

ABLLS-R, AFLS, VBMAPP, ESDM, PEAK!?!?

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT ASSESSMENT FOR YOUR LEARNER WITH AUTISM

### SESSION 3: BEST PRACTICES IN ASSESSMENT FOR EARLY LEARNERS

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DO BETTER COLLECTIVE



# OVERVIEW

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- Assessment Considerations for Early Learners
  - ESDM
  - First Words Project/Autism Navigator/ESI
  - RIE
  - ADOS and SORF
- Appropriateness
- Case Example

# EARLY START DENVER MODEL

- Combines developmental with ABA
- Excellent resource for research
- Ideas for how to structure sessions
- Ideas for order of skills
- The social piece





## THE SOCIAL PIECE

- “Children with autism often are less inclined to initiate interaction with people and tend to focus on a narrow range of activities”
- “Infants thus actively shape the amount and type of social exchanges with caregivers....”





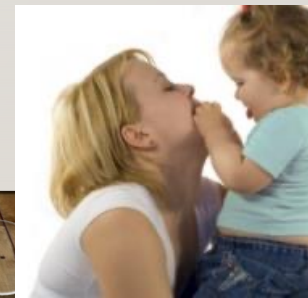
## THE SOCIAL PIECE

- “child with autism may not respond with pleasure, eye contact, laughter...”
- “If social partners feel as if their initiations are not positive for the child, they may well decrease their initiations”



## THE SOCIAL PIECE

- Why is this important?
- Social Interactions are integral to learning (Kuhl, 1993)
- Fundamental requirement




## THE SOCIAL PIECE

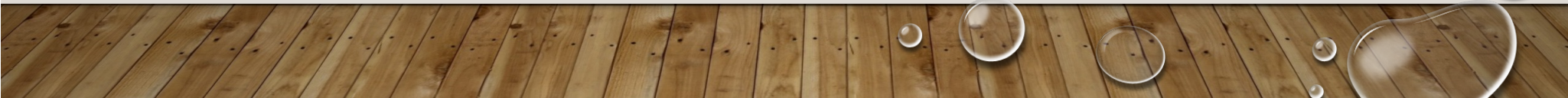
- Development of neural pathways
- Reward and feedback from environment is crucial
- Development of “object” pathways





# JOINT ACTIVITY ROUTINE

1. Clear Set-up
    - Beginning of the interaction
  2. Develop a Theme
    - Goes back and forth a few times
  3. Variations
    - Extends the activity
    - Allows more language to occur
    - Increases flexibility
    - Maintains motivation
  4. Closing
    - As the energy of the activity dies down
- 







Example from the Mind Institute:  
<https://vimeo.com/61626740>

# FIRST WORDS PROJECT

- Research project at FSU – Amy Wetherby
- 16 by 16
  - Gestures
  - Actions with Objects
  - Social Connectedness
  - Cooperation
  - Critical Thinking
- As a behavior analyst should ensure incorporating these types of things

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# ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

“Utilizing parents to implement teaching strategies and supports to promote active engagement as early as possible may have the greatest potential to change children’s developmental trajectories.” (Wetherby et al., 2018)

# AUTISM NAVIGATOR

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Focus on coaching the family

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Everyday Activities

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Transactional Supports

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Active Engagement

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Provides resources for coaching effectively

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Growth Charts

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Course Options

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ESI

# EARLY SOCIAL INTERACTION (WETHERBY ET AL., 2018)

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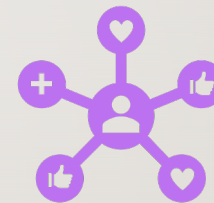


## **Family Centered Capacity Building Approach**

Active participation in assessment and intervention

Encourage reflection

Builds relationship with child and increases responsiveness



## **Learning in Natural Environments**

Activities individualized to the child

Based on typical routines

Based on unique needs of the family →  
intervention throughout the day and increases ownership

