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Preschool ABA

Trainers' Guide

1. Introduction

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disorder characterised by ongoing difficulties in social communication and interaction, as well as limited and repetitive behaviours, interests, or activities (Hodges et al., 2020). Recently, there has been growth in the ASD community as awareness has increased and diagnostic processes have improved (Maenner et al., 2020). This increase underscores the importance of increased support and resources for people with ASD and their families, along with opportunities for enhanced awareness, tolerance, and integration in society. Delivering high quality autism services demands a highly skilled team, as children with autism need more support for their health, well-being, and day-to-day activities in comparison to children without disabilities.

Dillenburger et al. (2016) indicated, "poorly trained staff can have detrimental effects on service provision and staff morale and can lead to staff burnout, as well as increased service user anxiety and stress." The current support for children with autism spectrum disorder in either the mainstream or special education preschool program is insufficient. Early intervention following diagnosis with ASD is believed to be important to enhance quality of life and diminish parental stress, thus alleviating some of the psychosocial and economic burdens experienced by people with autism and their families. Nevertheless, assistance is generally restricted, hard to reach, inadequate, and dissatisfactory. A lot of people are noting the importance of providing help for caregivers who are having difficulty accessing resources. Professionals are eager to provide more assistance, especially since it's challenging for children with ASD to access tailored educational services. The challenge is exacerbated by the limited understanding and acknowledgement of ASD. This is partly due to diverse and fluctuating requirements for individuals with ASD, which can lead to a lack of consistency in how the condition is recognized and accommodated (Hasson et al., 2022). Specialised support like Applied Behavior Analysis is needed to ensure these children succeed in preschool settings (Spreckley, Boyd, 2009). Furthermore, preschool teachers should undergo thorough training in ASD and techniques for managing behaviour to create a secure and favourable learning atmosphere for these children.

The *Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide* is a vital tool created to meet the urgent need for thorough training on behaviour management techniques for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in early education environments. It provides a comprehensive training program for peer educators and teacher trainers. The contents of this manual were developed using input from the initial needs analysis undertaken by the international partnership of the preschool ABA project, information from relevant sources, and reviews of successful teacher training guides with similar goals and audiences. Based on the findings from the needs analysis, 76% of teachers from North Macedonia and 36% from Slovakia have some level of confidence in teaching students with autism, with 54.2% of preschool teachers in Cyprus stating they feel a small amount of confidence. 59% of preschool teachers in North Macedonia, 35% in Slovakia and 31% in Cyprus find it difficult to manage children's behaviour. Furthermore, 72% of preschool teachers show slight confidence in behaviour management strategies.

The *Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide* offers detailed instructions on how to implement the Preschool ABA Handbook into practice, including preparing the training room, organising materials, conducting pre-assessments, and communicating with participants before training sessions.

Furthermore, it details the training material that trainers must present in the training sessions, including the proposed training schedule, session outline, and feedback. By using the *Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide*, trainers can ensure teachers are thoroughly trained to provide high-quality services to children with ASD.

The *Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide* is a valuable tool for individuals looking to offer foundational training on behaviour management techniques for children with ASD to teachers or parents in early childhood education environments. Furthermore, educators can apply the training to different age groups and individuals with or without disabilities.



1.1. The Purpose of the Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide

The Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide is an extensive tool for trainers interested in learning how to manage the behaviour of young children. It offers a detailed plan to guarantee the training is comprehensive, stimulating, and user-friendly for teachers, parents, and other interested professionals. It covers a range of topics, such as understanding children's growth phases, recognising positive and negative behaviour patterns of children, and using successful tactics for dealing with challenging behaviours. Real-life examples, case studies, and hands-on activities are used to assist participants in putting into practice what has been learned. This Guide will leave trainers feeling confident that they are equipping their audience with the needed knowledge base and skills to promote positive behaviours in young children with autism.

1.2. Who should use this Guide?

This Guide is suitable for individuals offering introductory training for educators or caregivers on the planning, executing, and assessing strategies for managing early childhood behaviour, with a particular focus on children with autism.

