

# Autism

## **Why**

Autism is a complex developmental disorder. NSSEO Autism Services recognizes that students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) present unique educational needs that are best met through: comprehensive assessment, the use of evidenced-based practice, established treatment protocols, and a framework for implementing service. Critical to the success of providing students with ASD with positive outcomes is a team approach, with the team comprised of parents and professionals.

"For some students, it is difficult to determine whether their unusual profile of abilities is due to autism, another developmental disability or their reaction to unusual circumstances." (Marilyn Moneiro, *Autism Conversations*, 2010)

## **Focus**

NSSEO Autism support services are provided to students, educators, and parents in an effort to develop and enhance programming that supports all facets of the student's learning environment.

Effective educational programming is guided by seven core considerations:

1. The verbal and nonverbal communication needs of the student.
2. The need to develop social interaction skills and proficiencies.
3. The needs resulting from the student's unusual responses to sensory experiences.
4. The needs resulting from resistance to environmental change.
5. The needs resulting from engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements.
6. The need for any positive behavioral interventions, strategies and supports to address behavioral difficulties resulting from autism spectrum disorder.

Other needs resulting from the student's disability that impact progress in the general curriculum, including social and emotional development.

## **Who We Are**

The NSSEO Autism Team is comprised of certified, highly qualified Autism Coaches, Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) Teacher, School Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Language Pathologist, and Autism Assistant.

## **SERVICES**

- Consultation and coordination of services.
- Support of assessment practices and eligibility determination through a Framework for Best Practices.
- Training, modeling, and coaching of strategies and supports for classroom teams, including teacher aides and related service personnel including:
  - § Creating and implementing individualized student schedules
  - § Providing sensory regulation activities
  - § Developing and implementing structured teaching task systems
  - § Supporting adapted social /cognitive/motor group activities.
- Observation of the student in the learning environment
- Participation in Eligibility and IEP meetings.
- Professional Growth Model that addresses 3 Tiers of training:

### **Tier 1**

- § Characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder
- § Assessment of Autism Spectrum Disorder
- § Learning environment variables and the impact on students with ASD

### **Tier 2**

- § Relationship development
- § Writing Social Stories
- § Visual communication systems
- § Augmentative communication systems
- § Visual supports
- § Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)/Discrete Trial Teaching
- § Structured Teaching
- § Illinois Experiential Program Autism Training
- § Analysis and implementation of sensory regulation
- § Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plans

### **Tier 3**

- § Application of specific strategies and methodology: sharing, problem-solving and networking
- § Coaching and classroom shadowing

- Parent Partnerships: parent networking and support groups
- Professional development activities for parents and educators
- Autism Resource Lending Library: parents can access current literature, instructional materials, and DVDs at the lending library located at the NSSEO Central Office, 799 W. Kensington Rd, My Prospect, IL 60056, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor.

