



Evidence-Based Practice Resources to Support Autistic Learners

This resource has been created for administrators and other school leaders who are responsible for providing feedback to educators who directly serve autistic learners and other students with disabilities based on the TEAM evaluation rubric. Within this resource, you will find useful resources that you can share with educators that directly tie to a few areas of the TEAM specific to aspects of high-quality classrooms that support autistic learners. **Please note: This document is not a new rubric but is meant to support administrators as they complete the TEAM evaluation rubric.**

How to use: After completing the TEAM observation and identifying educator strengths, goals and areas of growth, share the hyperlinked resources to build the capacity of your faculty and staff to best meet the needs of students in the educational setting. These are not the only resources available to support autistic learners but are a compilation of evidence-based practices and resources. To access the TRIAD courses and webinars referenced throughout this guide, users must first [register](#) for a free account. Learn more about account registration [here](#).



V VANDERBILT KENNEDY CENTER
Treatment and Research Institute for
Autism Spectrum Disorders

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Please email admin@vkclearning.org if you have questions about finding resources on TRIAD's online learning portal.

Instructional Plans

At Expectations (3)

Instructional plans include:

- goals aligned to state content standards,
- activities, materials, and assessments that:
 - » are aligned to state standards,
 - » are sequenced from basic to complex,
 - » build on prior student knowledge, and
 - » provide appropriate time for student work, and lesson and unit closure;
- evidence that the plan is appropriate for the age, knowledge, and interests of most learners; and
- evidence that the plan provides some opportunities to accommodate individual student needs.

Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}

- Schedule and activities reflect a variety of learning formats for each student, and an appropriate distribution of curriculum for the age, level, and individual needs of students in the classroom.
- Visual and manipulative supports are used to support learning as needed.
- Instructional materials are differentiated based on student need/ability.
- During instruction, staff deliver instructional cues clearly, prompt as needed, and reinforce correct responses or deliver error correction as needed.
- Instruction pace promotes high rates of correct responding, and uses appropriate schedules of reinforcement.
- Activities build students' language skills and staff encourage appropriate use of language to comment, ask and answer questions; staff create opportunities to promote communication with peers.

Evidence-Based Practice Resources

For TRIAD training and technical assistance see the “Increasing Academic Engagement for All” section at triad.vumc.org/edu-programs.

Click a resource title below to view		
Tip sheet	Visual Supports and Autism Spectrum Disorders	
Tip sheet	Graphic Organizers-An Overview	
Tip sheet	Administrator’s Guide to Instruction Adjustments for Autistic Students	
Book	Visual Supports for People with Autism	
TRIAD course	Setting Up Schedules Series	Login required
TRIAD course	Administrators: Supporting Teachers of Autistic Students	Login required
TRIAD course	Instructional Adjustments	Login required
TRIAD course	Brisk Pace	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Direct Instruction Webinar Series	Login required

To access TRIAD courses and webinars, first [register](#) for a free account. Learn more [here](#).

At Expectations (3)

Assessment plans:

- are aligned with state content standards;
- have measurement criteria;
- measure student performance in more than two ways (e.g., in the form of a project, experiment, presentation, essay, short answer, or multiple choice test);
- require written tasks; and
- include performance checks throughout the school year.

Quality Classroom Indicator^{1,2,3}

- Data on student performance is collected and reviewed weekly during collaborative planning time that involves members of the student's educational team.

Evidence-Based Practice Resources

For TRIAD training and technical assistance see the "Increasing Academic Engagement for All" and "Foundational Evidence-Based Practices and Class-wide Strategies for Autistic Learners" sections at triad.vumc.org/edu-programs.

Click a resource title below to view	
TRIAD course	Instructional Adjustments Login required
TRIAD course	Data Collection in the Classroom: Collecting Partial Interval Data Login required

To access TRIAD courses and webinars, first [register](#) for a free account. Learn more [here](#).

↘ Expectations

At Expectations (3)

- Teacher sets high and demanding academic expectations for every student.
- Teacher encourages students to learn from mistakes.
- Teacher creates learning opportunities where most students can experience success.
- Students complete their work according to teacher expectations.

Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}

- All classroom staff continually focus on building independence of students by challenging students to do things independently and prompting as needed. (e.g., students tying own shoes, opening own juice cartons, retrieving materials needed, cleaning up). Class staff understands the value of taking time to teach independent skills (vs. doing things for students in effort to save time).

