Benefits of the IEP meeting
 - Meet as a team
 - Review progress and services
 - Share what you are doing all day!
 - Make changes
 - Review goals and **obtain parent input**
 - Discuss transitions (schools/work place/etc.)
 - Resources/Tools
 - Training

VB-MAPPs- A Resource Tool

VB-MAPP Master Scoring Form

Child's name: _____
 Date of birth: _____
 Age at testing: 11 12 13 14

Any Score Date Color Teacher
 1st test 6.0 1/15/15
 2nd test
 3rd test
 4th test

LEVEL 3

Recl	Tot	Letter	VPWS	Play	Book	Reading	Writing	LPFC	N	Group	Ung	Math
15												
14												
13												
12												
11												

LEVEL 2

Recl	Tot	Letter	VPWS	Play	Book	Reading	Writing	LPFC	N	Group	Ung	Math
10												
9												
8												
7												
6												

LEVEL 1

Recl	Tot	Letter	VPWS	Play	Book	Reading	Writing	LPFC	N	Group	Ung	Math
5												
4												
3												
2												
1												

7/28/2017/09/2016

VB-MAPP Master Scoring Form

Child's name: _____
 Date of birth: _____
 Age at testing: 11 12 13 14

Any Score Date Color Teacher
 1st test 10.0 1/15/15
 2nd test 10.0 1/15/15
 3rd test 10.0 1/15/15
 4th test 10.0 1/15/15

LEVEL 3

Recl	Tot	Letter	VPWS	Play	Book	Reading	Writing	LPFC	N	Group	Ung	Math
15												
14												
13												
12												
11												

LEVEL 2

Recl	Tot	Letter	VPWS	Play	Book	Reading	Writing	LPFC	N	Group	Ung	Math
10												
9												
8												
7												
6												

LEVEL 1

Recl	Tot	Letter	VPWS	Play	Book	Reading	Writing	LPFC	N	Group	Ung	Math
5												
4												
3												
2												
1												

Guiding Parents & Families

Verbal Operands - Indicated observations indicate how each operand is represented on your child's probe sheet

Operand	Brief Definition	Example	Sample Set's
Mand (back of probe sheet)	Asking for something you are motivated for (student gets reinforced with what they asked for)	Student says "cookies" because they see a picture of a cookie.	MOTIVATION is the antecedent for the mand!! What is this? This is ____ It's a ____ Tell me what this is What do you see?
First F-1: First Item F-1P: First Body Part F-1E: First Action	Student labels something they see, hear, smell, taste, or feel and gets non-specific reinforcement (such as praise or other reinforcement)	Student says "cookies" because they see a picture of a cookie.	What is this? Show me that ____ Can you find the ____? Whose's the ____? Touch the ____ Show me the ____ Find the ____
Imitates Responding (Receptive) I-1P: Imitates Responding Part	Following directions and/or receptive identification (demonstrated). Reinforcement is non-specific.	Student touches the cookie when teacher asks "Do you see a cookie?"	"Do this" "Can you do this?" "Try this one" "Do what I do" "You do this"
Motor Imitation (Mimicry) M-1	Copying someone else's motor movement. Reinforcement is non-specific.	Student says "cookies" when teacher says "cookies"	
Exhibit E-1	Repeating (imitating) what someone else says. Reinforcement is non-specific.	Student says "cookies" because teacher said "cookies"	
Interpretal I-2	Seeing, signing, writing something related to what someone else said or answering questions (IS in responses, word associations, conversations). Reinforcement is non-specific.	Student says "cookies" when teacher says "Tell me something sweet that you eat."	Which one do you ____ with? The ____ with ____ Something you ____ is a ____ Tell me the one that has ____ The (animal) says ____ What does the (animal) say?

