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Increasing Emotional Regulation in Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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A Capstone Project for the Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Science

Introduction

This capstone project focuses on the emotion regulation skills of school-age children (5 to 7 years) on the moderate to severe autism spectrum. Emotional regulation is the process by which a person engages in behaviors with the implicit or explicit goal of altering emotion frequency, intensity, duration, or type (Raugh & Strauss, 2023). Through emotional self regulation, individuals can control their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions within everyday situations. This process involves the ability to identify one's emotions and those of other people while developing strategies to constructively manage their reactions to emotional experiences and inhibitory control (Dumont et al., 2019). Autism is classified as a neurodevelopmental disorder, which impacts communication and social functioning. It is also associated by the presence of restricted and repetitive behaviors (Feather et al., 2023). Children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) also have a difficult time expressing how they feel because of this communication barrier. A delay in emotional self-regulation in children with ASD may result in outbursts, aggression, self-injury, etc. It is important to teach children who have ASD how to self-regulate emotionally. For this project, I implemented a three day lesson for ASD children on important emotional regulation skills. The first lesson focused on the recognition of three emotions (happiness, sadness, anger). The second lesson focused on the recognition of scenarios that cause these three emotions. Lastly, the third lesson focused on coping skills that help regulate emotional outbursts. This three-day lesson was presented at Ione Olson Elementary School in Marina with children, ages 5-7, in a moderate to severe special education classroom setting.

Needs Statement

Children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have significant challenges with emotional regulation. They can struggle to manage emotions, inhibit reactions, delay gratification, and tolerate transitions or change (Gorman & Laurent, 2018). The need being addressed in this capstone project is to help promote emotional self-control in young children with ASD ages 5 to 7. Emotional regulation involves rethinking a challenging situation to reduce anger or anxiety, hiding signs of sadness or fear, or focusing on reasons to feel happy or calm. To promote emotional self-regulation skills, this project will teach school-aged children in kindergarten and 1st grade how to recognize three emotions (happy, sad, angry), recognize the scenarios that can occur form these three emotions, and learn about various coping skills. Children on the autism spectrum need guidance in showing them that it is normal to feel negative emotions and that there are ways they can respond better to those feelings. This will give them the reassurance that a lot of children on the spectrum need in a classroom setting that they can have self-control when feeling overwhelmed by their emotions.

Self-regulation refers to automatic responses that serve to control cognition, behavior, and emotions to support one's overall well-being (Howard et al., 2021). Self-regulation starts developing as early as in infancy and progresses throughout the preschool years. However, children on the autism spectrum are often delayed in different domains of development. Self-regulation starts to develop in the cognitive developmental domain in children. The cognitive-developmental domain of self-regulation includes children's use of explicit metacognitive knowledge about learning. Children often learn strategies to regulate behavior through planning, monitoring, and controlling ongoing cognitive processes (Leseman et al., 2017). However, Cognitive impairments are associated with ASD, which can include slow

thinking/responding, being easily confused, having a hard time paying attention, and difficulties in planning. The emotional development domain is also where self-regulation takes place. In the emotional domain, this is where children become aware of their feelings and how they express them. Children with ASD struggle to recognize, interpret, and respond to their feelings. Both of these domains are challenges for children on the spectrum when it comes to emotional regulation. This is why it is important to help them learn about their emotions and help them navigate healthy ways to express themselves during stressful times.

Recognizing feelings and emotions is an essential part of development in early childhood development. Children on the autism spectrum experience developmental delays in both recognizing and labeling feelings. Children with ASD who struggle with situational emotion recognition skills will encounter a limitation in the ability to learn not only about their own feelings but as well as the feelings of others. Furthermore, difficulties in emotion recognition have been found to play a significant role in the social and communicative impairments characteristic of an ASD diagnosis (Davidson et al., 2022). When children with ASD cannot fully communicate to those around them, it is harder for them to control emotional outbursts. It is important to help children with ASD recognize the types of emotions they can feel to better understand themselves in the present moment when emotions are at a high. When children can learn to label how they feel (e.g. sad, mad, anxious), they will learn the next phase of emotional regulation, which is learning how to respond to negative emotions.