2. Contents of Trainer's Guide

The Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide is a complete guide for implementing a successful training program on behaviour management techniques for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in early childhood environments. This Guide provides all the necessary tools for any trainer to facilitate a valuable educational journey for educators, caregivers, and other practitioners aiding children with autism.

2.1. Preparing for Training Sessions

Some of the basic things to be done before the training session are preparation of the training space, arrangement of supplies and tools, and following up with the trainees. This chapter gives you an effective and complete rundown of the preparation process that you, as a trainer, will undertake. Trainers are given a thorough Checklist for Preparation to help them outline important tasks and factors for each stage (Appendix 1).



2.1.1. Training Room Preparation

Getting the training room ready, arranging materials and equipment, and interacting with participants are essential before the start of the training. This part of the manual will offer guidance on efficiently completing these tasks.

As a trainer, it is crucial to consider the room and seating arrangement to prevent any discomfort or distractions throughout the session. The trainer should consider critical factors such as the number of participants, visibility and audibility of the presenter, availability of space for materials, audience comfort, and the suitability of seating for learning. In creating training materials, emphasise visuals, minimise text, incorporate practical examples, utilise video content when needed, adopt existing resources, offer workbooks or worksheets, and employ an interactive presentation style. You should follow these crucial procedures to establish a conducive learning atmosphere and conduct a productive training session.

Know in advance whether anyone has specific learning or accessibility needs.

It's often the small things that make a big difference in someone's educational experience. One really does pay for considering the audience and their needs in advance of any face-to-face training session. Email questions on any particular needs attendees may have in advance. A dyslexic person may need handouts in a specific font and on colored paper to allow her to see more clearly what is on screen. One of your participants will be partially deaf, and she might want special seating up front. If your training is face to face, ensure that you book a venue with wheelchair access. Where this is not possible, this should clearly be stated on the invitation card or advertisement about the event.

You may also need to consider other technology. Examples may include wearing a microphone for those with hearing impairments or using both on-screen text and audio to combine and ensure all are able to hear the directions.

If you're going to be showing something on a screen, be sure that text is large enough to be read by people at the back of the room. Generally, never have more than one or two sentences of text on screen at a time; otherwise, participants will become too focused on reading what is written and then miss the main message being delivered.

Read any text that is on the screen aloud, and describe any images or videos. Not everyone might have the ability to read, or even to see very well, or to understand written English. Say the words that are on the screen and tell them about the video or image so everyone in the group knows what it is.

Offer choices in the format of handouts and provide information in advance of the training. Some participants may need a variety of accommodations, such as large print, braille, colour or font, or Easy Read format. Having written materials available eliminates the need for note-taking, and minimizes potential for missing critical information. However, it is equally possible to distribute hand outs through email in an appropriate format before the event to some people who want to save on printing costs and for the good of the environment.

Keep to the subject matter. Use easy words and maintain the original meaning and word count. Yes, you might be the expert in your field, and it's tempting to show it off with difficult words and lots of acronyms, but remember who you are talking to. Tighten up your paragraphs. You could make this much tighter by breaking these paragraphs into individual sentences. Covering material in 15 minutes that you would normally cover in 5 just makes it difficult for people to stay engaged.

Break up the presentation with frequent breaks. Breaks are helpful for everyone and especially for those who have problems with their bladder control, who have ADHD, or who have diabetes. It's been shown people's attention span can be very short after 25-30 minutes so breaking up presentation of information with short breaks can help with retention.

Though the above list by no means is exhaustive, it is a good starting point to make in-person training more inclusive. Consider each one of your participants an individual and treat them as such — everyone is different, and some may need extra help to have the same opportunities as others. Any type of training program essentially means understanding your audience and catering to their needs. The world is full of weird and wonderful gadgets and solutions—it's no longer possible to plead ignorance. Not being available just isn't acceptable anymore.



2.1.2. Organising materials and equipment

Organisation is essential to preparing for training sessions. The trainer should prepare all necessary materials and equipment before the session begins. This task includes handouts, worksheets, all

the required training materials, and any essential equipment like projectors or computers. It is critical to have spare materials and equipment readily available for unexpected issues. Through careful preparation beforehand, trainers can ensure a seamless training session and enhance participant impact. Having adequate preparation is crucial for delivering a productive training session.