Evidence-Based Practice Resources

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Click a resource title below to view		
Tip sheet	The Teacher’s Pocket Guide for Effective Classroom Management Book Study Leader’s Guide	
Book	Setting Up Classroom Spaces That Support Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders	
Book	The Teacher’s Pocket Guide for Effective Classroom Management	
TRIAD course	Zoning Plans: Building Your Staff Schedules Around Student Needs	Login required
TRIAD course	Environmental Arrangement	Login required
TRIAD course	Creating Expectations and Rules in an Early Childhood Classroom	Login required
TRIAD course	Independent Work Systems	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Classroom Management Webinar Series	Login required

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➤ Managing Student Behavior

🎯 *At Expectations (3)*

- Students are mostly well-behaved and on task, and some minor learning disruptions may occur.
- Teacher establishes rules for learning and behavior.
- The teacher uses some techniques, such as social approval, contingent activities, and consequences to maintain appropriate student behavior.
- The teacher overlooks some inconsequential behavior but at other times stops the lesson to address it.
- The teacher deals with students who have caused disruptions, yet sometimes he or she addresses the entire class.

👍 *Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}*

- Instructional day is scheduled and continually adapted to maximize engagement/instruction and minimize problem behaviors.
- Behavior of 1-2 students does not affect the instruction of group.
- If instructional time is lost due to behaviors of 1-2 students, a plan is made to problem-solve and decrease the likelihood of lost instructional time in the future.
- Staff responds to challenging behaviors appropriately.
- Positive feedback is provided to students frequently and at a rate that exceeds corrective feedback.
- Teacher uses modeling and praise to support positive behavior of students.
- Reinforcement is delivered often for all students.
- Reinforcement is based on individual student preferences.
- Behavior problems are minimized using choices, clear expectations, and positive reinforcement.

☆ *Evidence-Based Practice Resources*

For TRIAD training and technical assistance see the “Foundational Evidence-Based Practices and Class-wide Strategies for Autistic Learners” section at triad.vumc.org/edu-programs.

Click a resource title below to view		
Tip sheet	Choice Boards – An Overview	
Tip sheet	Tips for Refocusing a Group After Occurrences of Problematic Behavior	
Tip sheet	Noncontingent Reinforcement	
TRIAD course	Setting Up Schedules in the Classroom	Login required
TRIAD course	Using Schedules	Login required
TRIAD course	Functional Assessment and Behavior Intervention Planning	Login required
TRIAD course	Understanding and Monitoring Behaviors	Login required
TRIAD course	Preference Assessments	Login required
TRIAD course	Better Together: Classroom Management Strategies for Groups and Individuals Series	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Reinforcement Webinar Series	Login required

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At Expectations (3)

The classroom:

- is welcoming to most members and guests;
- is organized and understandable to most students;
- has supplies, equipment, and resources that are accessible;
- has student work on display; and
- is arranged to promote individual and group learning.

Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}

- Classroom is highly physically structured (e.g., areas for activities are clearly and visually defined, physical/visual boundaries are used to help clarify areas using furniture, materials, tape, etc.).
- Classroom is divided into clearly defined areas for each activity (i.e., independent work, large group, small group). Arrangement allows for supervision of all students at all times and prevents or minimizes problem behaviors.
- Classroom is free of clutter. Visual distractions are as minimized as possible.
- Materials and furniture are age appropriate.
- Instructional materials are organized and accessible within the areas in which they are used (i.e., large group materials, small group materials, independent work).
- Space is maximized and unnecessary areas are eliminated.

Evidence-Based Practice Resources

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Click a resource title below to view	
Tip sheet	www.ksdetasn.org/resources/1803
Book	Setting Up Classroom Spaces That Support Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders
TRIAD course	Environmental Arrangement Login required
Webinar	www.ksdetasn.org/resources/734

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↘ Respectful Culture

🎯 *At Expectations (3)*

- ❑ Teacher-student interactions are generally friendly but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, or disregard for students' cultures.
- ❑ Students exhibit respect for the teacher and are generally polite to each other.
- ❑ Teacher is sometimes receptive to the interests and opinions of students.

👍 *Quality Classroom Indicators*^{1,2,3}

- ❑ Classroom rules are worded positively and succinctly, define observable behaviors, and are posted in the classroom.