During the early years, children learn about the consequences of their emotional behaviors.When children react to negative emotions, they are more likely to act irrationally, causing different behaviors. This project aims at those who have difficulty managing the intensity of their emotions, which results in emotional outbursts. There is an important role that

maladaptive emotional responses play in ASD that results in dysregulated emotions. These responses can take the form of irritability, poor anger control, temper tantrums, self-injurious behaviors, aggression, and mood dysregulation (Gross et al., 2013). It is important to teach ASD children to recognize and understand which scenarios correspond to their emotional outbursts. Additionally, children with ASD have difficulties with perspective taking which causes social difficulties. Perspective taking is described as the ability to understand other people's cognitive and emotional states (Carey & Cassels, 2013). Perspective taking is important during early childhood development because it teaches children to have empathy for those that they interact with. Children with ASD struggle with theory of mind, which makes it difficult for them to interpret how someone is feeling. It is important for ASD children to first learn to recognize and read facial expressions to develop this skill.

As children grow and develop, they begin to find that there are ways that they can cope with their emotions. Coping skills refer to effortful cognitive and behavioral processes of responding to stress that work in conjunction with self-regulation to help modify a child's emotional reaction (Camacho et al., 2020). Healthy coping strategies can be difficult for children with ASD because oftentimes they have their own behavioral ways of coping with stressful events. For instance, what may be considered a problem behavior to someone who is around a child with ASD might be a way of coping to the child. Repetitive behavior patterns or communication such as humming/echolalia, biting (self injury), squeezing, or excessive avoidance may serve as a coping function to the child (Mazefsky et al., 2018). Demonstrating various healthy alternative ways to cope with their emotions that can be used when negative emotions take over will give ASD students ideas on what is available to them in their school environment to help bring them to a calmer state. Teaching them to gravitate toward these coping

strategies will promote their emotional self-regulation skills and give them a sense of independence to be in control of their mind, bodies, and emotions.

There are many different coping strategies available that could help with regulating negative emotions. One of the most common is teaching children to take breaks from stressful situations. Break requests have been proven to be effective to reduce some aspects of behaviors that may escalate to problem behaviors in the academic setting (Chen et al., 2015). Taking a break can include movement breaks (going for a walk), going to a quiet area for personal space, or drinking water to cool off. Another coping strategy is deep pressure stimulation. Deep pressure stimulation is a therapy intervention that modulates stress arousal through sensory input (Cook et al., 2017). Different forms of deep pressure stimulation that can be found in a special education classroom are compression vests, weighted blankets, or stress balls for squeezing. Lastly, sensory and fidget toys are ideal for young ASD children to cope with their emotions. Sensory and fidget toys that can help a child calm down with items such as pop fidgets, kinetic sand, stretchy strings, and fidget spinners.

Visual support is one of the best interventions to support ASD children to not only regulate emotions but let a trusted adult know how they feel. Visual supports refer to using a visual item to communicate. Visual supports can be used in many different forms such as, but are not limited to, icons, photos, written words, objects, and labels (Hume et al., 2014). While many children on the moderate to severe autism spectrum are delayed in speech, visual supports help individuals with ASD communicate how they feel along with their wants/needs. Furthermore, visual supports build a level of independence and confidence in young children with ASD. Visual support encourages ASD children to use their visuals to better interact with their physical and social environments.

Emotional regulation is essential for children to learn during the early developmental years. For a child with autism, it is challenging to both recognize and understand emotions, which then results in impulsive behavior (acting upon emotions). In order for ASD children to increase emotional regulation, I implemented three lessons within a three day period. The first lesson focused on the recognition of three common emotions (happiness, sadness, and anger). The second lesson focused on the recognition of scenarios that can result in these three emotions. Lastly, the third lesson focused on various coping skills to help regulate emotions. These lessons were done with children ages 5-7 in a kindergarten and first grade special education classroom at Ione Olson Elementary School.

Theory

Jean Piaget's theory of Cognitive development focuses on the development of cognition, from birth through the end of adolescence. Cognition refers to the thinking and memory processes that change throughout the life span. According to Piaget, cognitive development is facilitated by four interdependent, interrelated factors. These four factors include the biological process of maturation, acquired experience from actions performed on objects (i.e., first-hand experiences of learning about the things of the world and their higher level coordinations), socialization (i.e., the development of operations through cooperation with others), and self-regulation by equilibration (DeRobertis, 2021). The Cognitive development theory is a four stage theory that describes the intellectual development in childhood through thought, judgment, and knowledge. Jean Piaget's preoperational stage is the second stage in his theory of cognitive development. This stage occurs from age 2 to 7 years old. The preoperational stage is where children are able to think about things symbolically. Their language develops along with their memory and imagination. However, children lack the ability to think logically. According to

Piaget, there is a limitation within the preoperational stage called egocentrism. Egocentrism refers to the child's inability to differentiate between their perspectives and others (Babakr et al., 2019). Piaget believed children are egocentric until a later age. This means in this age group, children see everything from their point of view and do not take the views of others into consideration.

