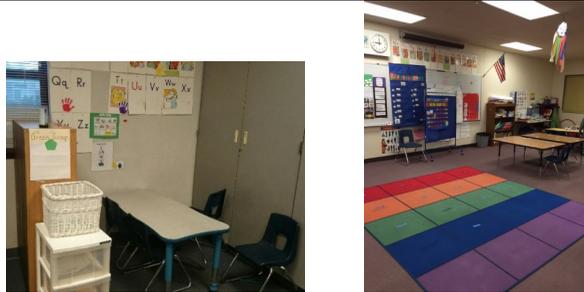
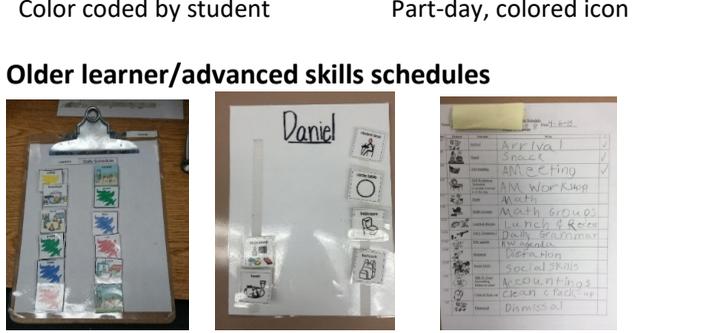


## Autism Program Walkthrough Checklist

In educational programs a core group of systematic Evidence Based Practices (EBPs) are utilized to best support the needs of students diagnosed with autism. *The 2020 Evidence Based Practices Report from the National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice (NCAEP)* reviewed substantial amounts of research and identified 28 Evidence Based Practices in the field of Autism. The strategies and interventions described in this checklist are among the identified evidence based practices. This checklist specifically reviews Visual Supports, Functional Communication Training, Picture Exchange Communication System and Reinforcement interventions. In addition to the EBPs, lesson planning and data based decision making are also critical features in special education programs.

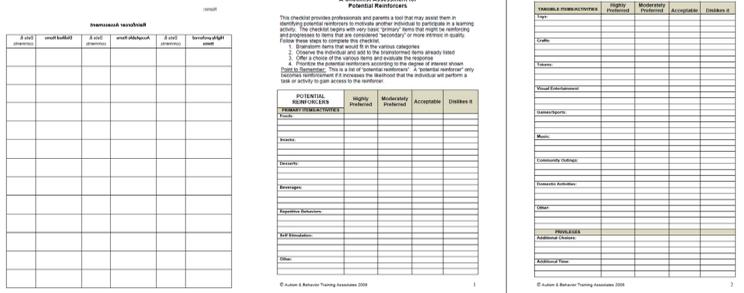
This checklist is intended to provide educational team members with an overview and examples of the core instructional strategies and program components that are foundational for educational programs serving students with Autism. For more information and to download the report visit <https://ncaep.fpg.unc.edu/>. For free training modules and resources on the 28 identified evidence based practices visit the Autism Focused Intervention Resources and Modules (AFIRM) <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/user/login>.

		<b>Evidence Based Practices aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession</b>				
		1 Engaging and supporting students in all learning	2 Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning	3 Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning	4 Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students	5 Assessing student learning
<p><b>Visual Supports (NCAEP 2020)</b></p> <p>Visual Supports are defined as: any visual display that supports the learner engaging in a desired behavior or skills independent of prompts. Examples of visual supports include pictures, written words, objects within the environment, arrangement of the environment or visual boundaries, schedules, maps, labels, organization systems, and timelines</p>						
<p><b>Classroom Environment and Physical Structure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The classroom environment is visually organized with clearly defined spaces/areas (some may include: Large group, Small group centers/stations, Play/Leisure, Transition area, Book/Reading, Break, Sensory)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Goals for Structure               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase student independence and adaptive skills for adult life</li> <li>○ Increase opportunities for spontaneous communication</li> <li>○ Create a visually clear and easy to understand environment</li> <li>○ Capitalize on visual strengths of learners</li> <li>○ Create opportunities for students to generalize learned skills</li> <li>○ Helps students compensate for the challenges with organizational skills</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			2.2 2.3 2.6			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clear Physical and Visual Boundaries identifies where each area begins and ends, as well as establishes context and segments the environment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Physical structure changes based on the needs and ages of the students</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minimize Visual and Auditory Distractions to assist the student to focus on the important concepts and tasks</li> </ul>						
<p><b>Whole Class Schedules:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A posted stationary visual representation of the day</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arranged in written or pictorial form and referenced throughout the day</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> States specific order of activities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Actively used by teacher to indicate activity completion and transition to new activities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> New or different activities are identified with a visual strategy (arrow, star, color)</li> </ul>			2.6 2.7			
<p><b>Student Schedules:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Schedules are used as a tool to teach organizational and planning skills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The schedule allows students to view the sequence of events in their day and identify what activities will come next</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Schedules are <u>reviewed</u> with students on an <u>on-going basis</u> throughout the day, clearly identifying when activities are finished</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students and staff are aware of all changes in <u>advance</u> and students are actively taught to accept the changes through the use of their individual schedules and visual cues</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Schedules are developed based on assessed skill and ability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The material, length of schedule and student interaction with the schedule progresses from simple to complex. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Object, photo, colored icon, black/ white icon, written word</li> <li>▪ Single item, part day, full day</li> <li>▪ Matching, check off/cross off</li> <li>▪ Stationary, portable</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Early learner/emerging skills</b> Colored Icon/Colored strip/ Stationary</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Color coded by student      Part-day, colored icon</p> <p><b>Older learner/advanced skills schedules</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Portable, Full day, colored icon      Portable Full day, written word</p>	1.1 1.4			4.1 4.4	

