STAR Autism Support Inc.

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Nature of the Intervention

STAR Autism Support offers a variety of training options for individuals, school districts, agencies, and intervention staff at the local, national and international levels. We are dedicated to assisting programs to improve their knowledge and understanding of working with students with autism and other developmental disabilities.

STAR Support trains on curricula and interventions based on the *principles of applied behavior analysis*. We strive to provide instructors with the tools to implement effective curricula for a wide range of learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The focus of the training and curricula is on the child and the functional skills he/she needs to learn to be an active, engaged member of the school, home and community.

The STAR Program (Strategies for Teaching based on Autism Research, Arick, Loos, Falco, Krug, 2004) is a comprehensive curriculum that includes detailed lesson plans, teaching materials, data systems and a curriculum-based assessment for teaching in the six curricular areas of receptive language, expressive language, spontaneous language, functional routines, academics, and play & social skills. The strategies used in the STAR Program have been shown to be effective with students at the preschool and elementary level. The STAR Program was first piloted in 1997. After a five year Outcome Study of 122 students (Arick, Young, Falco, Loos, Krug, Gense, and Johnson 2003) in which students made significant progress in language and academics, the STAR Program was published in 2004. For additional information on the STAR Program visit www.starautismsupport.com. View video examples of the program at www.starautismsupport.com/videos.

Links Curriculum (Linking Assessment and Instruction for Independence) is a comprehensive web-based curriculum to teach upper elementary, secondary and postsecondary students to be more independent across school, community and vocational routines. This curriculum includes detailed lesson plans, visual sequence strips, data systems and assessment. Links is designed to promote student independence in natural environments. The Links online system utilizes a curriculum-based assessment to individualize routines for every student. The Links school and community lesson plans provide the user with the tools necessary to teach both individual skills and independence in daily routines. For additional information on the Links Curriculum and to sign-up for a free preview, visit www.linkscurriculum.com. To view an overview of the Links process visit www.linkscurriculum.com/links-curriculum-overview-tutorial.

Both curricula have extensive instructional guides and lesson plans that provide instructors the tools for consistency of programming and fidelity of implementation among instructional staff. The STAR Program and the Links Curriculum suggest appropriate IEP Goals and Objectives and are aligned to the Common Core State Standards and/or the Common Core Essential Elements.

Training Details

a. **Trainers:**

STAR Support consultants and trainers have extensive experience in the implementation and design of evidence-based strategies for working with students with autism and other developmental disabilities. Consultants have worked as classroom teachers, autism consultants, administrators and home-based service providers. Dr. Joel Arick, lead author of the STAR Program, began his work in 1974 developing strategies for effective instruction for students with autism.   Information on STAR Support trainers can be found at www.starautismsupport.com/star-trainers.

b. **Trainees:**

Workshops accommodate up to 60 participants. Follow-up consultation can be provided to participants that attended the workshop either individually or in teams. Participants include special and general education teachers, paraprofessionals, related service staff, intervention staff, administrators and parents. Licensed professionals have access to additional training to become a coach within their district or agency.

c. **Frequency and Location of Training:**

Workshops and consultation are provided at the local school district/agency location and can be arranged throughout the year. Information on scheduled workshops can be found at www.starautismsupport.com/workshop-training.

d. **Train the Trainer:**

Ensuring successful implementation of a curriculum can be one of the most challenging tasks for special educators. STAR Support has developed a training site model whereby school districts and agencies can become self-sufficient in how they monitor and implement the STAR Program and Links Curriculum and to ensure fidelity of implementation. Extensive training materials and fidelity checklists are part of the STAR Support training model as well as training to become a "coach" within one's own district or agency.

e. **Manual:**

Both the STAR Program and Links Curriculum are manualized programs and include extensive information detailing implementation procedures.

Training DVDs: The STAR Program has video examples of teachers working with students for each of the STAR Program lessons. The DVDs cover all three levels of the STAR Program, contain examples of all 167 Lessons and show the use of discrete trial teaching, pivotal response training and the

functional routines. The DVDs use a menu system to orient the user and allow the user to select any of the STAR lessons to view.

Evidence-base for the Intervention

1. Research-based instructional strategies used in the STAR Program:

Discrete Trial Training:

Skills are taught in a logical sequence building on previously learned skills. Concepts to be taught are identified and then broken down into specific program elements for instruction. Each instructional session consists of a series of discrete trials. A discrete trial consists of a four-step sequence 1) Instructional cue, 2) child response, 3) consequence (generally a positive reinforcer) and, 4) pause. Data is collected to monitor the child's progress and to help determine when a pre-set criteria has been reached. The STAR Program provides a detailed guide to implementation of the discrete trial method. The STAR Program includes discrete trial program plans and data sheets to guide the specific implementation of this method to teach each appropriate skill. Discrete Trial Training is used to teach receptive language concepts, pre-academic concepts and some mid and advanced level expressive language concepts.