VB-MAPP Master Scoring Form

Child's name: _____
 Date of birth: _____
 Age at testing: 11 12 13 14

Any Score Date Color Teacher
 1st test 10.0 1/15/15
 2nd test 10.0 1/15/15
 3rd test 10.0 1/15/15
 4th test 10.0 1/15/15

LEVEL 3

Recl	Tot	Letter	VPWS	Play	Book	Reading	Writing	LPFC	N	Group	Ung	Math
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LEVEL 1

Recl	Tot	Letter	VPWS	Play	Book	Reading	Writing	LPFC	N	Group	Ung	Math
5												
4												
3												
2												
1												

Errorless Teaching

Prompted Trial (P¹ second delay)

Transfer Trial

Distractor Trial(s)

(A FEW EASY DEMANDS)

Check Trial (P² second delay)

REINFORCE!!!

Example of Errorless Teaching

Teacher: What is it? Cat— Cat

Student: What is it?— Cat

Teacher: Touch your head

Student: Clap your hands

Teacher: What is it?— Cat

REINFORCE!!!

Notes: If and when an error occurs, go back to square one (start over with a prompted trial). **DON'T FORGET TO RE-PRESENT YOUR S¹ WHEN YOU ARE CORRECTING AN ERROR!**

Parent & Family Desires

- Parent & family desires and input should always be heard! Remember, they are part of the team as well!
- As stated earlier, parent & family preference is not always consistent with evidence base.

What if you disagree?

- Formally, if parents disagree:
 - Team meeting
 - Mediation
 - State complaint
 - Due process hearing
- Informally, if parents disagree:
 - Try the LAFF, don't CRY strategy!

LAFF

LAFF

L	Listen, empathize, and communicate respect
A	Ask questions (and ask permission to take notes)
F	Focus on issues
F	Find a “first step”

Don't CRY

CRY

C	Criticize others
R	React hastily and promise something you cannot deliver
Y	Yakkity-yack-yack

Parent & Family Training Continued...


- The VB-MAPP
- What if you can't always do trainings in person?
 - [Videos](#)
 - Newsletters
- Teach the parents & families too!



Newsletter Examples

Miss Motsko's 2016 October Newsletter!

Important Dates:
 October 7th - Family Fun Night 6:30pm, Movie at 7pm
 October 10th - No School
 October 12-17 - Book Fair
 October 19th - 6-8:30pm Watch Dog Night & Book Fair
 Family Night 6-8:30pm
 October 24th - Fall, White, & Blue Spirit Day
 October 31st - Fall Parties & Early Dismissal at 11:45am



Positive Reinforcement

Positive reinforcement: something is added after a behavior that increases the probability of that behavior occurring again under similar circumstances. Positive reinforcement is used when teaching a student a new skill or a more appropriate response. There are three types of positive reinforcement: social rewards, tangible rewards, and activity rewards. Social rewards can include a smile, hug, verbal praise, pat on the back. Tangible rewards can include a sticker, token, a toy, an edible, etc. Activity rewards can include a favorite activity that the child likes to engage in such as swinging. A child can be given a social reinforcement along with other types of reinforcement.

Guidelines for implementing positive reinforcement:

- ***It is essential that the reinforcers that are selected are **motivating** to the child
- ***Positive reinforcement needs to be given **immediately** following the target behavior that you want to see increase
- ***Reinforcement should be **faded** so that the child does not become dependent on the reinforcement for the behavior to occur. Be careful not to fade the reinforcement too quickly.

Information taken from [Autism Education](#) by Amanda Bouker and Matt Tincani

Thorndike's Law of Effect:
 A response followed by a pleasant consequence will tend to be repeated and a response followed by an unpleasant consequence will tend to decrease in frequency.

OCTOBER

Miss Motsko's March 2017 Newsletter!

What is a mand?

Manding is one type of verbal behavior which can also be referred to as a request. Often times, manding is overlooked in children's programs; however, it is one of the basic skills that a child needs to learn. The main purpose of a mand is for the child to get their wants and needs met. With that being said, in order for the child to mand or request for an item they need to have **motivation**. Without motivation, there is no mand!