☆ *Evidence-Based Practice Resources*

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Click a resource title below to view	
Tip sheet	Strategies to Support Resilience: The 3 Cs
Tip sheet	Strategies to Support Social Engagement
TRIAD webinar	Classroom Management Webinar Series Login required

To access TRIAD courses and webinars, first [register](#) for a free account. Learn more [here](#).

↘ Standards and Objectives

🎯 *At Expectations (3)*

- ❑ Most learning objectives are communicated, connected to the state standard(s), and referenced throughout lesson.
- ❑ Sub-objectives are mostly aligned to the lesson's major objective.
- ❑ Learning objectives are connected to what students have previously learned.
- ❑ Expectations for student performance are clear.
- ❑ There is evidence that most students demonstrate mastery of the daily objective that supports significant progress towards mastery of the standard(s).

👍 *Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}*

- ❑ Schedule and activities reflect a variety of learning formats for each student, and an appropriate distribution of curriculum for the age, level, and individual needs of students in the classroom.
- ❑ Daily/Weekly lesson plan format developed to align with instructional schedule.
- ❑ Written lesson plans are available which clearly state the content and instructional goals of the learning activity.
- ❑ Instructional materials are differentiated based on student need/ability.

☆ *Evidence-Based Practice Resources*

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Click a resource title below to view		
Tip sheet	Visual Supports and Autism Spectrum Disorders	
Tip sheet	Graphic Organizers-An Overview	
Tip sheet	Administrator's Guide to Instruction Adjustments for Autistic Students	
TRIAD course	Administrators: Supporting Teachers of Autistic Students	Login required
TRIAD course	Instructional Adjustments	Login required
TRIAD course	Brisk Pace	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Direct Instruction Webinar Series	Login required

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➤ Motivating Students

🎯 *At Expectations (3)*

- ❑ The teacher sometimes organizes the content so that it is personally meaningful and relevant to students.
- ❑ The teacher sometimes develops learning experiences where inquiry, curiosity, and exploration are valued.
- ❑ The teacher sometimes reinforces and rewards effort.

👍 *Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}*

- ❑ Instructional day is scheduled and continually adapted to maximize engagement/instruction and minimize problem behaviors.
- ❑ Positive feedback is provided to students frequently and at a rate that exceeds corrective feedback.
- ❑ Teacher uses modeling and praise to support positive behavior of students.
- ❑ Reinforcement is delivered often for all students.
- ❑ Reinforcement is based on individual student preferences.

☆ *Evidence-Based Practice Resources*

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Click a resource title below to view		
Tip sheet	Choice Boards – An Overview	
Tip sheet	Noncontingent Reinforcement	
TRIAD course	Setting Up Schedules Series	Login required
TRIAD course	Using Schedules	Login required
TRIAD course	Preference Assessment Series	Login required
TRIAD course	Better Together: Classroom Management Strategies for Groups and Individuals Series	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Reinforcement Webinar Series	Login required

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➤ Presenting Instructional Content

🎯 *At Expectations (3)*

Presentation of content most of the time includes:

- visuals that establish the purpose of the lesson, preview the organization of the lesson, and include internal summaries of the lesson;
- examples, illustrations, analogies, and labels for new concepts and ideas;
- modeling by the teacher to demonstrate performance expectations;
- concise communication;
- logical sequencing and segmenting;
- all essential information; and
- no irrelevant, confusing, or non-essential information.

👍 *Quality Classroom Indicators*^{1,2,3}

- Schedule and activities reflect a variety of learning formats for each student, and an appropriate distribution of curriculum for the age, level, and individual needs of students in the classroom.
- Visual and manipulative supports are used to support learning as needed.
- Instructional materials are differentiated based on student need/ability.
- During instruction, staff deliver instructional cues clearly, prompt as needed, and reinforce correct responses or deliver error correction as needed.
- Skills are taught in the context of naturally occurring activities and daily routines.
- Activities build students' language skills and staff encourage appropriate use of language to comment, ask and answer questions; staff create opportunities to promote communication with peers.