References for Discrete Trial Training: Krug, D., Arick, J., Almond, P., Rosenblum, J., Scanlon, C., & Border, M. (1979). Krug, D., Rosenblum, J., Almond, P., & Arick, J. (1981). Leaf, R., & McEachin, J., (2000). Lovaas, O. (1981). Lovaas, O. (1987). Smith, T. (2001). Arick, J., Young, H., Falco, R., Loos, L., Krug, D., Gense, M.,and Johnson, S. (2003).

Pivotal Response Training:

Pivotal Response Training is also based on the 4 step sequence; cue, child response, consequence and pause. However, Atrials@ within PRT are incorporated into the environment in a functional context. During PRT the child to chooses the activity or object and the reinforcer is a natural consequence to the behavior being rewarded. The nature of this strategy makes it possible to engage the child throughout all activities and locations throughout the day. The STAR Program also suggests the use of PRT sessions that incorporate massed trials. PRT is primarily used by the STAR Program to teach and generalize expressive language and play and socialization skills.

References for Pivotal Response Training: Koegel, R., O=Dell, M., & Koegel, L. (1987). Koegel, R., Schreibman, L., Good, A., Cerniglia, L., Murphy, C., & Koegel, L. (1989). Laski, K., Charlop, M., & Schreibman, L. (1988). Schreibman, L., & Koegel, R. (1996). Pierce, K., & Schreibman, L. (1997). Arick, J., Young, H., Falco, R., Loos, L., Krug, D., Gense, M., and Johnson, S. (2003), Hupp and Reitman (2000).

Functional Routines:

Functional Routines are predictable events that involve a chain of behaviors. Routines are generally associated with a functional outcome for the child. Some common example routines that all children engage are: the restroom routine, arrival routine and snack routine. The functional outcome of a routine usually serves as the reinforcer for typically developing children. These routines provide meaningful contexts for using, generalizing, and maintaining receptive and expressive language, social interaction skills, and preacademic concepts. The STAR Program provides the teacher with the needed programs to systematically teach children to independently participate in most common school and self-care routines. Guidance is provided for the creation of a structured learning environment for young children with autism. The STAR Program also provides the teacher with a system to integrate and thus generalize the use of skills taught in discrete trial and pivotal response training.

References for Teaching Functional Routines: Falco, R., Jansen, J., Arick, J. and M. Deboer (1990). J. B. Ganz (2007), R. Lovannone, G., Dunlap, H. Huber, and D. Kincaid (2003), B.T. Ogletree, T. Oren, & M.A. Fisher (2007), Brown, Evans, Weed, & Owen, (1987). Cooper, et. Al., (1987). McClannahan & Krantz, (2000). Olley, (1987). Arick, J., Young, H., Falco, R., Loos, L., Krug, D., Gense, M., and Johnson, S. (2003).

More information on research basis of the STAR Program can be found at www.starautismsupport.com/research-0 .

2. Research-based instructional strategies used in the Links Curriculum:

Themes of Instruction (National Research Council, 2001; Snell & Brown, 2006; Wehmeyer, 1998)	Instructional Methods (National Autism Center, 2009; National Professional Development Center, 2010; Snell & Brown, 2006)
Independence Self-Determination Functional and Generalizable	Principles of Applied Behavior Analysis Discrete Trial Training Task Analysis (i.e. Functional Routines)
Context of Instruction (National Research Council, 2001; Snell & Brown, 2006)	Using Visual and Environmental Supports Antecedent-Based Strategies Positive Behavior Strategies and Supports
School and Community Routines Responding to Language Communicating with Others Functional Academics Engaging in Diverse Activities Social Skills	Self-Management Techniques Augmentative Communication Systems Modeling/Imitation Strategies Joint Attention Using Student Schedules Reinforcement Structured Work Systems Peer Mediated Instruction Prompting Strategies

A major field test was also conducted in the state of Oregon during 1999-2000 to determine the reliability and validity of the measurement system that is utilized in the Links Curriculum. Thirty school districts, 133 instructors, and 478 students with moderate to severe disabilities participated in the study (Arick, Nave, & Hoffman, 2000). The study found the high levels of reliability and strong validity. These results indicated that the routine assessment process used in the Links Curriculum has inter-rater and test-retest reliability and validity for measuring a student's independence level.

More information on research basis of the Links Curriculum can be found at www.linkscurriculum.com/features.

Provisions for cultural adaptations:

STAR Support has provided training in both urban and rural school districts and agencies throughout the United States, US Territories and other countries. STAR Support trainers have successfully adapted the curricula for non-English speaking students.

The STAR Program teaches typical developmental skills that children need to learn and the curriculum can easily be modified for specific language and cultural accommodations. The program is manualized . Instructional staff are provided extensive information, lesson plans, and data collection systems for ease of use on a daily basis.

The Links Curriculum teaches independence on typical school and community routines. The Links system allows the user to modify the instructional targets to adapt to any cultural environment. The curriculum is web-based for easy access throughout the world on a computer or tablet.

Contact Information:
STAR Autism Support has a wide range of training options. Training is always tailored to the unique needs of your district, agency or program.   For further information email jesse.arick@starautismsupport.com or call 503-297-2864.