<p><b>Visually Structured Work System:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A systematic visual system which allows a student to receive and understand information and increase independence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The work system clearly defines the work expectations: what work, how much work, when is it finished and what comes next</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A work system allows a teacher to clarify expectations while capitalizing on the visual strengths of the learner</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The system minimizes auditory input and promotes organization</li> </ul>		1.4		3.3 3.4 3.5	4.4 4.5	
<p><b>General Visual Supports:</b></p> <p><b>Visual Expectations/ Lanyard Rules:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Visual icons and written words show students the expected behaviors throughout the day and allow students to receive and understand information</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Visual rules are systematically taught to students and used as a prompt or reminder when needed to clarify expectations</li> </ul> <p><b>Visual Timers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provides a visual concrete system to represent the abstract concept of time and time passing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A visual timer allows the students to “see” time passing and prepare for transitions and activities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Visual timers are used across the day to support students with concepts of time, including waiting for preferred tasks and ending activities</li> </ul> <p><b>First-Then Strip:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A basic visual system that identifies the order of activities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> It may be used in a variety of settings at several levels to help with transitions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A timer can be attached to the system if needed to further clarify expectations</li> </ul> <p><b>Self-Regulation Visual supports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Purposefully taught visual supports are used to help students identify their own behaviors, emotions and actions and practice appropriate self-regulation behaviors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Using visuals, minimizes auditory input in stressful and difficult situations</li> </ul>		1.2 1.4 1.6	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6	3.5	4.1 4.2 4.4 4.5	

<p><b>Functional Communication Training</b> (NCAEP 2020)            Functional Communication training is defined as: replacement of interfering behavior that has a communication function with more appropriate communication that accomplishes the same function.</p> <p><b>Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)</b> (NCAEP 2020)            The Picture Exchange Communication System is defined as: A functional communication systems in which learners are initially taught to give a picture of a desired item to a communicative partner in exchange for the desired item. PECS consists of six phases which are: (1) “how” to communicate, (2) distance and persistence, (3) picture discrimination, (4) sentence structure, (5) responsive requesting, and (6) commenting.</p>	1 Engaging and supporting students in all learning	2 Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning	3 Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning	4 Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students	5 Assessing student learning	
<p><b>Helping Hand:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Visual used to make a request for help, clarification or assistance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provides an alternative way to communicate when in heightened emotional states</li> </ul>		1.2 1.4 1.6	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6	3.5	4.1 4.2 4.4 4.5	
<p><b>Break Card and Break area:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Used by students to request a break or time away from a difficult task</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can be used to remind the student that a break is an option and that a break can be requested</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The break area is a calm, neutral “teaching area” for the students to learn self-regulation and coping skills</li> </ul>		1.4	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.6	3.6	4.4	
<p><b>Wait Card:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The ability to understand the word “wait” is a critical listener skill. The Wait card can be paired with the spoken word during daily activities when “waiting is needed”</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The wait card makes “wait” more concrete and can be used in combination with a visual timer to give meaning to the abstract concept of time</li> </ul>		1.2 1.4 1.6	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6	3.5	4.1 4.2 4.4 4.5	
<p><b>Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A specific protocol for teaching Functional Communication Skills in which student uses pictures or icons to communicate, starting with spontaneous requesting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> PECS System should be used across the day and in a variety of contexts (e.g. not just at snack time) and staff should be able to describe which of the six phases a student is on when asked about the use of the system</li> </ul>		1.1 1.2 1.4		3.2 3.5 3.6		