2.1.3. Pre-assessment

Performing a pre-assessment to evaluate the participants' knowledge, skills, and attitudes is critical to assessing whether training participants developed the necessary behaviour management knowledge and skills after the training. Pre-assessments can also assist in customising the training program to fulfil the learning needs of the participants based on their existing knowledge. The pre-assessment can be undertaken through surveys, interviews, focus groups, or activities. Ensuring the pre-assessment is done anonymously is crucial to promoting honest and accurate answers.

Additional steps to consider before training sessions are:

- establishing specific goals,
- creating a plan for a lesson,
- collecting essential items and supplies, as well as gathering necessary materials and resources
- talking to the participants to make sure they understand the training program and know what is required.

Sufficient preparation is essential to ensure the training program succeeds and meets its desired goals.



2.1.4. Communicating with Participants

It is important that the participants are advanced and become engaged in the training. Before training, some necessary information should be informed about the objectives, time, and venue of the training. It should also include any materials or equipment that would be required, such as workbooks or laptops, that the participants require. A reminder email sent out a couple of days before the training will also help participants refresh their minds about the program and allow you to address questions. Clear and effective communication between trainees before the actual training allows trainers to be sure that everyone is well prepared to undertake the training program.

3. Delivering Training Content

Trainers need to ensure that there is sufficient information provided to participants about a particular training. It includes details such as objectives, schedule, and location. The attending ones will also need information regarding items or tools they are required to carry along to the training, such as notebooks or computers. An email reminder a few days before the training will therefore be very useful in keeping participants updated on the activity and answering any questions they may have. This makes sure that all trainees will come to the program ready and fully equipped for maximum participation by laying out and providing effective pre-training communication.

3.1. Training Program

The training program utilises behaviour skills training. Behaviour skills training is a technique to educate individuals on new skills or behaviours via teaching, demonstrating, practising, and providing input (Slane and Lieberman, 2021). It is frequently utilised in different environments, such as academia, healthcare, and the corporate world, for educating individuals on communication, leadership, and problem-solving abilities. Part of the teaching process is to break down complex behaviours into smaller, more manageable components and provide instructions for each part before combining them into a complete whole.

This training program is designed for around 25 attendees and will last two days (16 hours). The content covers various topics and approaches, allowing participants to use the materials and activities in addition to training resources. These notes provide additional information for those implementing the training to understand the significance of each subject and how specific methods aid in reaching training objectives.

Recommended Agenda and Curriculum:

| Day (1) | Day (2) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Training opening, introductions, expectations, selection of feedback teams▪ Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder▪ Behaviour intervention | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Day 1 Recap▪ Measurement of behaviour▪ Functional behaviour assessment▪ Strategies to eliminate problem behaviour |

- Principles of behaviour
- Functions of behaviour
- Feedback
- Wrap-up

- Stress and burnout
- Wrap-up
- Feedback
- Closing ceremony

Module (1): Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders

This module presents a comprehensive overview of essential knowledge and information about the diagnosis and behavioural characteristics of preschool-aged children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It aims to assist individuals in gaining a deeper understanding of the unique challenges and needs encountered by children with ASD during their early years, thereby facilitating the provision of appropriate support and care.

Time to complete:

This module will take approximately 1 hour.

By the end of this module, learners will:

- Understand the definition of ASD and typical characteristics of people with autism spectrum disorder.
- Understand the role of the brain, genetics, and the environment in ASD diagnoses.
- Have the appropriate knowledge to understand ASD and early symptoms in preschool-age children.

Trainer Note:

This module is suggested to be the first module of the training, but you are encouraged to choose a different teaching path for your trainees based on their existing knowledge and experience.

Delivery Methods:

This module should be delivered through slide presentations and practical exercises.

