



Monarch Center for Autism

A Division of Bellefaire JCB

Co-Occurring Conditions: Bridging Autism and Mental Health

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Prevalence of ASD and Mental Health Conditions



- Awareness
- Assessment
- Diagnosis
- Treatment

Awareness & Symptoms of Autism

What we know...

- 1 in 68 children are being diagnosed with Autism

“Y” doesn’t always follow “X”

- Children with Autism struggle with the unwritten rules of life.

Creating predictability for those that can’t.

- Children with Autism need to live in a world in which Y *always* follows X.

Predictability, Consistency, Structure!!



Common Co-Occurring Conditions

Mood

Mood swings/instability
Irritability
Aggression
Irregular sleep patters
Appetite changes
Hypersensitivity
Elevated mood
Oppositional behavior

Anxiety

Concentration
Isolation
Loss of enjoyable activities
Fatigue
Sleep
Sad
Worry

OCD

Repetitive behaviors
Rituals
Obsessive thoughts
Compulsive behaviors
A need for control
Inflexibility
Inability to manage change

Assessment

When it starts to look different...

- Typical Onset
 - Puberty
 - Transitions
- Life Cycle Changes
- Family Dynamics



Mental health symptomology

- Mood swings/instability.
- Irritability and aggression.
- Irregular sleep patterns.
 - Appetite changes.
- Obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors.
 - A new need for control.
 - Inflexibility.
 - Inability to manage change.
- Tendency to isolate and avoid once enjoyable activities.
 - Repetitive/ritualistic behaviors.

What are the barriers to treating these symptoms?

- Functional Communication
 - Cognitive ability
 - Self - awareness

Dual Diagnosis

“Sometimes they walk the line.”

When to separate out symptoms that suggest a secondary diagnosis.

Do you have to choose between treating the symptoms of both diagnoses?

Which one is causing the most impairment in daily functioning?

When should you give a secondary diagnosis?

How much does it matter?



Common Misconceptions

“They can talk so they understand.”

“They don’t have Autism.”

“He should be able to control himself.”

“He used to be able to do that.”

“His behaviors are coming from a different place.”



Treatment Providers

Find a professional to conduct a Mental Health Assessment.

- Must understand Autism.
- Needs to treat the whole individual.

Find a Multi-Disciplinary Team

- Counselor/Therapist
- Psychiatrist
- Behaviorist
- Teacher



Treatment Modalities

Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Cognitive Behavior Therapy

Incorporating visual supports.

Benefits to an eclectic approach.



Cognitive Behavioral Therapy



=

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

HOW TO SOLVE A PROBLEM FLOW MAP

DIRECTIONS: WRITE AND DRAW THE STEPS FOR SOLVING A PROBLEM IN YOUR CLASSROOM.

FIRST, → THINK, → LAST,

FIRST, _____
THINK, _____
LAST, _____

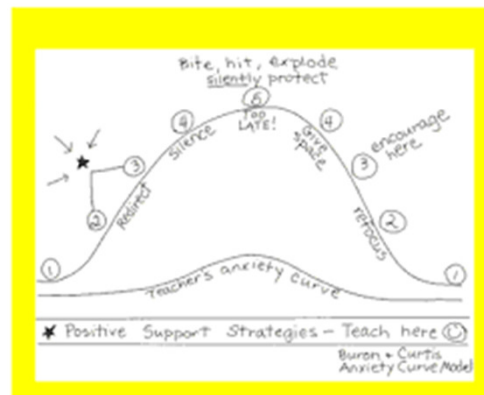


Figure 6

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Real
Life
Scenarios


Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

How I Feel


I feel: _____

Happy	Mad	Sad	Glad
Worried	Excited	Bored	Scared
Annoyed	Upset	Sick	Nervous


I feel this way because:



This is what I did about it:



Something else I could have done is:

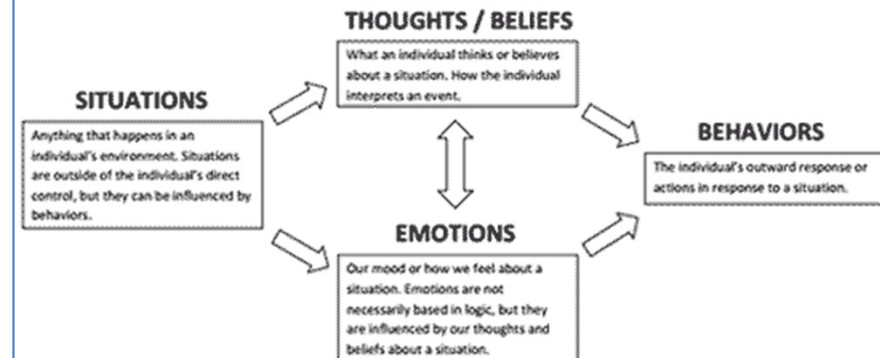


Ask for help	Take deep breaths	Walk away
Do something else	Tell an adult	Talk to a friend

Thought Log

Event	Thought	Consequence (Emotion / Behavior)	Alternate Response

The Cognitive Behavioral Model



Subjective Units of Distress Scales (SUDS)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Zero: Complete relaxation. Deep sleep, no distress at all.</p>	<p>One: Awake but very relaxed; dosing off. Your mind wanders and drifts, similar to what you might feel just prior to falling asleep.</p>	<p>Two: .A little bit upset, but not Noticeable unless you took care to pay attention to your feelings and then realize, "yes" there is something bothering me.</p>	<p>Three: Mildly upset. Worried, bothered to the point that you notice it.</p>	<p>Four: Mild distress such as mild feelings of bodily tension, mild worry, mild fear, or mild anxiety. Somewhat unpleasant but easily tolerated.</p>	<p>Five: Moderately upset, uncomfortable . Unpleasant feelings are still manageable with some effort.</p>	<p>Six: Moderate distress. Very Unpleasant feelings of fear, anxiety, anger, worry, apprehension and/or bodily tension such as a headache or upset stomach.</p>	<p>Seven: Starting to freak out, on the edge of some definitely bad feelings. You can maintain control with difficulty</p>	<p>Eight: High distress. High levels of fear anxiety, worry, and/or bodily tension. These feelings cannot be tolerated very long. Thinking and problem-solving is impaired. Freaking out.</p>	<p>Nine: Feeling extremely freaked out to the point that it almost feels Unbearable and you are getting scared of what you might do. Feeling very, very bad, losing control of your emotions.</p>	<p>Ten: Feels Unbearably bad, beside yourself, out of control as in a nervous breakdown, overwhelmed, at the end of your rope. You may feel so upset that you don't want to talk because you can't imagine how anyone could possibly Understand your agitation.</p>

Zero	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight	Nine	Ten
<p>No coping skills necessary</p>	<p>No coping skills necessary</p>	<p>Feel a sheet of crumpled up paper. Rip paper. Write or draw.</p>	<p>Watch or read comedy. Talk to a peer. Rip paper. Write or draw. Magic tricks.</p>	<p>Rip paper. Watch or read comedy. Magic tricks. Clean.</p>	<p>Write or draw. Clean. Write or read comedy. Talk to an adult.</p>	<p>Write or read comedy. Talk to a peer or an adult.. Origami. Computer (if it's available to you).</p>	<p>Talk with a trusted adult. Origami. Write what you're feeling down and rip it up.</p>	<p>Color mandalas. Magic tricks. Reading (history or mark twain).</p>	<p>Exercise. Write poetry. Deep breaths. Scale drawing. Gym.</p>	<p>Phone call. Projects. Listen to music. Deep breathing. Shower.</p>

5	Explode 	Saying that I want to kill people.	Take a break. Ask people not to talk to me. Yell in a pillow. Pace. Rip paper.
4	Pissed off 	Ripping down things and throwing	Take a break. Ask people not to talk to me. Yell in a pillow. Pace. Rip paper.
3	Sad 	Crying saying I want to die	Yoga. Take a break in my room. Take a shower. Do an art project. Sing. Go for a walk.
2	Upset 	Yelling and swearing	Yoga. Take a break in my room. Take a shower. Do an art project. Sing. Go for a walk.
1	Happy 	Singing. playing video games. art	Nothing. I'm happy.

Other
SUDS
Scales

ANGER CHECK IN

How are you feeling?

1

It's good, nothing is bothering me.

2

It's not bad but not perfect.