<p><b>Reinforcement</b> (NCAEP 2020) Reinforcement is defined as: An event, activity, or other circumstance occurring after a learner engages in a desired behavior that leads to the increased occurrence of the behavior in the future.</p>		1 Engaging and supporting students in all learning	2 Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning	3 Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning	4 Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students	5 Assessing student learning
<p><b>Reinforcer Preference Assessment/Inventory:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct observations and a reinforcer assessment allows the teacher to work with the students to identify a variety of highly preferred items</li> <li>The inventory is a tool for the teacher to document each individual student's reinforcers and update it as the student demonstrates interest in various items/activities.</li> <li>Inventories should be posted in the classroom for all staff to access on a regular basis.</li> <li>Staff should use this information to prepare potential reinforcers for each student that can be used across the day</li> </ul>		1.1 1.2 1.6				5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5 5.7
<p><b>Visual Choice boards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A visual menu of choices which represents available items that can be selected as a reinforcer by the student</li> <li>Increases functional communication opportunities</li> <li>Identifies a variety of items to increase student motivation</li> </ul>		1.2 1.4 1.6	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6	3.5	4.1 4.2 4.4 4.5	
<p><b>Token Economy System:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A system for providing <u>positive reinforcement</u> to a child by giving them tokens for completing tasks or engaging in desired behaviors (called "target behaviors")</li> <li>Once the specified number of tokens are earned, the child exchanges these tokens to gain access to backup reinforcers</li> <li>Positive reinforcement, via the tokens, can be provided immediately after the target behavior occurs.</li> <li>A token economy is structured to facilitate consistency with delivery of positive reinforcement for target behavior(s)</li> </ul>		1.1 1.2 1.4	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6		4.1 4.2 4.4 4.5	

# Individual Lesson Planning and Data Based Decision Making

In addition to the EBPS reviewed above, a critical component to all Autism programs is data based decision making. Instructional plans are essential in developing individualized lessons targeting each student's specific needs. Data collections measures are needed to determine the effectiveness of the interventions and the progress of the student. Data based decision making should guide all classroom interventions and instructional plans.

- 1 Engaging and supporting students in all learning
- 2 Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning
- 3 Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning
- 4 Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students
- 5 Assessing student learning

- Lesson plans are developed and utilized across activities:**
- Core Curriculum lesson planning forms
  - Intervention Curriculum lesson planning forms (WIP, HWOT, Touch Math, Edmark)
  - Functional Routine Tasks Analysis forms
  - Planning Matrix to infuse lessons across the school day

The image shows three forms used in lesson planning. On the left is the 'Instructional Plan' form, which includes fields for 'Instructional Plan', 'WIP or HWOT', 'Date Developed', 'Targeted Skills/Goal for Instruction', 'General Prerequisite', 'Skill Copy or Date', 'Master Copy or Date', and 'Assessment/Modification/Strategy/Teaching/Other Support/Visual'. In the middle is the 'Planning Matrix' form, which is a grid with 'Skill' on the vertical axis and 'Date' (from 1/1 to 1/7) on the horizontal axis. On the right is the 'Lesson Plan' form, which includes 'Objectives', 'Prerequisite', 'Lesson Objectives', 'Materials', 'Activities', and 'Assessment'.

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- 4.2
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- 4.6
- 5.1
- 5.2
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- 5.6
- 5.7

- Data Collection Measures should include:**
- Student work product from the core and/or intervention curriculum, if working from the intervention and/or core curriculum
  - Curriculum based assessments, if working from the intervention and/or core curriculum
  - Skill Acquisition Charts (tracking progress over time), (all programs)
  - Task Analysis, data measure for play skills, schedule acquisition, routine following, adaptive living skills (all programs)
  - Discrete Trial data collection, if working from *Work In Progress* (Highly Intensive and Intensive Programs)
  - Small group weekly data collection for the Intensive and Integrative Programs

The image shows three data collection forms. On the left is the 'Acquisition Chart' form, which has a grid for tracking skill acquisition over time. In the middle is the 'Task Analysis' form, which includes a 'Task Analysis & Data Collection Form' with a grid for recording task steps. On the right is the 'Data Form' form, which includes a 'Weekly Data Collection' form with a grid for recording weekly data.

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- 4.2
- 4.3
- 4.4
- 4.5
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- 5.1
- 5.2
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- 5.6
- 5.7

**Notes and Comments**