# TEACCH Autism Program

Tuesday 11th February 2025

Presented by Lyuba Kisel

# Agenda

- TEACCH overview
- 9.30 am-10.20 am

- TEACCH practical activities
- 10.20am-10.50am

- Questions
- 11.20 am-11.30am

# TEACCH Induction Course

## Lead by

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THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA at CHAPEL HILL

# TEACCH is a Researched Based Program

- Established as a program in the University of North Carolina School of Medicine, 1965
- To recognise the unique needs of individuals with ASD

# TEACCH Objectives

- Understand the unique learning styles of individual with ASD
- Understand the connection between learning styles, challenging behaviours and Evidenced-Based Practices of Structured TEACCH strategies and visual supports
- Develop and implement interventions based on individual learning styles and developmental differences
- Understand the Culture of Autism
  - ✓ Learning Styles
  - ✓ Behaviours
  - ✓ Strategies

# TEACCH Goals

## Beginner

- Engagement
- Learn new skills
- Decrease behaviour problems

## Lifelong learner

- Independence
- Flexibility
- Generalization
- Self-Advocacy
- Well-Being happy, healthy, self-efficacy, competence

# Autism Spectrum Disorder

Neurodevelopmental disorder - brain organised and functions differently

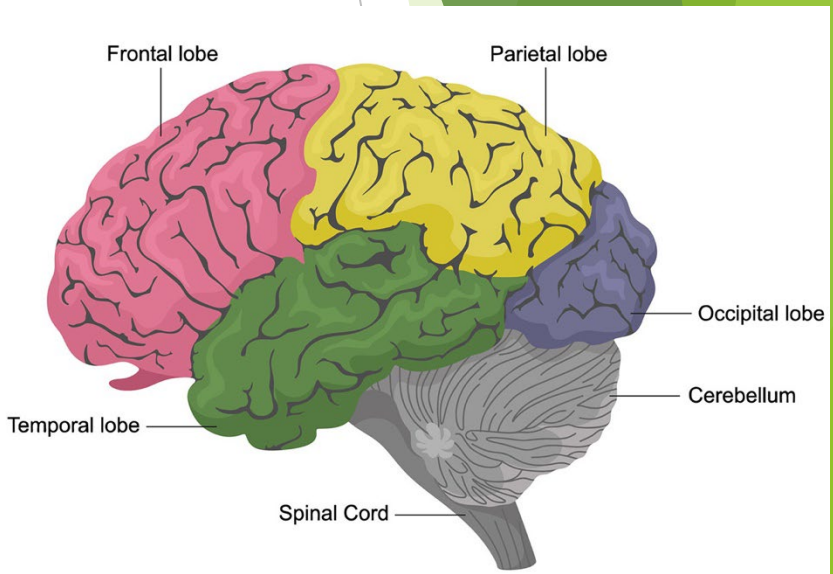
Starts early in life but presentation of symptoms may be delayed

**Social Communication** : deficit in social and emotional reciprocity, deficit in nonverbal communicative behaviours, deficit in developing and maintaining relationship

**Restricted, repetitive Patterns of Behaviour, Interest or Activities:** stereotyped or repetitive speech, movements , or objects.

Excessive adherence to routine, ritualized verbal or nonverbal behaviour

Hyper- or –hypo reactivity to sensory aspects of environment



# ‘Once you have met one person with autism, you’ve met one person with autism’

*Attributed to many including Stephen Shore*

- **Learning Styles of ASD:**
  - Implicit learning
  - Auditory processing
  - Attention
  - Executive Functioning
  - Social cognition
  - Sensory Processing

# Implicit Learning: Difficulty Learning Things Automatically

Difficulty with generalisation

- Trouble exhibiting the same skills across people, places and materials
- Knowing what to do based on prior learning or experience

*'Temple [Grandin] had longed for friends at school. While they admired her intelligence, the never accepted her as part of their community. I could never figure out what I was doing wrong. I had an odd luck of awareness that I was different. I could never figure out why I did not fit in. Something was going on between the other kids, something swift, subtle, constantly changing – an exchange of meanings, a negotiation, a swiftness of understanding so remarkable that sometimes she wondered if they were all telepathic.'*

*Oliver Sachs writing about Temple Grandin*

# Teaching and Intervention

- Use direct, explicit instruction to teach skills and clarify what ‘to do’
- Use specific language
- Use visual support to teach new skills
- Use visual reminders to implement routine strategies

# Learning Styles: Auditory Processing

- Strength in visual processing
- Difficulty with abstract language (concrete or literal thinking)
- Delayed processing of language
- ‘Behave’’- one word, many meanings