Piaget's preoperational stage applies to my project participants whose ages range from 5 to 7 years old. Perspective-taking is the foundation of emotional understanding. Children ages 2 to 7 are developing their abilities to think about the things that surround them symbolically and give them meaning. Because of the egocentrism that children in this age range are in, it becomes difficult for children to see past their own emotions. Children with ASD have a more difficult and delayed process in gaining this ability to perspective-take. ASD children struggle with symbolic understanding which creates difficulties in labeling real world objects. To improve perspective-taking in children, it is important to focus on the recognition of emotions, thoughts, and feelings. This ties in with emotional regulation in that perspective-taking helps children to regulate their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to respond appropriately. Overall, cognitive developments and pre operational characteristics relate to emotional regulation in that children in this age range undergo a lot of social emotional changes. Children are becoming increasingly aware of their emotions as well as the others around them.

Consideration of Diversity

This project was conducted at Ione Olson Elementary School in Marina in one of the special education classrooms. At Ione Olson Elementary, there are four special education classrooms that have a majority of autistic children. Three classes are on the moderate to severe spectrum and two classes that have mild to moderate students. The minority demographics are

75.2%. This did reflect my participants as they were ethnically diverse. I had six participants in which four were boys and two were girls. Two of my participants were Hispanic, two White, one Asian, and one Black. The ethnic demographics of the entire school include 48.3% Hispanics, 24.8% white, 14.2% Asian, and 5% Black, 4.3% 2 or more races, and 2.5% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (U.S. News & World Report L.P; 2023). My project involves children on the moderate to severe autism spectrum ages 5-7. While some children on the moderate spectrum are verbal or partially verbal, those that are on the severe spectrum are nonverbal.

Children on the moderate to severe spectrum have different ways to communicate such as through communication icons, sign language, or by using their communication devices. These diversity characteristics influenced my project in that I had to take into consideration the level of communication each of the participants had along with their attention spans. With this in mind, some students may not fully process the information in the lessons. In order to keep my project simple for them to understand, I had to consider using few but simplistic words when giving the lessons and also incorporate engaging activities to fit the theme. In addition, I took gender and ethnicity into consideration by the materials I was using. For instance, the printed pictures of facial expressions I used for my lessons had both genders so the students could see that what is being taught relates to boys and girls. Furthermore, I also made sure in my printed visuals to have a diverse range of ethnicities so the children could see that children who look similar to them feel the emotions of happiness, sadness, and anger just like them.

Learning Outcomes

I created three thirty minute lesson plans across three days for ASD children in a moderate to severe special education classroom at Ione Olson Elementary School. This project had three learning outcomes:

1. ASD Students will be able to recognize and label three emotions (happy, sad, and angry) on pictures of facial expressions.
2. ASD Students will be able to recognize scenarios that correspond to the emotions of happiness, sadness, and anger.
3. ASD Students will be able to demonstrate one coping skill for coping with their feelings of sadness and anger.

Methods

Location and Participants

The Emotional Regulation lessons took place at Ione Olson Elementary School in Marina, California. The lessons were conducted in a special education classroom with six participants on the moderate to severe autism spectrum. I have worked at this school for 2 years as a Behavior Technician, therefore, I recruited the six participants in the special education classroom I currently work in. My six participants were children ages 5 to 7 in both kindergarten and first grade. Out of the six participants, there were 2 girls and 4 boys. When it came to communication, 3 out of 6 participants were verbal, while the other 3 were nonverbal.

Procedures and Materials

The Emotional Regulation lessons were presented to the six special education students in a three day period. These lessons were on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of the same week.

Before starting my lessons, I talked with the teacher I work with and asked her when would be the best time in the daily classroom schedule to give the lessons. She gave me a 30 minute time slot from 10:30-11:00a.m. during the time called “centers”. The center's time period consists of a rotation work period distributed between three tables labeled blue table, red table, and green table. The children during centers move clockwise through all three centers to complete their work or activities. The teacher gave me the green table towards the back of the classroom because the table was the biggest. This allowed me to have more space for the lessons as well as have a quieter area.