# EARLY SOCIAL INTERACTION – WETHERBY ET AL (2018)

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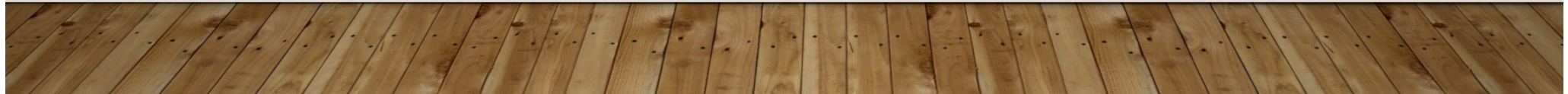
## **NDBI Framework**

SCERTS

- Social Communication
- Emotional Regulation
- Transactional Supports



## **Use of evidence-based strategies**



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## WETHERBY ET AL. (2014)

“Our multisite RCT of the ESI model was the only parent-implemented intervention that reported differential treatment effects on standardized measures of child outcomes, including social communication, developmental level, and adaptive behavior.”

# ADOS AND SORF AS A RESOURCE

- Looking
  - Not just to name
- Following a point
- Goal-Directed reach
- Vocal rounds
- Make eye contact when blocked
- Maintains engagement
- Eye gaze, Reach, Smiles
- "Shows" objects
- Gives objects
- Points to interesting objects
- Shares smiles
- Shared enjoyment
- Range of facial expressions
- Sharing interests
- Gaze to face
- Coordination of NV comm
- Less interest in people
- Reciprocal social play
- Clutching objects
- Sticky attention to objects



We perceive and acknowledge them to be unique, separate people. We enhance our awareness by observing them -- allowing them the bit of space they need to show us who they are and what they need

JANET LANSBURY ON RIE  
PARENTING



# WHAT IS RIE?

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- Resources for Infant Educators
- Baby-centered = person-centered
- Observe = discovery of who the human is as their own person
- Sportscasting = narrating events
- Expression of emotions = meet needs, hold space, and support
- Set boundaries = be consistent and lead clearly

# APPROPRIATENESS??? – DEVELOPMENTAL SKILLS

Typical Program – VBMAPP or ABLLS-R	Child Profile
Mand Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loses interest easily</li><li>• Limited initiation</li></ul>
Echoic Training/SSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Few to no sounds</li><li>• Little to no gaze shifting/shared enjoyment</li></ul>
Matching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clutches matching items in natural environment</li></ul>
Puzzles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spontaneously does puzzles</li></ul>
Object Imitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rarely attends to adults</li></ul>
Receptive Commands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refuses preferred items/activities from adults</li></ul>
“Compliance Training”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sticky attention to objects</li></ul>
Majority Table Time - DTT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “high energy”</li><li>• Seeks movement activities</li></ul>

# APPROPRIATENESS??? - RESEARCH

Responders vs. Non-Responders (Sherer & Schreibman, 2005)

- Language
  - Equal at start of intervention. Responders developed functional language
- **Play with toys**
  - Responders engaged in functional but limited play
- Social behaviors
  - Equal at start of intervention. Responders developed maintenance of social engagement some initiation

# APPROPRIATENESS??? - RESEARCH

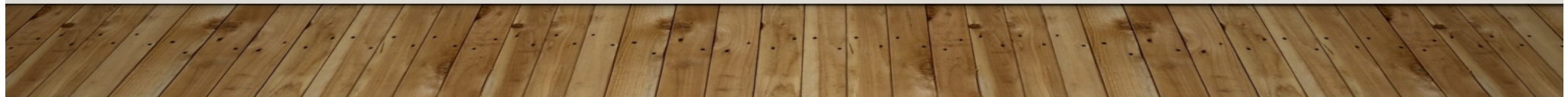
- Responders
  - Functional Play
  - Approach behaviors
- Non-Responders
  - Avoidant behaviors
  - Self-stimulatory behaviors
- Self-initiation training changed trajectory for a non-responder (Koegel, Carter & Koegel, 2003)

# APPROPRIATENESS – BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

- Toddler Tantrums
  - Emotional Regulation
    - May not sound behavioral but it is a thing
  - Pick your battles
  - Learn how to support
  - Assess skill deficits
- Attending/Responding/Learning Behaviors
  - May have very short attention repertoire
  - May respond inconsistently – is it functional? Is it motivating?
  - Repetition and routine

