

Understanding Developmental or Intellectual Disabilities

CIT State Conference
January, 26, 2017



45 min CIT

Common Core Disability Characteristics

Disability	Visible Characteristics?	Communication /Language Processing Disorder	Sensory Processing Disorder	Social Interaction	Behavior
Autism	N	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cerebral Palsy	Y	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intellectual Disability	Y/N	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Down syndrome	Y	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tourette Syndrome	N	✓			✓

All are brain disorders

Autism Spectrum Disorder

- **CLASSIC
AUTISM**

PDD-NOS

- **ASPERGER'S
SYNDROME**

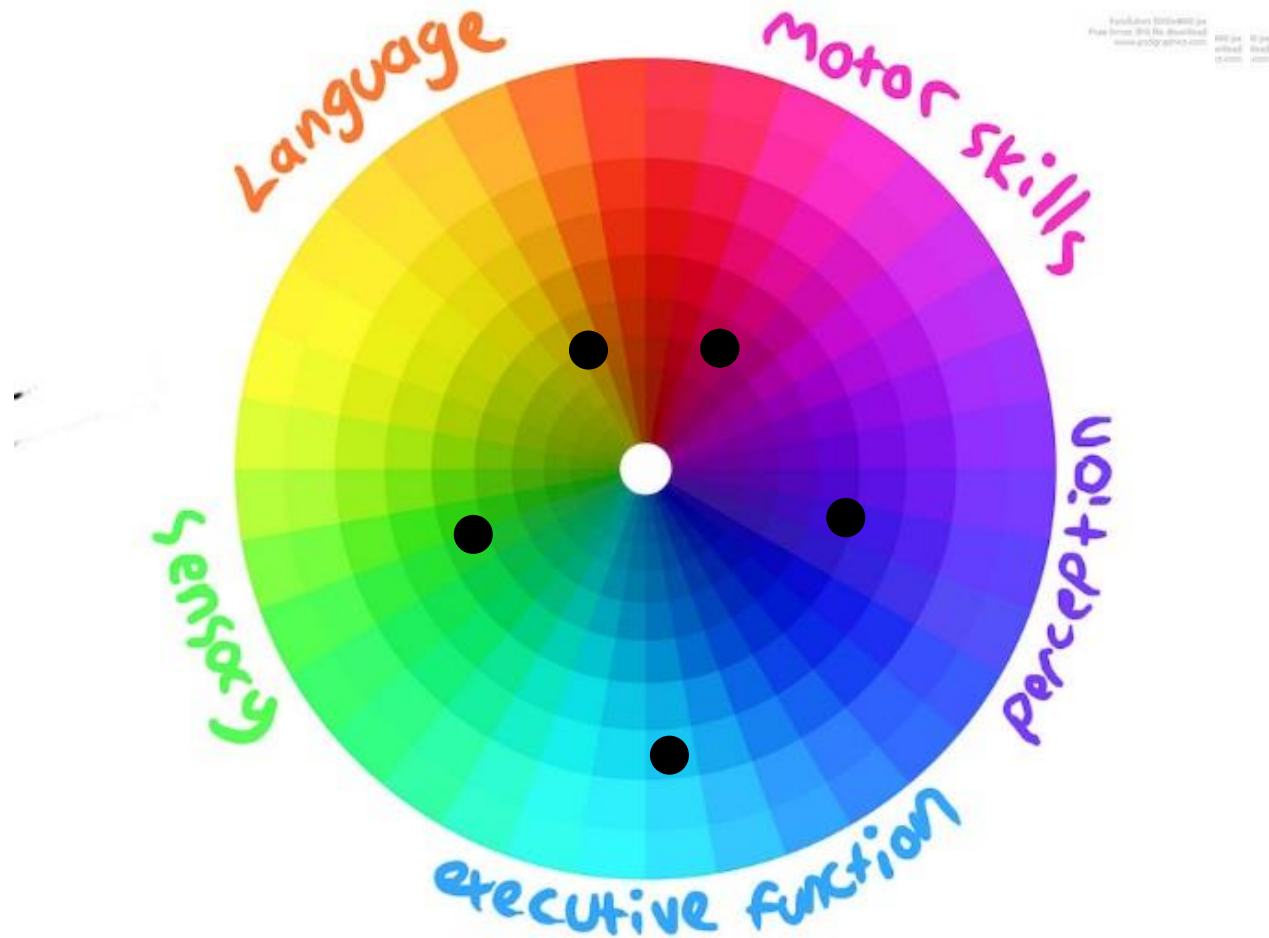


- Severe
- Low Functioning

- Mild
- High IQ
- High Functioning



The Autism Spectrum Looks More Like This



Spectrum design by Rebecca Burgess

Prevalence Statistics

- About **1 in 68** children has been identified with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) according to estimates from the CDC.
 - **1 in 42** boys
 - **1 in 55** children in Maryland
 - **1 in 34** boys in Maryland



Prevalence Statistics

- **1 in 6** of children age 3-17 have a developmental disability according to CDC
- Write your name on page four



Why Should You Care?