Resources:

- Slide Presentation: Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders

Module (2): Behaviour intervention

This module helps participants understand the meanings of behaviour. It provides an in-depth understanding of challenging behaviours and different behavioural disorders. Furthermore, the

module seeks to empower participants to gather basic behaviour information, such as recognising a particular antecedent, behaviour, and outcome. After finishing the module, participants will gain the necessary skills to identify, examine, and handle challenging behaviour in educational environments. These skills will help ensure that suitable assistance and care are provided.

Time to complete:

This module will take approximately 1,5 hours.

By the end of this module, learners will:

- Understand the definition of behaviour and non-behaviour.
- Understand the differences between challenging behaviour and behavioural disorders.
- Be able to follow simple ABC data collection tools to collect data and create a hypothesis about the function of problem behaviour.

Trainer Note:

This module includes practical skills demonstration. It is essential to model a skill, ensure enough time to practise and provide quality feedback to participants.

Delivery Methods:

This module should be delivered through slide presentations, video examples, and practical exercises.

Resources:

- Slide Presentation: Behaviour Intervention
- Practical Scenarios

Module (3): Principles of behaviour

The module explores the basic concepts of behaviour intervention. It discusses reinforcement, which consists of encouraging desired behaviours through the provision of consequences. Furthermore, it delves into extinction, which involves the gradual fading and eventual elimination of behaviours that are no longer being reinforced. Additionally, it talks about stimulus control and how stimuli affect behaviour. Lastly, it also addresses punishment, a strategy for reducing or eliminating undesired behaviours using consequences. Grasping these fundamental ideas sets a solid groundwork for understanding the root causes of behaviour and successfully executing strategies to encourage positive behaviour change.

Time to complete:

This module will take approximately 2 hours.

By the end of this module, learners will:

- Understand the definition and importance of motivation.
- Understand stimulus control and how stimuli impact behaviour.
- Understand and apply reinforcement successfully.
- Understand and decide on the use of punishment.
- Understand and apply extinction successfully.

Trainer Note:

This module includes practical skills demonstration. It is essential to model a skill, ensure enough time to practice it and provide quality feedback to participants.

Delivery Methods:

This module should be delivered through slide presentations, video examples, and practical exercises.

Resources:

- Slide Presentation: Principles of Behaviour
- Practical scenarios

Module (4): Functions of behaviour

This module focuses on enhancing understanding of the five main functions of behaviour and the underlying reasons for individuals' distinct behavioural patterns. This module covers five behaviour functions: medical, escape, attention, access to tangible items, and automatic reinforcement. After finishing the module, participants will comprehend these functions and their use in behaviour analysis and management.

Time to complete:

This module will take approximately 1,5 hours.

By the end of this module, learners will:

- Possess the appropriate knowledge and understanding of functions of behaviour: tangible, escape, attention, medical, and sensory (TEAMS).

Trainer Note:

This module includes practical skills demonstration. It is essential to model a skill, ensure enough time to practise and provide quality feedback to participants.

Delivery Methods:

This module should be delivered through slide presentations, video examples, and practical exercises.

Resources:

- Slide Presentation: Functions of Behaviour
- Practical scenarios

Module (5): Measurement of behaviour

This module covers basic techniques for measuring behaviour and how to use them effectively. Measuring behaviour includes quantifying and recording frequency, duration, latency, and other characteristics of specific behaviours. It is frequently used in behaviour analysis and psychology to assess the effectiveness of behaviour interventions and track their progression and results over time. Behaviour assessment can be done via direct observation, self-reporting, or alternative methods involving qualitative and quantitative data collection. Standard tools for assessing behaviour consist of timers, clickers, checklists, rating scales, and behavioural assessments.

Time to complete:

This module will take approximately 1,5 hours.

By the end of this module, learners will:

Understand and be able to implement the following behaviour measurements:

- frequency,
- duration,
- interval (partial/whole),
- and momentary time sampling.

Trainer Note:

This module includes practical skills demonstration. It is vital to provide a model, ensure enough time to practise and provide quality feedback to participants.

Delivery Methods:

This module should be delivered through slide presentations, video examples, and practical exercises.