The first lesson focused on the first learning outcome which was recognizing facial expressions of happiness, sadness, and anger. First, I set up my materials around 10:15am while the class was at recess. At 10:30a.m when the class got back from recess, I started pulling students 1 by 1 to my table in the center time rotation. I started off the lesson by showing each child that I worked with a visual icon of each of the three emotions we’d focus on. To grab each child’s attention, I acted out what these emotions and how they can look like as a facial expression. Next, I began to show them printed out pictures of children who were happy, sad, and angry (Appendix A). For each emotion, I showed them three different pictures of that single emotion. In total the participants saw nine pictures. I made sure each picture was slightly different from the next so they could recognize the different ways that happy, sad, and angry could be shown on a facial expression. Along with showing them the pictures, I showed each child the icon facial expression that the printed picture was showing (Appendix A). I then described why each picture was the emotion it was by pointing out the facial characteristics that the children in each photo were displaying. If the child was verbal, I had them repeat the emotion after every picture we identified. If the child was nonverbal, I had them point to the icon visual.

Lastly, to assess each child on recognizing the three emotions, I ended with an activity. For this activity, each child had to create a facial expression on felt material face boards. This activity came with felt material facial characteristics related to these emotions such as eyes, mouth, ears, tears, etc. I selected one of the three emotions for each child and they had to recreate the emotion that was on the icon onto the face board.

On the second day, the lesson focused on recognizing emotional scenarios corresponding to the emotions of happiness, sadness, and anger. I pulled students 1 by 1 to my table during the center time rotation at 10:30a.m. I started off by refreshing each child's memory of what emotions we talked about the day before. Once again, I acted out what each emotion can look like on a facial expression. Next, I told each child that we would be looking at pictures again but this time it would be the things that can cause us to feel happy, sad, or angry. I used the same structure for this lesson as I did for the first lesson in that I used a total of nine printed pictures. Each of the three emotions had three different scenarios during the lesson. For the emotion of happiness, I showed pictures that included celebrating a birthday, spending time with family, and playing with friends. For the emotion of sadness, I showed pictures of a boy dropping his ice cream cone, falling off a bike, and how not sharing can make someone feel sad. As for being angry, I showed pictures of a boy not wanting to do homework, a boy ripping his artwork, and a girl not wanting to clean up. With each picture, I once again used a visual icon to relate it back to what emotion the picture displayed and described why the scenario would make someone feel that way. Lastly, to assess each child on recognizing scenarios of happy, sad, and angry, I created a matching worksheet (Appendix B). The work sheet had three different scenarios for the three emotions. These scenarios on the worksheet were not used in the lesson, but had similarities. The

children had to look at each of the three emotional scenarios and match it with the correct facial expression icon.

On my third day, the lesson focused on coping skills for the emotions of sadness and anger. On this day, I began to set up at 10:15 when the children were at recess. I set up 2 baskets in which I labeled one “sensory” and the other “deep pressure” (Appendix C). In the sensory basket, I put different sensory toys inside. For the deep pressure basket I added a pressure vest and a stress ball. I then set up a velcro choice board that had coping requests such as take a walk, drink water, and eat a snack (Appendix C). Once it was 10:30, I began to pull students 1 by 1 to my table during the center time rotation. I began by refreshing the students memory with the emotions we have been talking about and named a few of the scenarios that contribute to these emotions. I then told the students for this lesson we would be talking about coping skills we could use when we feel angry or sad. I began with the choice board. I went 1 by 1 through the three icons and told them how taking a walk, drinking water to cool off, and eating a snack are good choices when we feel sad or angry. I then moved to the deep pressure basket. I first started with the pressure vest and showed the students the icon to request this coping strategy. I showed them how it's worn over our shirt and how it has sections on the vest that has weight. I had each student feel where the weight was on the pressure vest and how it feels like heavy sand. I explained how this helps with relieving the tension we feel in our bodies when we are angry. Next, I moved on to the stress ball. I showed the students how to use it by squeezing the ball. I explained to the students how this is a good coping strategy when we feel angry or stressed. Finally, I moved onto the last coping strategy which was the sensory basket. I went through each of the sensory toys and demonstrated how they are used. I included sensory toys such as pop its, a sensory ball, stretchy strings, and stretchy fidget tubes. I explained how these sensory toys can

help us become calm, relaxed, and more focused. To assess each student at the end of this lesson, I had them demonstrate one coping strategy they would use when dealing with emotions of sadness or anger.

