What’s to be covered...

• Prevalence of Autism
• Definition of Autism
• Signs of Autism
• Screening for Autism
• LGBTQIA Disability Facts
• Prevalence of Transgender Youth
• WI data on Transgender Youth
• Inclusion and Inclusive Supports

Prevalence of Autism

• Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability
• 1 in 68 individuals have autism spectrum disorder
• There are more than 3.5 million Americans living with ASD
• Autism affects more boys than girls
• Cost of medical treatment and care for people on the autism spectrum is costing Americans $262-$236 billion annually.
  • The majority of this cost is to help cover the unique needs of adults with ASD
  • It costs approximately $12,000 to educate a student with ASD in K12 public education

Definition of Autism

• Autism is characterized by
  • Impairment in social interaction
  • Impairment in communication
  • Presence of restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped behaviors
  • A present occupation with parts of objects
  • Inflexibility, difficulty changing from routine situations and regular rituals

Characteristics of Autism

Visual strengths

Signs of Early Autism

• Certain signs and characteristics of autism can be seen as early as infancy. Doctors can perform a “developmental screening” and inquire about progress. Some early signs of possibly autism are:
  • A child does not babble by 12 months
  • Does not gesture by 12 months
  • Does not speak by 12 months
  • Does not say 2 word phrases by 24 months
  • A loss of language at any age
Screening for Autism

- There are no medical tests for diagnosing autism.
- Early intervention is key.
- Diagnosis is based on individual communication, social interaction, and activities and interests.
- Screening should be multi-disciplinary. Could include: educational diagnostician, occupational therapist, speech therapist, and medical professional.
- Some medical professionals have experience with autism – pediatric neurologists, child and adolescent psychologists, and psychiatrists.
- More support is offered through local autism society affiliates, support groups, and primary care provider.

Screening for Autism

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<th>Several Screening tests can help to diagnose autism</th>
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Case Study – Brandon’s story

https://docs.google.com/document/d/19oxPdG3NAAW7IoEcQZH9ic1qyYTxreyU0GYe4d0M/edit

Some of the topics of interest...

Veronica’s Story

- Veronica, a transgender female was a student in a school district that had several significant mental health disorders. Along with the struggles she faced with these health disorders, she was also diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. When she came out to her family and told them that she was transgender, her biological parents disowned her. She spent time in and out of juvenile detention centers. There was concern about her receiving medical treatment for her mental health needs. The care that she needed was not always readily available in the juvenile detention center. She was released to her biological grandmother and is now attending public high school.

Transgender Children

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVmauLCM5TU
LGBTQIA- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, & Asexual

- Research indicates that people identified as LGBTQIA and that fall on the autism spectrum have a significantly higher risk for depression, suicidal ideology and self-harm (Benett & Goodall, 2016, p. 3190).
- Research also shows that students with disabilities and that identify as LGBTQIA struggle with academics (Benett & Goodall 2016, p. 3190).

LGBTQ+ Disability Facts

People with a disability may have:
- Limited ability to acquire knowledge elsewhere
- Less opportunity to engage spontaneously with peers
- Difficulties in distinguishing fact from fiction
- Challenges in reading social situations and matching behavior
- High risk of experiencing STIs and unintended pregnancies
- Increased vulnerability to sexual abuse/assault and exploitation

Prevalence of Transgender youth and Autism

- Incidence of gender-ambiguous sex above average - 7.8% of a group of trans-identity children tested were identified as being on the autism spectrum.
- Participants on the autism spectrum were 7.36 times more likely to express gender variance.
- A study showed 47% of transgender youth report at least one suicide attempt, and nearly 46% report a history of self-harm, such as cutting.
- There is a higher risk of victimization for autistic trans people.
- People with autism can be more likely to die from suicide attempts because they often have less awareness of permanent consequences.
- People with autism who are transgender experience more social isolation than people with either diagnosis alone.

WI Transgender Youth Data

- 3x more likely to be in Special Education
- 2x more likely to have dropped out of school
- 5x more likely to have carried a weapon to school
- 4x more likely to have no adult support outside parents
- 3x more likely to have been in physical fight
- 15x more likely to have been in juvenile correction or prison
- 3x more likely to have suicide ideation
- 3x more likely to attempt suicide
- 2.5x more likely to get aggressive, hit, yell, or scream

Inclusion

- As special education teachers, we automatically think of inclusion as including students with disabilities into the regular education environment. However, inclusion is so much more than that. Inclusion is accepting everyone. We need to consider the supports we put in place in order to meet the needs of every student in our classrooms.

Inclusive Supports

Inclusive Supports

• Providing safe space for students. A place of Zen in order to destress from daily anxieties.
• A general school-wide anti-bullying campaign
• Offering Gender Sexuality Alliance student organizations for support
• Educating student body on topics such as: Gender inclusion, race/ethnicity differences and Disability awareness
• Being compliant with 0 tolerance policies
• Acceptance for people first language and using proper pronouns to address students

Ability not Disability

https://www.ted.com/talks/rosie_king_how_autism_freed_me_to_be_myself/transcript?referrer=playlist-331-t-351924

Pentatonix – Imagine

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLiWFUDJ9NI

Inclusive Supports

• What are your districts doing to help students with these needs?

Any Questions?

Resources