Seizures

Features can be:

- Muscle jerks
- Eyeball twitching
- Staring
- Inability to respond despite consciousness
- One body part twitching



Exercise Time



Communication/Language Processing Disorder

- Both verbal and non verbal
- May use alternative mode of communication – iPad or other assistive technology, gestures, sign language, PECS
- May be verbal, but unable to sustain a conversation
- May only cite scripts or use echolalia
- May use repetitive or idiosyncratic language (ASD and Tourettes)
- Articulation difficulties (ID/Down syndrome and CP)



Communication/Language Processing Disorder

- May only understand direct language
 - May be able to speak but answers may seem blunt or tactless
 - Unable to understand sarcasm, metaphors



Communication/Language Processing Disorder



Communication/Language Processing Disorder

- May appear deaf and may not respond to verbal cues
- Receptive and Expressive Language may require additional processing time



Communication/Language Processing Disorder



When Interacting with a Person with a Developmental Disability . . .



When Interacting with a Person with a Developmental Disability . . .





Sensory Processing

- ▶ sensitivity to sound, light and touch
- ▶ easily over-stimulated
- ▶ under-stimulated
- ▶ difficulty with body awareness and balance



Social Interaction

- May not make eye contact
- May not pick up on social cues or body language
- May not understand personal space
- May be huggers or kissers
- Down syndrome – may be overly social and not recognize the seriousness of situation



Social Interaction

- May lack social or emotional reciprocity
- May not respond “appropriately” – may laugh or giggle at inappropriate times
- CP – may not be able to show any signs of emotion
- May not develop peer relationships



Behavioral Effects

- May have obsessive tendencies
- May act impulsively
- Anxiety creates repetition
- Medication effects



“Bad Behaviors”

- All “behaviors” should be seen as communication
- People may engage in “acting out” or “aggressive behavior” because of:
 - The inability to communicate ideas, pain or mental health experience in ways that are effective, reliable and universally understandable*
 - Difficulty adjusting to new routine or situation

**From William Stillman, “Presuming Intellect”*

Crisis

- Real or Perceived = REAL



CIT Considerations

- Individuals with a developmental disability MAY –**
- Not want their disability to be recognized (and try to cover it up)
 - Moderate ID – communication and social skills may at first appear typical
 - Pretend to understand their rights when they don't
 - Seem less credible as a result of behaviors
 - Say what they think you want to hear

CIT Considerations

Individuals with a developmental disability MAY --

- Invade your personal space
- Reach for your badge or gun due to curiosity
- Not react well in emergency situations or recognize real danger (may re-enter burning building, touch downed power lines, etc.)
- Appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Have a high tolerance for pain



CIT Considerations

Individuals with a developmental disability

MAY –

- Be overwhelmed by police presence
- Not recognize the uniform as a sign of authority
- Not know what to do or how to seek help
- Be confused about who is responsible for the crime



CIT Considerations

Individuals with a developmental disability

MAY –

- Repeat words or mimic gestures of the officer
- Have difficulty describing facts or details
- Not respond to “stop” or other commands
- React with “fight” or “flight”
- Answer “no” or “why” to all questions



When Interacting with a Person with a Developmental Disability . . .

- Be patient and give the person space
- Be alert to signs of increased frustration and try to eliminate the source if possible as behavior may escalate
- Avoid quick movements and loud noises
- Do not touch the person unless absolutely necessary



When Interacting with a Person with a Developmental Disability . . .

- Check for ID jewelry, ID card, shoe tags, ID temporary tattoos, or ID sewn into clothing
- Evaluate for injury
- Be aware that the person might have low/under-developed muscle tone
- If in custody, alert jail authorities



When Interacting with a Person with a Developmental Disability . . .

- Use simple sentences-avoid metaphors and sarcasm
- Ask questions one at a time
- Provide paper for the person to write/draw responses
- Give plenty of time for the person to process the information and respond
- Answering individual's questions may minimize anxiety



Conducting an Interview

Use his name at the start of each sentence so they know you are addressing them



Explain how long the interview is going to last, and what will happen at the end

Allow for frequent breaks

Maintain a calm environment; minimize distractions, e.g., sensory

Use clear, concise and simple language – no sarcasm, metaphors

Ask questions one at a time

Allow time for the person to process and respond



FOR MORE INFORMATION



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