Results

Learning Outcome 1 was that ASD children will be able recognize the three emotions of happiness, sadness, and anger. To assess the ASD children's learning, I had them create one of the three emotions onto a felt material face board. I gave each child a different facial expression card. Each child had to find the felt facial characteristics and create the facial expression that is displayed on the card onto the face board. I calculated a passing score of the assessment as one point per student. Students who did not pass the assessment got a zero. For Learning Outcome 1, 5 out of the 6 (83%) of the ASD students were able to create the facial expression they were given onto the felt material face board. On the other hand, 1 out of the 6 ASD students (16%) was close to passing but needed assistance when creating the facial expression. After the assessments were completed, it became clear that Learning Outcome 1 was fully met. Although one student did not get a passing score, the student did complete a facial expression with my help. Due to this student's attention span, it was hard to focus on the assessment by themselves and needed extra support to complete it.

Learning Outcome 2 was that ASD children will be able recognize emotional scenarios that can create the emotions of happiness, sadness and anger. To assess the ASD children's learning, I created a quick task for them to match the emotional scenario to the emotion face icon. I calculate a passing score for the assessment as one point per student and for those who did not pass would score a zero. For Learning Outcome 2, 4 out of the 6 ASD students (66%) were able to match the emotional scenario to the emotional facial icon. However, 2 out of 6 ASD

students (33%) were not able to match the emotional scenario to the emotional facial icon. After the assessments were completed, it became clear that Learning Outcome 2 was partially met. Most of the ASD students were able to make the connection between emotional scenarios to the emotions while the other two studentSs had a difficult time making that connection.

Learning Outcome 3 was ASD students will be able to demonstrate one coping skill they would use when they feel sad or angry. To assess the ASD children's learning, I asked each one of them at the end of my lesson which coping strategy they would use when they feel emotions of sadness or anger. For Learning Outcome 3, 6 out of 6 of the ASD children (100%) were able to demonstrate at least one coping skill they would use when feeling sad or angry. After the assessments, I concluded that Learning Outcome 3 was fully met. All six ASD children were able to engage and understand different coping strategies they could use to regulate their emotions.

Discussion

The focus of my capstone project was to increase emotional regulation within children on the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This was done by focusing on three specific areas that are crucial for ASD children to become aware of their emotions. The areas that were focused on with the ASD students were recognizing three emotions (happiness, sadness, anger), recognizing the scenarios that contribute to these three emotions, and demonstrating one coping skill to help regulate emotions of sadness and anger. After the implementation of my project, it can be concluded that the project was successful in meeting the focus of my capstone project. All learning outcomes were either met or partially met.

Many factors did indeed contribute to the success of my project. Every ASD student that participated in my project showed interest in learning about emotions and what they can look

like. The activities that were included, especially the facial expression creation, seemed to help the ASD students stay engaged. I incorporated a lot of visuals which helped the ASD student make eye contact and point to as the lessons took place. Learning Outcome 1 was fully met. Most ASD (with the exception of one child), were able to recognize facial expressions. Using printed out pictures of children displaying each emotion as well as facial expressions icon to correspond to the pictures. This definitely helped with getting the children to use their words to respond to the pictures or point to the icons. Learning Outcome 2 was partially met. It helped that I kept the same steps as the previous learning outcome when it came to using printed out pictures for the scenarios and using the facial expression icons to make the connection between the scenario and emotion. This made it a smooth transition into the assessment.

All my learning outcomes were either met or partially met. Therefore, there were no challenges in regards to meeting the learning outcomes. However, there were a couple challenges I encountered during the process of giving the lesson and assessments. The first challenge I encountered was redirecting the ASD students a lot during the lessons. At least 3-4 of the ASD students had a difficult time remaining in their seats or distracted by the materials that were used for the lessons. For instance, after I'd show the child an emotional icon they would want to hold it and play with it or repeat the words rather than move on. Another challenge I found was specifically during learning outcome 3. I found the most challenging part about giving that lesson was that I had too many coping skills for a 30 minute lesson. This resulted in too many options for the students. The ASD children had a challenging time staying focused on the lesson because they wanted to grab and play with each available coping strategy. I should have kept in mind that with children on the autism spectrum, it's good to give options, but not too many where it becomes overwhelming for them. On the other hand, the children did enjoy the sensory

toy basket since most students chose a sensory toy to demonstrate for the assessment. I could have chosen one coping category (such as a sensory toy basket) with three different coping strategies to make it less overwhelming for the students.

