



CASD CHAT E-Newsletter

A Therapy Guide

Dear CASD families and friends,

With many options to choose from, finding the right intervention for your child can feel overwhelming. Your child's care team (e.g., developmental pediatrician, psychiatrist, evaluating psychologist) is a great resource for determining the right fit for your child. However, it can also be helpful for families to know what their options are – especially when your child is between evaluations or waiting for an appointment. Therefore, this month's CASD Chat (by Dr. Meagan Wills with support of Jessica Smith, BS) aims to provide an overview of the most common therapies and who might benefit from them.

Behavioral Therapy

- **Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA):** Broadly, this approach aims to encourage the development of new skills by rewarding desired behaviors. This technique is also known as 'positive behavioral reinforcement.' Possible rewards include, but are not limited to, the following: verbal praise, engaging in a preferred activity (e.g., bubbles, iPad game), tokens, stickers, or food. The goal is to fade out the use of these rewards over time.
 - There are several types of ABA therapy:
 - **Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI):** This is an intensive treatment approach (i.e., 20-40 hours per week of individualized instruction) that is designed for children four years and younger. Children usually receive 2-3 years of EIBI.
 - **Early Start Denver Model (ESDM):** Another early intervention approach, ESDM is designed for children ages 18 to 48 months. In contrast to EIBI, this method focuses on increasing a child's motivation by following the child's lead during play, offering choices, and providing naturalistic reinforcement. It is similar to PRT (described below).
 - **Discrete Trial Training (DTT):** DTT is often used synonymously with ABA. This is a very structured and systematic approach that involves breaking down desired behaviors into a series of smaller steps. DTT works best for individuals who learn best when taught in small, repeated steps. Data collection is also a major component of DTT and allows therapists to track and communicate progress.
 - **Pivotal Response Training (PRT):** PRT is a more naturalistic and

play-based approach that builds on the individual's own initiative and interests. It is particularly helpful in teaching communication, language, play, and social skills.

- Unlike other treatments, ABA therapy is often conducted within the home environment. This is a huge advantage as it often speeds up the learning process and promotes the generalization of skills. It also allows for other family members/caregivers to take part in the therapy. However, there are a few things to keep in mind for in-home therapy to be successful:
 - Provide a space that is calm and quiet.
 - Remove additional clutter and distractions.
 - Provide developmentally appropriate toys and activities.
- **Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS):** Based on the principles of ABA, PECS teaches functional communication skills through the exchange of picture cards. Specifically, individuals are taught to use picture cards to request desired items. This method can be used with all ages.

Relationship-Based Therapy

- **Floortime:** In this approach, parents are encouraged to get down on the floor and follow their child's lead during play. By doing this, parents can enter their child's world through play, ultimately strengthening the parent-child relationship and fostering social-emotional growth. Floortime can also be done with other caregivers, siblings, and peers.
- **Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT):** Also considered a behavioral intervention, PCIT aims to improve communication patterns, increase expected social behaviors, and decrease disruptive behaviors by strengthening the parent-child relationship. Parents receive in-the-moment coaching while playing with their child, as well as receive weekly feedback on their progress. PCIT is designed for children ages 2-7.

Social Skills Training (SST)

- As indicated by its name, SST involves teaching positive social behaviors and social problem-solving skills in a small group format. Possible treatment targets include conversation skills, perspective-taking, emotion regulation, turn-taking, sharing, etc. SST groups can be done with individuals of all ages. However, in order for the groups to be successful, it is critical that individuals are appropriately matched based on their developmental level.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

- This is a form of talk therapy that encourages individuals to change their behaviors by addressing the thoughts and feelings that influence them. CBT can be effective for treating a broad range of symptoms. In working with the autistic population, we often use CBT when treating comorbid anxiety, depression, and executive functioning challenges. Although it can be used with a wide age range, it is most effective for individuals who can understand and verbally express their own thoughts.

Celebrating Neurodiversity

highlight Kalin Bennett. Kalin is the first autistic athlete to be awarded an NCAA Division 1 basketball scholarship. On his website,



Spektrum 50, Kalin reminds us to never underestimate one's potential. He reports that, "doctors told my mom, I would never walk; I would never talk and college was NOT an option. Yet, I can walk, I can talk, and I can dunk." Kalin hopes that his story inspires "others who are figuring out their purpose or finding their strengths or who are overcoming whatever obstacles are in their way."

For more information, you can check out his website at: www.spektrum50.com

Talking about Gun Violence with your Children

The nation (and the world) is stunned by the shootings this past month at a supermarket, a church, and more recently, an elementary school. Talking to your kids about shootings can be hard, but it's important to be open to discussion about tragic events. Dr. Lee Beers of Children's National Hospital wrote an article about how to talk to kids about school shootings.

[Click here for the article.](#)

Pride Month

Children's National is Celebrating Pride Month

Children's National has been recognized with the **LGBTQ+ Healthcare Equality Leader** designation, after receiving a perfect institutional score of 100, as rated by the Human Rights Campaign. This is the nation's foremost benchmarking survey of health care facilities on policies and practices dedicated to the equitable treatment and inclusion of their LGBTQ+ patients, visitors and employees. Services include the Youth Pride Clinic provides primary and specialty care services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning/queer (LGBTQ) patients throughout the greater Washington, D.C., region, ages 12-22 and specialized multidisciplinary care to support transgender youth.

Look for the Children's National booth at the Capital Pride Festival on Sunday, June 12th from noon until 7 pm.

2022 Calendar of Events

Integrate advisors is inviting autistic college students and graduates to apply for our [National Employer Connect](#) program.

