



ECHO Session Date: 10/18/24

Thank you for presenting your student at ECHO Idaho – K12 Supporting Students with Autism session. Please keep in mind that your School District policies and Health Services procedures, medication administration protocols, process guidelines, remain the guiding principles to your practice.

After review of the case presentation and discussion of this student’s case among the ECHO Community of Practice, the following suggestions have been made:

Student Grade Level: 3-5th grade

Summary:

The student has a generally positive attitude, enjoys hugs, and participates in activities like color and shape sorting. He interacts well with peers, enjoys outdoor play, and engages in tasks that help develop his motor skills. He is particularly drawn to rhythmic sounds, leading to the introduction of musical instruments.

However, the student faces significant challenges. He is non-verbal with limited communication abilities and sometimes reacts with aggression when frustrated. Potty training has been unsuccessful, and he continues to mouth objects. He requires comprehensive services such as occupational and physical therapy, which he is no longer receiving. Cultural and geographical barriers prevent his parents from accessing needed services or understanding how to improve his progress.

Question:

How can I best support this student, his parents, and the SPED department? I’m considering using a visual schedule—would that be appropriate given the student's unique challenges?

Recommendations:

Behavioral Guides & Communication Supports

- Consider using the [Idaho Assistive Technology Project](#), a state funded program that provides assistive technology resources and expertise. They provide free consultations for the school and family.
- Explore the [National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#) "Backpack Series" for simple, one-page behavioral guides available in multiple languages, including Spanish. These can be sent home to support parents in reinforcing behavioral strategies used at school.
- For children with greater intellectual disabilities, a visual schedule using objects rather than pictures or icons can be an effective way to help them understand daily routines.
- Use visual boards and simple motor signs to help the student express frustration or request breaks more easily.
 - [Autism Level Up!](#) offers free visual communication tools to support this process.
 - <https://cdn.sanity.io/files/p6bm7moz/production/b4183a8079314b1f86a47c4a8b8e7d546a2dc8c8.pdf>



Family Support and Resources

- Consider involving an interpreter to improve communication with the student's family, helping them understand school efforts and fostering better collaboration.
- [Idaho Parents Unlimited](#) is also a very good resource for families like this one, who may need a little bit more assistance with navigating some of the systems in Idaho. They have Spanish speaking staff to help.
- [Autism Speaks \(Spanish\)](#) has a large volume of information and resources
- [Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities](#) recently completed a training for Spanish-speaking and bilingual parents from Idaho and Utah. These parents, all of whom have children with disabilities, have been trained to assist other parents in advocacy and finding their voice. Reaching out to the Council can provide access to these individuals who can offer support and share their experiences.
- ESL services within the school

Leverage Rhythm for Calming

- Continue incorporating rhythmic patterns and music to help organize the student's brain activity.
- Consider using a portable MP3 player to play rhythmic sounds for calming and regulation, particularly during transitions and walking breaks.
- Try making some musical instruments (e.g., plastic easter eggs make wonderful maracas or containers with screw lids that can be filled with beans, rice, etc. Just remember to glue the lids!)

Structured Walking Breaks

- Provide regular, planned walking breaks with trusted adults to help regulate the student's nervous system. These breaks should be predictable, and visual aids (like pictures of him walking) can help him request these breaks when needed.

Medical Support

- Consider reaching out to the primary care provider so that this person can help relay the message to the family that early intervention is key. As this child is older, there are some missed opportunities for early intervention, but he has lots of potential and we don't ever want to assign a ceiling to these kids.

Explore Meaningful School Activities

- Consider incorporating more meaningful activities that involve movement and social interaction to increase his motivation and communication opportunities. For example, instead of color sorting, have him engage in tasks like taking attendance, matching classmates' pictures, and interacting with peers. These activities can make his learning more engaging and purposeful.
- Consider testing his abilities in Spanish

Resources:

[Idaho Assistive Technology Project](#)
[Autism Level Up!](#)
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[Idaho Parents Unlimited](#)
[Autism Speaks \(Spanish\)](#)
[Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities](#)