For future directions of this project, if I could change one thing about my project lessons it would be the procedure and materials for learning outcome 3. Although learning outcome 3 was successful, it took longer to get through due to the fact that I had too many coping skills. I had three different coping categories that each had various coping strategies within them. If I were to do the lesson again, I'd have one basket (one coping category) with 3-4 various coping skills instead of having 2 baskets of coping skills and a choice board. For the amount of coping skills I provided, the students could have demonstrated two or three if there was more time to help them stay focused. Aside from the project, I want to continue to work with the autism population in the behavioral health field. I enjoy working with families to help them understand what is going on with their child both internally and externally. It is hard to tell all the time what an ASD child is going through because their developmental disorder impacts their communication. In conclusion, ASD children are capable of emotionally regulating, self-regulating, and so much more beyond that. They are intelligent human beings who need extra guidance in understanding themselves along with the world around them.

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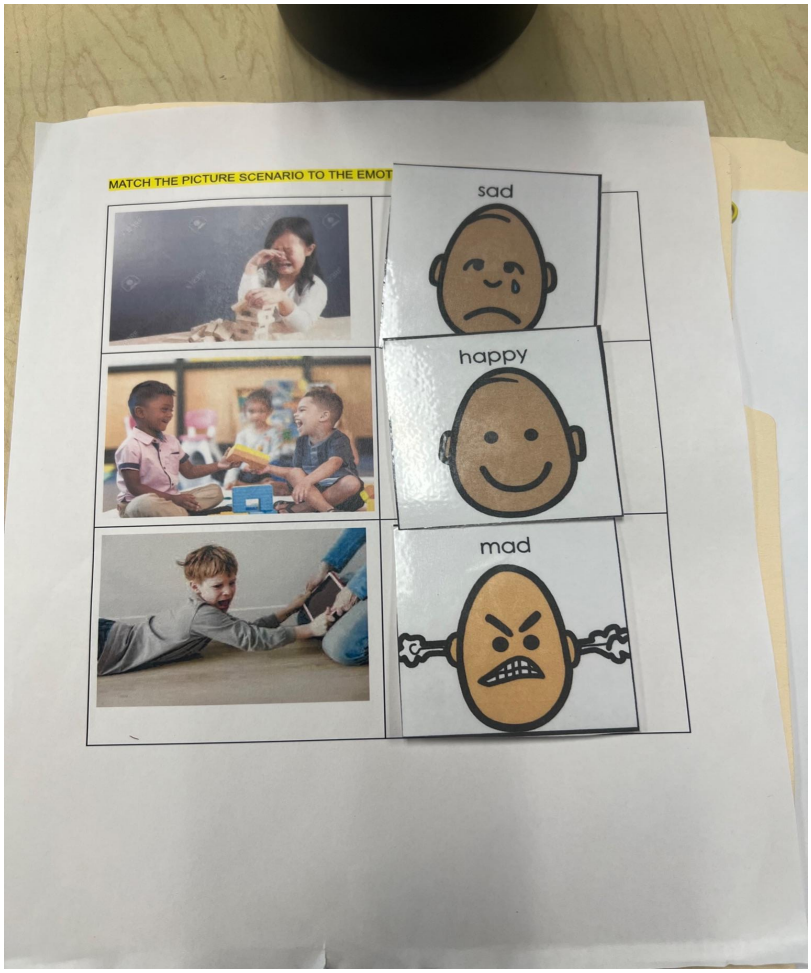
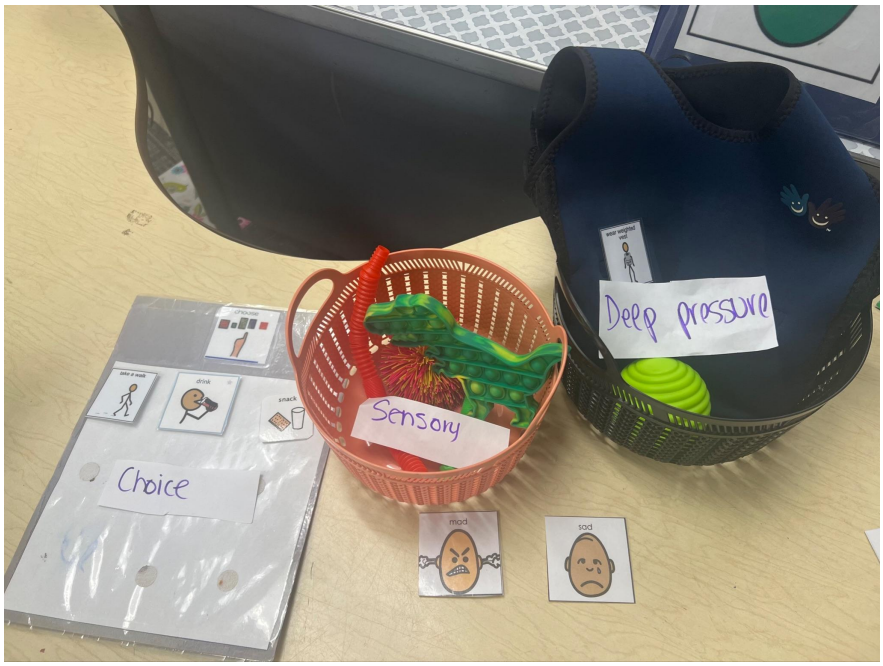
Appendix A