This interactive networking program is designed for autistic and neurodivergent job

seekers to facilitate their education, communication, and awareness. We provide candidates with the opportunity to meet with select employers who are eager to share their best practices when it comes to all aspects of a job search. Do you know anyone that would be interested? All areas of study are welcome to apply.

To be considered, candidates should submit their resume to the [National Employer Connect](#) posting on Integrate's website as the first step. Candidates will then be directed to complete an application, HireVue on-demand interview and lastly a Zoom interview. As a reminder, candidates who apply by the priority deadline will be given first consideration. Applications will be considered on a first come, first served basis so applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

****The deadline is Friday, June 10.****

Free Parent Support Group

Where: Virtual

When: every Monday at 1 PM EST

Dr. Dan Shapiro, friend of CASD, will be offering a free parent support group, every Monday at 1 PM EST. To register, [click here](#).

We want to highlight *Ivymount School Resource Guide* which provides information on a wide range of resources in the community including **Summer Camps** (since it is that time of year to schedule) www.ivymount.org/resourceguide2022

Dr. Shapiro is offering new courses for parents of different age groups. To learn more about these courses, please visit his website:

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

Dr. Shapiro also offers [parent-child excursions](#): stand-alone courses on common topics in developmental and behavioral pediatrics: ADHD, anxiety, autism, social success, sibling relationships, eating, sleeping, violence, adolescence, gender, sexuality, and more.

These in-depth seminars are for parents of children with challenging temperaments or developmental differences. Each Excursion starts with a review of background concepts then dives deep into specific strategies. As with all Parent Child Journey courses, the emphasis here is on individualizing the approach for each child. Choose the topics that interest you. Real-life challenges. Real-life solutions.

Pathfinders for Autism (<https://pathfindersforautism.org/calendar/>) provides a list of programs for all ages including video group for spouses/partners of adults with Asperger's; Transitioning services and Job skills; Baby and Family Navigator programs, and new this month, Autism from the Autistic Perspective and free Pediatric Occupational Therapy Screening and more!

NEW VIDEOS ADDED!

The *Unstuck* author team has created short videos to help

The videos made me
feel less alone.
-Parent

The strategies
were very well
explained.
-Parent

New Free Videos



UNSTUCK

AND ON TARGET

parents of children with executive functioning difficulties. Please click the playlists below to view the videos in both English and Spanish! **We have added new videos to address feedback from parents. Please click on our playlist to view our new 3-part video series on "troubleshooting."**

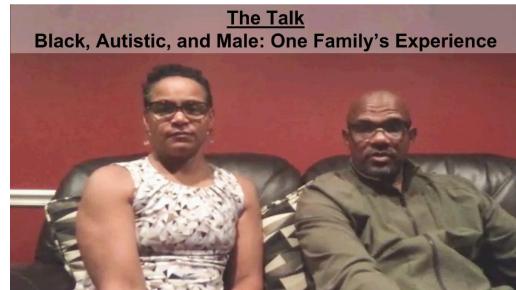
[Playlist of all videos](#)

[Recursos para padres](#)

The Talk— Black, Autistic, and Male: One Family's Experience

[Click here for the
video](#)

We would like to share an interview with a family of a college-bound autistic young adult and an accompanying reflection by Tawara Goode, Director of the National Center for Cultural Competence and Director of the Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities.



Please see below for a flyer regarding a study of brain development and autism. If you're interested, please contact Chelsea Armour, aarmour@childrensnational.org.



 Website



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Do you want to help us study brain development and learn about autism?

**Earn up to \$90 in our
developmental studies at
The George Washington
University!**

Is your child between 5-17 years old and has an autism diagnosis?

Have a fun family day!

We would like to invite you and your child to play child-friendly computer games while we track their gaze and their brain function.



Pediatric Mendelian Genomics Research Center

Study of Undiagnosed and Diagnosed Genetic Diseases.

Investigators at Children's National Center for Genetic Medicine Research, in collaboration with Invitae Corporation, are researching the genetic causes of human disease. If you or a family member have a known or uncertain genetic diagnosis or suspected genetic diagnosis, you may be eligible to participate in our research program.

If you are interested in learning more about our research program or are interested in participating, please submit a request for information here: <https://is.gd/PMGRCstudy> or email PMGRC@childrensnational.org.

Investigators at Children's National Center for Genetic Medicine Research, in collaboration with Invitae Corporation, are researching the genetic causes of human disease. If you or a family member have a known or uncertain genetic diagnosis or suspected genetic diagnosis, you may be eligible to participate in our research program. Please see the flyer to the left to learn more.



20+ free resources available to view anytime, anywhere!

Enjoy these information-packed free webinars on your own or make them a powerful group learning event with your colleagues, friends, and family members. Topics include:

- Working/learning in groups
- Face-to-face communication
- Social anxiety
- Executive functions
- Children's stress
- Self-regulation
- Individual webinars on 10 core Social Thinking Vocabulary

Hosted by Social Thinking.

Community Resources & Events

Advocacy Resources

[Autistic Self Advocacy Network-Navigating College: A Handbook on Self Advocacy](#)

Resources on Anti-Racism

[Spectrum Support's Social Stories on Racism](#)

[ASAN's What is Police Violence?: A Plain Language Booklet](#)

[@TheMorganCruise Worksheets for Black Children](#)

COVID-19 Safety Resources

[Behavioral Directions LLC's Safety Teaching Protocol](#)

COVID-19 National and Local Government Resources

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[DC Department of Health](#)

[Maryland Department of Health](#)

[Virginia Department of Health](#)

[U.S Department of Education's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) Part C Dispute Resolution Procedures](#)

[U.S Department of Education's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) Part B Dispute Resolution Procedures](#)

Visit Children's National Hospital's COVID-19 Resources