Resources:

- Slide Presentation: Measurement of Behaviour
- Practical examples

Module (6): Functional Behaviour Assessment

This module offers a detailed summary of functional behaviour assessment, focusing on determining the motives or purposes of problematic behaviours. The module includes various tools for functional behaviour assessment, such as direct observation, interviews, and rating scales. It also highlights the importance of introducing functional skills programming, a proactive method of behaviour support that prioritises teaching individuals new skills to replace challenging behaviours (also known as replacement behaviours). By the conclusion of the module, participants will acquire a more profound comprehension of functional behaviour assessment and programming functional skills. They will gain effective tactics to help individuals with challenging behaviours.

Time to complete:

This module will take approximately 1,5 hours.

By the end of this module, learners will:

- Know the difference between the main characteristics of indirect and direct functional assessment methods.
- Understand the importance of skills assessments and discover tools to assess functional skills such as communication, waiting, sharing, accepting "No.", transitioning, play, and self-care skills.

Trainer Note:

This module includes practical skills demonstration. It is essential to provide a model, ensure enough time to practice and provide quality feedback to participants.

Delivery Methods:

This module should be delivered through slide presentations, video examples, and practical exercises.

Resources:

- Slide Presentation: Functional Behaviour Assessment
- Practical scenarios

Module (7): Strategies to eliminate challenging behaviour.

This module delves into different strategies for managing challenging behaviours in individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), offering a range of approaches to address such behaviours. The importance of considering proactive, reactive, and teaching strategies is highlighted to ensure a thorough approach incorporating functional assessment, positive reinforcement, and environmental modifications. Training attendees will understand different approaches to managing problematic behaviours and learn to choose suitable techniques for particular circumstances. Moreover, they will learn how to assess the efficiency of implemented methods and modify their strategy accordingly.

Time to complete:

This module will take approximately 2 hours.

By the end of this module, learners will:

- Know different problem behaviour strategies: proactive, reactive, and teaching/learning.
- Be able to decide on applicable behaviour strategies to use in different situations.
- Be able to evaluate behaviour strategies and make changes if needed.

Trainer Note:

This module includes practical skills demonstration. It is essential to model a skill, ensure enough time to practise and provide quality feedback to participants.

Delivery Methods:

This module is created to be delivered through slide presentations, video examples, and practical exercises.

Resources:

- Slide Presentation: Strategies to Eliminate Challenging Behaviours
- Practical scenarios

Module (8): Stress and burnout.

This course will explore the meanings of stress and burnout and how they affect teachers' lives. It will explore the indicators and manifestations of stress and burnout and effective methods for handling and minimising them. At the end of this module, participants will have a greater

understanding of the importance of handling stress and burnout as an educator and the essential tools to do it well.

Time to complete:

This module will take approximately 1 hour.

By the end of this module, learners will:

- Be able to define stress and burnout and identify their impact on educators' lives.
- Recognise the signs and symptoms of stress and burnout in yourself and others.
- Understand the relationship between stress and burnout and their effects on job satisfaction, productivity, and physical and mental health.
- Identify practical strategies for managing and reducing stress and burnout, such as self-care, boundary setting, seeking colleague support, and engaging in stress-reducing activities.
- Be able to apply the strategies learned in the module to your own life as an educator to improve your overall well-being and the quality of education provided to students.

Trainer Note:

When delivering this module, create a safe and supportive learning environment. Encourage participants to share their experiences and concerns openly while respecting privacy and boundaries. Emphasise the importance of self-care and stress management techniques and use interactive activities to help participants apply the concepts learned. Reinforce the idea that managing stress and burnout requires consistent effort and attention. Provide resources for further learning and support.

Delivery Methods:

This module is created to be delivered through slide presentations, video examples, and practical exercises.