*‘I think in pictures. Words are like a second language to me. I translate both spoken and written words into full colour movies, complete with sounds which runs like a VCR tape in my head. When someone speaks to me, his words are instantly translated into pictures.’*

Temple Grandin

# Teaching and Intervention

- Use gestures, meaningful concreate examples and visual instructions and support
- Allow time to process information and formulate a response
- Apply rule: ‘if you cannot draw it, it might be too abstract’

# Learning Styles: Attention

- Sticky Attention:
  - Strong attention for high –interest
  - Difficulty disengaging and shifting
  - Problems seeing big picture
- Narrow Beam:
  - Strength in focusing on details and facts
  - Difficulty determining relevant/ non relevant

# Teaching and Intervention

- Organise and segment the environment to engage and maintain attention
- Use visuals structure to direct attention to important and relevant information
- Use visual support to enhance meaning and understanding of abstract concepts
- Use a variety of visual cues to help disengage and shift attention
- Incorporate special interests to engage attention

# Learning Styles: Executive Functioning

- Week organisation skills
- Sequencing/planning
- Trouble with initiation
- Understanding ‘finished’
- Flexibility
- Difficult with transitions

# Teaching and Intervention

- Provide visual sequences of activities
  - Pupils need predictability
  - Routines are predictable, but routines can encourage rigidity  therefore
  - Need to  …. TEACH FLEXIBILITY

# Learning Styles: Social Cognition

- Joint attention
- Respond to other's emotions
- Theory of mind
- Inability to understand that others have perspectives that are different from one's own.

# Teaching and Intervention

- Use visual cues to support social understanding and promote social interaction
- Use social stories to teach social understanding and clarify expectations
- Incorporate interests to promote social engagement and joint attention
- Directly teach about emotions in self and others

# Sensory Processing Impacts Learning

- Problems filtering and understanding input
  - Hyper – reactivity (over-stimulated)
    - Aversion, avoidance, over-aroused
  - Hypo –reactivity (under-stimulated)
    - Sensory seeking, may not notice sensory input
- Difficulty dealing with open space

# Teaching and intervention

- Organise and segment the environment to decrease stimulation
- Provide calm and quiet spaces
- Schedule breaks throughout the day

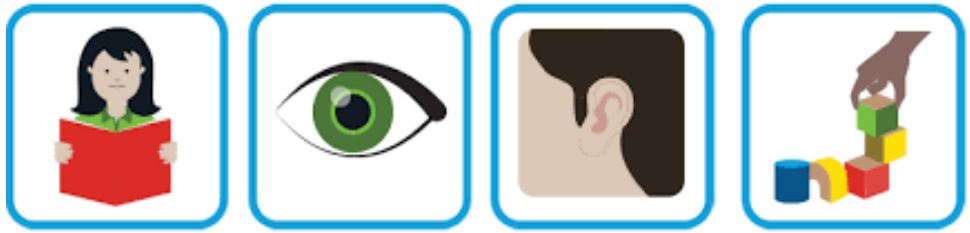
# Summary: Learning Styles in ASD

**Strength**

- ✓ Explicit learning
  - ✓ rules and routines
- ✓ Visual information
- ✓ Fosus on details
- ✓ Restricted interests
  - ✓ increased motivation

**Weaknesses**

- ✓ Intuitive (implicit) learning
- ✓ Sticky attention
- ✓ Theory of mind
- ✓ Executive functioning
  - ✓ panning, organisation, time



# Activity:
## Identify Learning Style of an Individual with ASD

**Behaviour**

James has been playing with cars. The teacher tells James that it is time to go into the library. James is upset, when he has to stop playing with his cars, cries and drops to the ground.

# Activity:
## Identify Learning Style of an Individual with ASD

**Learning styles**

- Visual learner: cannot understand verbal explanation of what is happening next.
- Attention; difficulty disengaging and shifting attention.
- Time and organisation does not know when he can play with cars again
- Restricted or repetitive behaviours : strong interest in cars

# Summary

## Structured Teaching is an evidence-based approach

- Based on the understanding of individual learning styles of ASD pupils
- Capitalizes on the individual's strengths
- Uses strategies and visual support to provide meaning and promote independence

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# Elements of Structured TEACCHing

## Types of Visual Support

- Daily timetable
- Work system
- Material Structure and Support
- Physical Organisation

# Thank you

# Backup

## Use Visual Supports to Answer These Key Questions for the Learner……

- Where am I going? schedule
- What and how much will I do? work system
- When will I be finished? work system
- What happens next? work system
- How will I do it? material structure and visual supports
- What happens here? physical organization

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