3

Awful, there are a few things bothering me.

4

Horrible, a lot of things are bothering me a lot.

5

So bad I feel like I want to hurt someone. I want to hurt.

Safety Thinking Zones

Date _____

I am feeling a _____ on my SUDs scale.

I feel _____

because _____

Things I can do to get through this moments (that are safe and available to me)...

1. _____

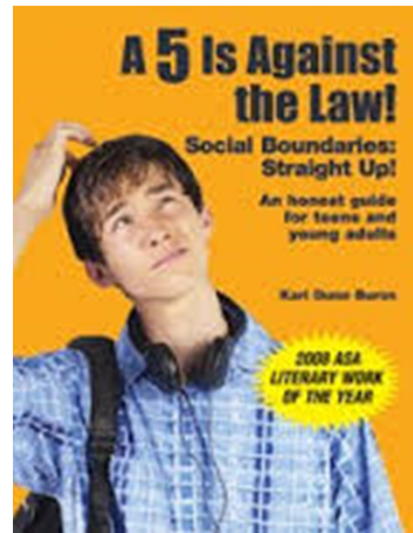
2. _____

Green zone	Yellow zone (warning zone) *restarts next shift	Red zone (high risk zone) *restarts 24 hours
Things to do for fun on level green: •Go on YouTube for 30 minutes once your entire schedule is completed for the shift and for 10 tokens (30 minutes per shift). •Play basketball. •Go out in the community. •Use your cell phone when appropriate. •Listen to music in your room.	Things to do for fun on level yellow: •Listen to the radio. •Play basketball. •Staff's discretion about safety in the community. •Use your cell phone (when appropriate).	Things to do for fun on level red: •Listen to the radio. •Use your phone (when appropriate). •Play basketball. •No community for 24 hours.
When I'm on level green I am: •Being safe with my body, my thoughts, and my words. •Completing my schedule. •Being kind to staff and peers. •Talking to staff when I am feeling upset or concerned about my thoughts.	When I'm on level yellow I am: •I'm being unsafe. •I'm talking about acting violent. •I'm threatening to hurt someone. (I am NOT in trouble...this is only about safety)	When I'm on level red I am: •I am not being safe (restraint). •I have put my hands on someone.
•I am doing everything that is asked of me and I am following all of the rules.	•Staff will keep a close eye on me. •I am not in trouble and I should tell staff how I am feeling. I should write it down. •I may be having a hard time. •I should not be listening to music that upsets me or gets me too excited.	•Staff will need to monitor me. •I should not be listening to music that upsets me or gets me too excited.
* I don't need to do anything different, just communicate my needs to staff.	•I should be talking to staff about what is bothering me and write it down on one of my sheets with the scale. •I should be using feeling words rather than talking about hurting someone.	•I should be using my sheets and following directions of staff for safety. •I may be on restrictions due to unsafe behaviors.

The ZONES of Regulation®

BLUE ZONE Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	GREEN ZONE Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	YELLOW ZONE Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	RED ZONE Mad/Angry Mean Terrified Yelling/Hitting Out of Control

Social Thinking



EXPECTED Behaviors

Things people do or say that make other people feel calm, happy, and pleased.

When people feel good they...

- Want to hang out with me.
- Like me.
- Want to keep talking to me.
- Give me things.
- Want to help me.
- Take my places.
- Trust me.
- Want to be my friend.
- Think I'm cool.

UNEXPECTED Behaviors

Things people do or say that make other people feel stressed, upset, uncomfortable or weird.

When people feel unhappy they...

- Don't want to hang out with me.
- Might not like me.
- Don't want to keep talking to me.
- Take things away.
- Don't want to help me.
- Don't bring me to cool places.
- Don't trust me.
- Don't want to be my friend.
- Don't think I'm cool.

Resources

<http://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/how-i-feel-cbt-tool>

<http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2014/p0327-autism-spectrum-disorder.html>

<http://autismnow.org/>

www.autismspeaks.org

<http://www.socialthinking.com/>

<http://www.theautismprogram.org/wp-content/uploads/5-point-scale.pdf>

<http://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits/asperger-syndrome-and-high-functioning-autism-tool-kit/interventions>

www.bellefairejcb.org

www.monarchcenterforautism.org

Questions?

