



How to Teach Children with Autism

Instructor: Karina Barley – M.Ed.

Length: 45 Hours

Number of Continuing Education Unit Credits: 3, from the University of the Pacific

Online Course

Introduction

It is vitally important for teachers to be aware of how 'autism' is for their students. The autism world can be a literal sensory minefield for students and the school environment needs to be designed where it creates a secure space that is conducive to learning.

Children who have autism have different learning styles and as educators we need to be aware of how to cater to the various styles to develop the best strategies to teach them.

This course aims:

- To provide autism awareness for all stakeholders who intend to work, or are working with students who have autism.
- To develop an understanding of what autism 'is' from the student's perspective.
- To provide training, education & strategies for educators, support workers & ancillary staff who intend to work, or are working with students who have autism.
- To provide educational strategies, including sensory strategies; differentiating learning depending on learning styles; and using technology for students with differing abilities.

Session Topics

1. What is autism?
2. The transforming educational environment.
3. Inclusive education.
4. What does autism mean to those who have autism?
5. Sensory issues.
6. Sensory strategies for students with autism.
7. Sensory strategies for the classroom.
8. Learning styles of students with autism.
9. Mobile technology and autism.
10. Math and English apps for autism.
11. Sensory and augmentative communication apps
12. The future of autism.

Methods of Instruction will include:

- Individual lessons.
- Multiple-choice quizzes.
- Assignments.
- Videos.
- Web links.
- Optional essay for further study.

Text and/or Other Materials

Video, screen captures, multiple-choice quizzes, web links and links to apps are provided by the instructor in this online course. There are NO required textbooks.

Assignments

This course has twelve assignments. The course includes twelve multiple-choice quizzes.

Percentage of Course Credit

Quizzes: 100%

Assignments: Mandatory - but ungraded.

OUTLINE OF COURSE

Lesson One – Autism – What is it?

- To develop an understanding of what autism is from a medical perspective and social perspective.
- To understand how autism affects those who are on the spectrum and their families.
- To gain some understanding about recent research on autism and what the most recent research is suggesting.
- To know what it means by 'differences in learning styles' for students who are on the Autism Spectrum.
- To gain some awareness on secondary conditions that may affect students who are on the Autism Spectrum.
- To gain some awareness on sensory cognitive processing and how this may affect students who are on the Autism Spectrum.

Lesson Two – The transforming educational environment

- What is the technology revolution in perspective to students with autism?
- What is inclusion and the legal ramifications regarding inclusion in education and the community.
- What it means to 'get autism' and why this is vital to when you are teaching students who have autism.
- How do learning styles affect your students?
- To gain an understanding of how the changing fabric of education affects students with autism and other disabilities, as well as neurotypical children.
- Understand what the term 'difiable' means and what appropriate language is when dealing with students who have autism.

Lesson Three – Inclusive education

- Why is inclusion important to all students?
- What influence does the 'every child' policy have on inclusive education?
- To develop an understanding of the tenets of inclusive education; what it is and what it isn't?
- To be aware of what schools need to be doing to be an 'inclusive' school.
- To be aware of what teachers need to be doing to be an 'inclusive' educator.
- To have an understanding of the history of inclusion in the United States and the various laws that have implications on the 'inclusive' debate.
- To be aware of how inclusion affects neurotypical children.

Lesson Four – What does autism mean to those who have autism?

- To gain awareness of what the world is like for individuals who have autism.
- To gain some perspective of what people who have autism want us to know.
- To develop empathy for those who have autism in order to be able to connect and work with these individuals.

Lesson Five – Sensory issues

- To learn and understand what sensory issues are and how this affects students with autism.
- To learn about the two additional senses, the vestibular and proprioception senses and this affects children on the Spectrum.
- What are the various sensory issues in relation to each sense and what this 'looks' like from the student's perspective.
- To gain awareness of the difference between hypersensitivity and hyposensitivity.

Lesson Six - Sensory strategies for students with autism

- What is sensory overload?
- To gain awareness of how sensory overload affects the individual's wellbeing.
- To understand Gestalt Perception and how this fits into the sensory experience.
- To develop strategies for behavior meltdowns due to sensory overload.
- To understand the difference between a sensory meltdown and a behavior meltdown, and what strategy to apply to each situation.
- To learn about sensory profiles and how this is vital to developing sensory strategies.
- To understand how to develop a sensory program for the individual student/classroom?

Lesson Seven – Strategies for the classroom

- To develop an awareness of what qualities and skills are needed to work with children who have autism.
- To gain strategies to nurture your students.
- To understand that the world needs different types of brains.
- To gain an understanding of strategies to improve students' outcomes in the classroom.
- To gain knowledge about group work and how to improve outcomes.

Lesson Eight – Learning styles for students with autism

- To gain understanding about how Gardner's Multiple Intelligences are important when looking at student's learning styles.
- To gain a basic understanding of how the autism brain may work differently than the neurotypical student.
- To be aware that a different brain doesn't mean 'less than' and become familiar with successful individuals who have autism.

Mobile technology and autism

- To learn why mobile technology is so valuable in the differentiated classroom.
- What makes mobile technology unique?
- What can the mobile technology classroom look like?
- To understand what students think about mobile technology and how this affects their learning.

Lesson Nine – Mobile technology and autism – Apps for English

- To learn what apps are available for English.
- To gain some understanding of how apps can be used to assist students who have autism.
- To gain some awareness of how to develop a literacy program using mobile technology.

Lesson Ten – Mobile Technology and apps for Math

- To learn what apps are available for Math.
- To gain some understanding of how apps can be used to assist students who have autism.
- To gain some awareness of how to develop a numeracy program using mobile technology.

Lesson Eleven – Communication and sensory apps

- To learn what apps are available in other curriculum areas.
- To gain some understanding of what sensory apps are available.
- To gain some awareness of how to use apps and the iPad for augmentative communication.

Lesson Twelve – The future for autism

- To learn what the current and future research foci are.
- To gain some understanding of what the bigger picture is for the community.
- To gain some awareness of how providing success for students with autism, increases their confidence and self-belief, which in turn creates more success.