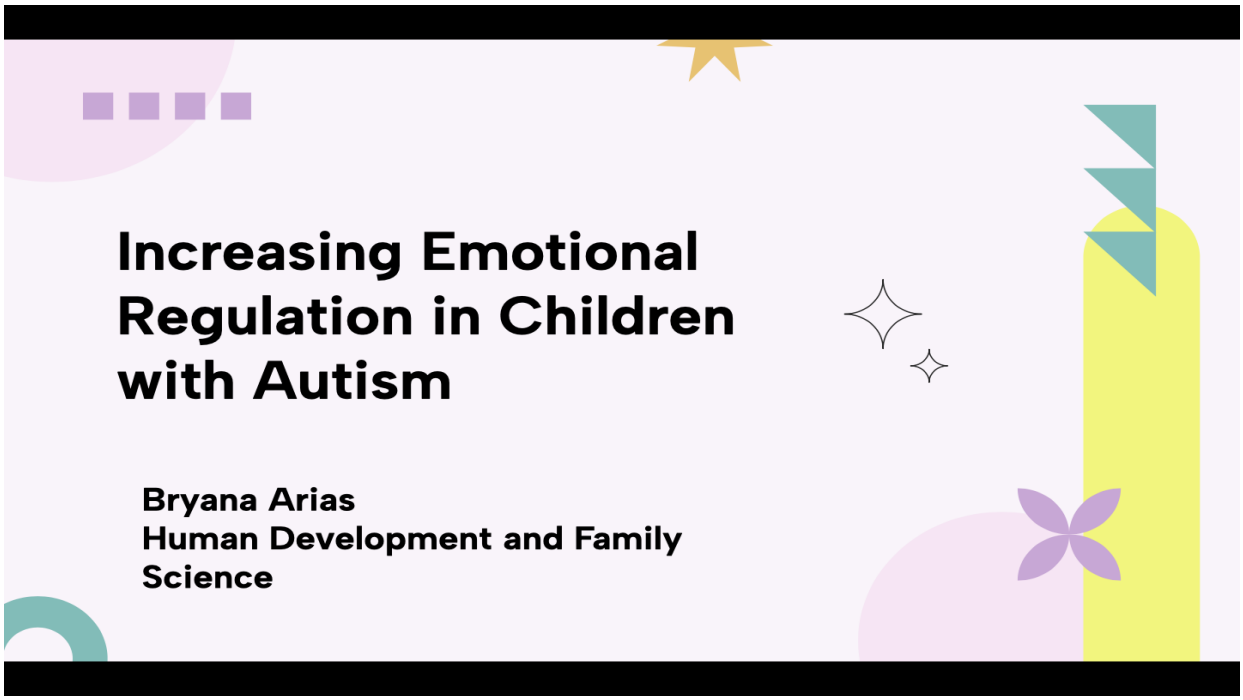
Appendix B

Worksheet for the activity to meet Learning Outcome 2.