## EXAMPLE – 18 MONTHS

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# EXAMPLE – TYPICAL ASSESSMENT

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- VBMAPP?
- ESDM?
- Skills frequently suggested
  - Articulation
  - Joint Attention
  - Manding
  - Imitation
  - Receptive Language
- Barriers
- Echoics
- VBMAPP – for developmental



## EXAMPLE– DISCUSSION

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- Example of a case where understanding your population is incredibly important
  - CDC
    - Is articulation really important at this age?
    - Go through skills for a typical 21 month old and see what is missing or weak
  - Autism Diagnosis
    - What are the observable behaviors associated with the diagnosis
    - Review ADOS or similar

# EXAMPLE— ASSESSING EYE GAZE/INTERACTION

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- Video 1 – Shifting Attention



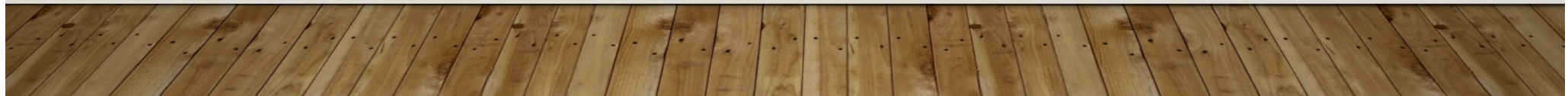
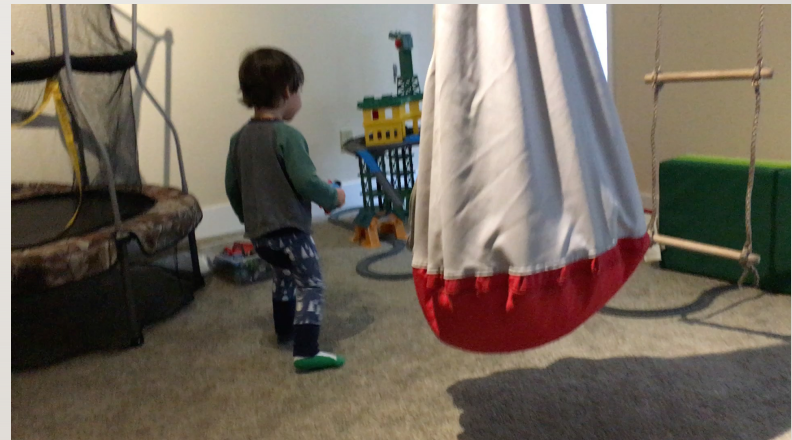
- Video 2 – Requesting



# EXAMPLE– ASSESSING EYE GAZE/INTERACTION

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- Video 3 and 4 – Getting attention/Persistence/Sustained Interaction



# QUESTIONS?

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Early Social Interaction Project - <https://med.fsu.edu/index.cfm?page=autismInstitute.esi>
- Autism Navigator – [www.autismnavigator.com](http://www.autismnavigator.com)
- SORF - <https://autismnavigator.learnercommunity.com/SORF-Resources>
- RIE Parenting - <https://www.rie.org/about/ries-basic-principles/>
- More than words – [www.hanen.org](http://www.hanen.org) and the book by fern Sussman
- Research by Martha Pelaez - <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/author/martha-pelaez> \*This is one of her books but google scholar search and read her articles 😊

# SUGGESTED EI STRATEGIES

The suggestions below can be incorporated to help promote language and social interaction in EI programs

- Exaggerated facial expressions
- Repetitive vocalizations → saying the same word or sound within an activity such as “vroom vroom” each time you push the car
- Routines → Using routines to help teach things such as playing social games and pausing for interaction, labeling something a few times as you hand it over and pausing right before handing it to the child to see if the child says something or looks at you
- Gestures → using exaggerated gestures to help prompt responding without directly prompting responding such as looking at dramatically at the item that needs to be chosen, or using hands to express an emotion
- Mutually Led “shared Control” → the child initiates and the adult initiates ...should be balanced interaction and control throughout the session