For example, it is 80 degrees and humid outside and you just completed a 5K. As you cross the finish line you most likely are motivated for water or Gatorade. At this point, you may ask someone where you can get something to drink. By you asking someone where you can get a drink, you are manding (requesting). We often times take it for granted that we request for things we want or need when we cannot access them ourselves. It just comes naturally for us.

On the other hand, if it is 25 degrees and windy outside, you would be more motivated for something hot to drink such as hot chocolate. In this situation, you would be more inclined to mand for a hot drink because you are cold and have motivation to get warm.

Why do we want our kids to be able to mand?

Manding is a crucial skill that is one of the first programs typically started for early learners. By teaching children how to mand, it will result in their lives getting better. Manding can be taught with any type of response form. A student can emit a mand through a vocalization, sign, or picture. Additionally, manding does not just stop at requesting for a single item or action. Manding becomes complex in manding for information, manding to remove aversive stimuli, and manding for missing items.

Take Home - What can you do?

It is important for children to be able to mand in a variety of environments since that is a functional skill. At home, you may notice your child likes a particular toy, food, drink, activity, or action. When you see your child have motivation for something rather than providing them with it right away we can teach them the mand if they don't already know it. For example, your child is reaching for his juice, you identify that motivation is present so you pick up the cup and prompt your child "juice". When they emit the mand "juice", you provide them with a little bit of juice. You can then run a second trial with more juice in the cup, but this time instead of prompting them with "juice", you can say "ju" or "j" or nothing. If your child emits the mand of "juice" with less prompting reinforce them with more juice than what they received the first time. It is important to remember that if your child is learning how to mand we are not requiring him to say "please" or "thank you" when they do not understand what it means to be polite. "Please" and "Thank you" are just extra words that make it harder for them to get what they are motivated for. Additionally, we teach our children to say "juice" versus "have juice", or "want juice". We know when they said "juice" what they want and again by adding extra words it makes it harder for them to get what they want; thus, it is an added response which is not necessary.

Important Dates:
 March 13th - SR Night at the Museum 5:30-8:30 at Reading Public Museum
 March 29th - End of Quarter 3 & Early Dismissal 11:45am
 March 31st - HSA Movie Night at SR 6:30-8:00pm

Site Review

• Parent & family communication and training section of site review

	Yes	No
Parent/Family Engagement		
25. Is there a system of training for parents, caregivers, and other community members that regularly interact with the students? Evidence of this item needs to be documented. Trainings must focus on content that is relevant to students' instruction and that allows an increased collaboration and involvement as well as enhance parents' ability to make informed decisions.		
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a. Communication is designed to keep parents informed about their child's specific program and progress.		
a. Communication allows parents to provide feedback and information to teacher.		

Parent & Family Communication Beyond the Classroom Teacher

- Support Staff:
 - Prior to school starting:
 - Meet with your classroom staff:
 - Review expectations for classroom and parent communication; establish yourself as the leader
 - Give clear directions on what you want them to do

Parent & Family Communication Beyond the Classroom Teacher

- General Education Teachers:
- Prior to school starting:
 - Meet with general education teachers:
 - Review expectations for shared students and parent communication; establish yourself as a team member!
 - Advocate for your students
 - Continue to discuss how parent communication between you is going

Parent & Family Communication Beyond the Classroom Teacher

- Administration:
- Prior to school starting:
 - Meet with administration:
 - Review expectations for parent involvement with your students
 - Ask for help!
 - Set up routine meetings
 - Reinforce them!

Here is My Heart

- “We expect an awful lot of teachers and schools. I want us to remember that we are all here for the same purpose. It’s about creating an environment where every child can thrive.”

In Summary...

- Continued collaboration is essential for the success of each and every student!
- We are a team!

Resource File

- <https://webapps.pattan.net/files/PaTTANAutismResources.zip>

Contact Information

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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Tom Wolf, Governor

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