Appendix C

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Introduction

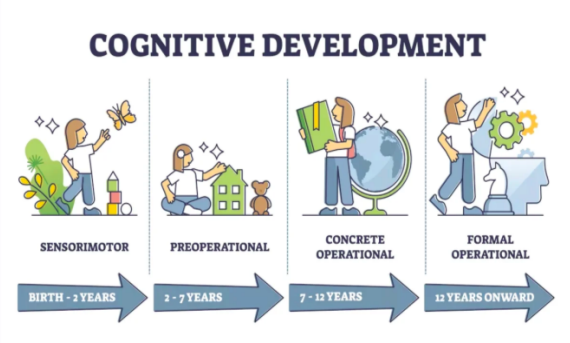
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is classified as a neurodevelopmental disorder.
- Emotional Regulation is the ability to exert control over one's own emotional state.
- Through emotional regulation, children can control their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions.

Needs Statement

- ASD children have challenges with emotional and self regulation abilities.
- Cognitive impairments are associated with ASD.
- ASD children struggle with recognizing, interpreting, and responding to their emotions.
- Emotional regulation serves to reduce feelings such as anger, anxiety, and sadness.

Jean Piaget's theory of Cognitive Development

- Piaget suggested that children not only acquire knowledge but also develop a mental mode for their surroundings.
- Preoperational stage is the 2nd stage in which children do not understand concrete logic and are unable to take the point of view of others (egocentric).
- My participants fall under Piaget's 2nd stage: children 2–7 years old.
- Children in this age group have a difficult time in perspective-taking.



Learning Outcomes

I created three 30 minute lessons across three days for children on the autism spectrum. This project had three learning outcomes:

01 **ASD students will recognize and label three emotions (happiness, sadness, anger) on picture visuals of facial expressions.**

02 **ASD students will recognize emotional scenarios that correspond to the emotions of happiness, sadness, and anger.**

03 **ASD students will be able to demonstrate one coping skill for coping with emotions of sadness and anger.**

Location and Participants

Location

- Olson Elementary School in Marina, California with children ages 5 to 7 in a kindergarten and first grade special education classroom.

Demographics

Students: 6
Gender: 4 boys 2 girls
Ethnicity: Hispanic (2), White (2), Asian (1), Black (1).
Communication: 3 verbal, 3 nonverbal

Procedures & Materials

DAY 1	• Showed emotion icons of happy, sad, angry. • Showed 9 printed facial expression pictures of children. • Matched icons to pictures.
DAY 2	• Showed 9 emotional scenario pictures of the three emotions. • Used emotion icons to match.
DAY 3	• Showed and demonstrated 2 baskets of coping skills. • I showed a choice board with coping requests.

Assessment Results: LO 1

ASD students will be able to recognize and label three emotions (happiness, sadness, anger) on picture of facial expressions.

- ASD students had to create a facial expression.
- Each child had a facial expression card they had to recreate using a face board.

Results: 5 out of 6 students created the facial expression.

Learning Outcome 1 was fully met

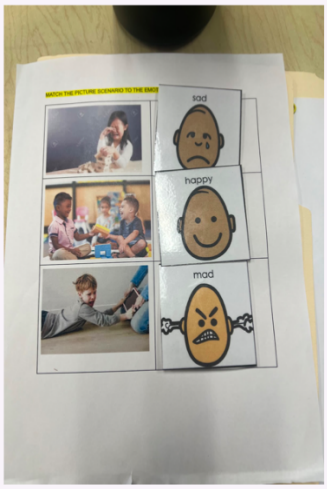
Assessments Results: LO 2

ASD students will be able to recognize emotional scenarios that correspond to the emotions of happiness, sadness, and anger.

- Worksheet Task.
- Match the Scenario to the correct emotion icon.

Results: 4 out of 6 students were able to match each scenario to the correct icon.

Learning Outcome 2 was partially met



Assessment Results: LO 3

ASD students will demonstrate one coping skill to cope with emotions of sadness and anger.

- I had each child choose one coping skill they wanted to demonstrate from the baskets or the choice board.

Results: 6 out 6 ASD students demonstrated one coping skill.

Learning Outcome 3 was fully met

Discussion: Successes

- The students were engaged.
- Students enjoyed the activities.
- Students were able to show their engagement through verbal communication, pointing or communication devices.

Discussion: Challenges

- A lot of redirecting the ASD students to stay focused.
- I had too many coping skills for LO 3.
- Although LO 3 was fully met, it took longer to get through the lesson.

Future Direction

- Extend the lessons
- Parents, guardians, and educators should teach ASD children to become aware of their emotions by coaching them verbally on how they feel and encourage them to problem solve.
- ASD children are capable of so much!