

Lesson Plan Ideas For Engaging Children On The Autism Spectrum



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As a parent to a child on the autism spectrum, you know that how your child will react to a certain situation or change must always be considered. Whether you're moving to a new [neighborhood](#) or simply [buying new clothes](#) for school, children on the autism spectrum will likely react much differently than other children. They need many different types of stimulation and playtime where learning is involved, and it's important to have a well-rounded lesson plan that is focused on your child's specific needs. There are several things you can do at home to engage your child, help them work on any issues they may have with fine motor skills or socialization, and keep them feeling safe and comfortable at the same time.

Individuals who fall on the autism spectrum typically need activities that involve sensory feedback, cause-and-effect, and repetitive motions, but the first step you'll need to take is to make a list of goals for your child based on their needs. It might be necessary to talk to their doctor before beginning a new schedule; after that, it's simply a matter of working on their weaknesses and playing up their strengths. Your child will be looking to you for cues on how to react, so remember to be patient and specific during learning time.

Movement

Including motion in your daily activities will help stimulate your child and help them learn about cause-and-effect while satisfying their need for movement. Toy windmills or pinwheels are great for children who fall on the autism spectrum because they provide several different types of stimulation.

"Children with ADS sometimes tend to crave motion, and if they can't be moving, they like to look at moving objects. So just watching the windmill engaged them. When the windmill turned in response to their push, it also provided cause-and-effect play. And the repetition of the spinning movement provided a third level of satisfaction," says [Kathy Ralabate Doody](#) of SUNY Buffalo State.

Communication

Communication can be very difficult for children living with autism, so finding games and teachable moments that revolve around it is important. Try a [game](#) called "What's In The Bag", which involves putting objects from around the house into a bag and having your child ask you questions to try and figure out what's inside. This will help them learn communication skills, although it's a good idea to use items that your child is interested in.

Get creative

Visual art can be very helpful in teaching kids who fall on the autism spectrum about fine motor skills. Many children have trouble holding onto a pencil correctly, so give your child colored pencils and paper and set up a small mirror on a table. Have them draw a self-portrait and consider creating one yourself in order to lead by example.

Play up his strengths

It's important to suss out your child's strengths where learning is concerned, and cater the lesson plan to his needs and the things he takes the most interest in. Integrate playtime, crafts, and sensory activities to ensure your child gets the most out of learning time.

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