Resources:

- Slide Presentation: Stress and Burnout
- Practical scenarios

3.2. Feedback



Feedback is an integral part of behaviour skills training. It ensures that learners understand and practice newly acquired skills daily. This shall be the case through a number of learning approaches: regular practice of new skills, soliciting for feedback, and reflection on how to appropriately apply these skills in real life. Secondly, continuous learning activities and goal setting for skill development will enable a person to learn and apply new skills daily. Giving constructive feedback allows one to encourage the development of new skills and behaviours without being judgmental. One has to be prompt, precise, and centre on a particular behaviour we are trying to teach. Moreover, it should be tailored to the learning style of every individual. Responding constructively can improve the participants' learning process immensely, which provides appropriate and relevant ways to acquire new skills and behaviours. Constructive feedback makes the participant understand his strengths and weaknesses, hence perfecting his learning and development of skills. It helps a person pinpoint particular actions which should be taken in order for one to improve his performance and behaviour. This kind of feedback would support an encouraging, safe environment where all participants feel empowered to take control and engage themselves in the learning process.

Trainer note

- Remember to provide constructive and positive feedback.
- Do not solely concentrate on areas for improvement. When giving feedback, start with one or two improvements at a time.
- Ensure there is lots of practice to strengthen the skill that needs improvement before adding the next set of feedback.

4. Training evaluation

This part of the training program will give trainers details on how to assess the effectiveness of the training and collect feedback from participants. It also provides information on how to recognise areas that need to be enhanced. The Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide offers instruction for assessing training through formative and summative evaluation methods. During the training process, formative assessment is done to collect input on the program and implement any needed training improvements. Participant feedback surveys, observation checklists, and focus groups are all methods that can be used for this type of evaluation. Feedback obtained during formative assessment can be utilised to adjust the training program and better cater to the participants' requirements. Once the training program is finished, a final assessment is conducted to gauge its overall success. This assessment occurs after the program to ascertain if the training has successfully reached its desired goals. Nevertheless, it is crucial to administer pre-assessments before the commencement of training to accurately gauge the participant's knowledge or skills progress.

Pre-assessments determine the participants' current knowledge and skills about the training subject. Different methods, such as surveys, quizzes, or interviews, can be utilised to carry out these evaluations. Comparing the pre-assessment results with the summative evaluation results allows for measuring the genuine improvement from the training program.

The assessment process typically involves a mix of evaluations before and after training, feedback surveys and interviews. Pre-training evaluations determine the participants' initial knowledge and skills, while post-training evaluations gauge the knowledge and behaviour shifts following the training. Surveys and interviews further understand the participants' experiences, perceptions, and attitudes regarding the training program.

The final assessment results are utilised to make educated choices regarding upcoming training sessions. If the assessment shows that the training successfully met its goals, similar methods can be applied in forthcoming programs. If the evaluation identifies areas needing improvement, adjustments should be made to the training design, content, or delivery methods to improve its effectiveness.

The summative assessment procedure is essential in guaranteeing the efficacy of training programs and addressing participants' needs. Through pre-assessments, utilising different assessment methods, and analysing data, organisations can obtain helpful information on the effectiveness of their training programs and make informed decisions to enhance upcoming training sessions.

The Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide offers resources for performing formative and summative assessments, with instructions on analysing collected data to enhance the training program.

Here are a few examples:

Survey for participant feedback: This survey collects feedback throughout the training program. It consists of inquiries regarding the instruction's effectiveness, the material's significance, and recommendations for improving the training.

Assessment before and after training: These evaluations can assess the effectiveness of the training program by gauging shifts in participants' knowledge and skills before and after the training.

Ensure that you utilise the suggested assessment documents to assess the success of your training program.

5. Lesson Plans

The Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide offers different lesson plans for trainers to conduct a successful behaviour management training program for young children. The lesson plans are arranged logically, enabling instructors to build upon prior lessons and gradually enhance their participants' comprehension of the topic. Every lesson plan consists of a distinct goal, an in-depth overview of the material to be discussed, and recommended activities to involve participants and solidify their understanding. The lesson plans provided in the Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide are designed to be thorough, user-friendly, and adaptable, making the Guide a valuable tool for trainers who want to conduct a successful early childhood behaviour management training program.

6. Conclusion

The Preschool ABA Trainers' Guide is designed to assist educators and carers in learning how to utilise successful behaviour management techniques for young children with ASD within the early childhood education environment. Mastering the core principles of ABA, such as understanding behaviour functions and using evidence-based behaviour management interventions, may serve to empower trainers in the possibility of creating positive learning environments for children with ASD. This Guide underlines a comprehensive approach including pre-assessment, tailored training material, constant feedback, and evaluation to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of the training. If the recommendations are followed and the resources provided in the lesson plans are used, then the trainers are well on their way to successfully deliver quality training that shall enhance the learning experience of teachers or professionals being trained. In fact, behaviour management is getting better and better all the time—it's continuous learning, adjusting, and teamwork. It means continued learning about what works best; making adjustments when necessary guided by feedback and results; and collaboration to ensure success. Trainers can increase their skills in supporting children who have ASD and their families by keeping up with the findings from current research and best practices.

Appendix (1):

Trainer Checklist for Effective Training Delivery

Pre-Assessment

Purpose: To understand participants' existing knowledge and tailor the training.

Checklist:

- Define your target audience (teachers, parents, etc.).
- Choose assessment tools:
 - Survey (for large groups, general data)
 - Interview (for deeper insights, smaller groups)
 - Focus Group (for discussion, diverse perspectives)
- Design questions addressing knowledge, experience, and expectations.
- Ensure anonymity and confidentiality to encourage honest responses.
- Review responses to identify knowledge gaps and areas of interest.
- Adapt your training plan based on pre-assessment findings.

Training Room Preparation

Purpose: To create a comfortable and engaging learning environment.

Checklist:

- Confirm participant count to choose the right room size.
- Arrange seating:
 - U-shape or circle for discussion-heavy sessions
 - Rows of lecture styles are predominant
 - Ensure all participants can see and hear clearly
 - Test audio-visual equipment (projector, microphone, etc.)
 - Adjust lighting and temperature for comfort.
 - Minimise distractions (close doors, silence phones).
 - Set up a welcoming atmosphere with signage and relevant visuals.

Organising Materials & Equipment

Purpose: To have everything you need ready for a smooth training session.

Checklist:

- Print enough handouts and worksheets (with extras).
- Organise presentation slides and demo materials.
- Test all equipment (clickers, laptops, etc.) thoroughly.
- Have spare batteries, cables and other essentials.
- Arrange materials in the order you'll use them for easy access.

Communicating with Participants

Purpose: To ensure participants are informed and prepared.

Checklist:

- Send an initial email/invitation with the following:
 - Clear training objectives
 - Detailed schedule (start/end times, breaks)
 - Location and directions (if applicable)
 - List of materials participants should bring
- Send a reminder email a few days before the training.
- Provide contact information for questions.

Accessibility

Purpose: This ensures that trainees are in a position to carry out training with all trainees including those who may have special needs and disabilities in the general population.

Checklist:

- Check for physical accessibility:
 - ramps, elevators, accessible restrooms, etc.
- Options for a different seating arrangement for participants with mobility issues
- Available training materials in accessible formats
 - large print, Braille, or electronic documents compatible with screen readers.
- Check whether all audio-visual materials have open captions or are accompanied by transcripts for participants who have a hearing impairment.
- Make sure readability within the materials can be accommodated through clear fonts, large font size, and contrast for those with visual impairments.
- Ensure good lighting and proper acoustics in the training room for people with sensory impairments.
- Contact in advance and ask participants what accommodation may be required by them.
- Provide training on assistance provided to participants with disabilities in the use of any kinds of assistive devices or technologies.
- Be responsive to individual accommodation requests and ready to make adjustments necessary for equal participation at all times.
- Revise and update the checklist of accessibility based on feedback and continuous learning from participants with different disabilities.

Additional Tips for Trainers

Arrive early: Gives you time to troubleshoot any issues.

Be welcoming: First impressions matter!

Know your stuff: Rehearse to build confidence.

Be adaptable: Adjust your plan if necessary.

Collect feedback: Use evaluation forms to improve future training.

By diligently following this checklist, trainers can ensure that their training program is well-organised, impactful, and, ultimately, beneficial for the children with ASD whom they aim to support.

Good luck with your training!

5. References

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