☆ *Evidence-Based Practice Resources*

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Tip sheet	Graphic Organizers-An Overview	
Tip sheet	Administrator's Guide to Instruction Adjustments for Autistic Students	
Book	Visual Supports for People with Autism	
TRIAD course	Setting Up Schedules Series	Login required
TRIAD course	Administrators: Supporting Teachers of Autistic Students	Login required
TRIAD course	Instructional Adjustments	Login required
TRIAD course	Brisk Pace	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Direct Instruction Webinar Series	Login required

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Lesson Structure and Pacing

At Expectations (3)

- The lesson starts promptly.
- The lesson's structure is coherent with a beginning, middle, and end.
- Pacing is appropriate and sometimes provides opportunities for students who progress at different learning rates.
- Routines for distributing materials are efficient.
- Little instructional time is lost during transitions.

Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}

- Instruction pace promotes high rates of correct responding, and uses appropriate schedules of reinforcement.
- A routine is developed to clearly and consistently transition students to next activity while promoting as much independence as possible.
- There is very little wait time in between activities to minimize likelihood of problem behavior.

Evidence-Based Practice Resources

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Click a resource title below to view		
Tip sheet	Accommodations Fidelity Checklist	
Tip sheet	Visual Supports and Autism Spectrum Disorders	
TRIAD course	Setting Up Schedules Series	Login required
TRIAD course	Administrators: Supporting Teachers of Autistic Students	Login required
TRIAD course	Instructional Adjustments	Login required
TRIAD course	Brisk Pace	Login required
TRIAD course	Creating Expectations and Rules in an Early Childhood Classroom	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Classroom Management Webinar Series	Login required

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↘ Activities and Materials

At Expectations (3)

- Activities and materials include most of the following:
 - » support the lesson objectives,
 - » are challenging,
 - » sustain students' attention,
 - » elicit a variety of thinking,
 - » provide time for reflection,
 - » are relevant to students' lives,
 - » provide opportunities for student-to-student interaction,
 - » induce student curiosity and suspense,
 - » provide students with choices,
 - » incorporate multimedia and technology, and
 - » incorporate resources beyond the school curriculum texts (e.g., teacher-made materials, manipulatives, resources from museums, cultural centers, etc.).
- Texts and tasks are appropriately complex.

Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}

- Schedule and activities reflect a variety of learning formats for each student, and an appropriate distribution of curriculum for the age, level, and individual needs of students in the classroom.
- Visual and manipulative supports are used to support learning as needed.
- Activities build students' language skills and staff encourage appropriate use of language to comment, ask and answer questions.
- Skills are taught in the context of naturally occurring activities and daily routines.
- Instructional materials are differentiated based on student need/ability.

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Tip sheet	Graphic Organizers-An Overview	
Tip sheet	Administrator's Guide to Instruction Adjustments for Autistic Students	
Book	Visual Supports for People with Autism	
TRIAD course	Setting Up Schedules Series	Login required
TRIAD course	Administrators: Supporting Teachers of Autistic Students	Login required
TRIAD course	Instructional Adjustments	Login required
TRIAD course	Brisk Pace	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Direct Instruction Webinar Series	Login required

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At Expectations (3)

- Teacher questions are varied and high quality providing for some, but not all, question types:
 - » knowledge and comprehension,
 - » application and analysis, and
 - » creation and evaluation.
- Questions usually require students to cite evidence.
- Questions are usually purposeful and coherent.
- A moderate frequency of questions asked.
- Questions are sometimes sequenced with attention to the instructional goals.
- Questions sometimes require active responses (e.g., whole class signaling, choral responses, or group and individual answers).
- Wait time is sometimes provided.
- The teacher calls on volunteers and non-volunteers, and a balance of students based on ability and gender.
- When text is involved, majority of questions are text-based.

Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}

- Activities build students' language skills and staff encourage appropriate use of language to comment, ask and answer questions.
- Instruction pace promotes high rates of correct responding, and uses appropriate schedules of reinforcement.
- Visual and manipulative supports are used to support learning as needed.
- Schedule and activities reflect a variety of learning formats for each student, and an appropriate distribution of curriculum for the age, level, and individual needs of students in the classroom.

Evidence-Based Practice Resources

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Click a resource title below to view		
Tip sheet	Visuals and Scripts for Academic Self-Advocacy: An Overview	
Tip sheet	Teaching Communication Skills: A Toolkit for Educators	
TRIAD course	Eliciting Responses	Login required
TRIAD course	Teaching Communication Skills: A Toolkit for Educators	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Framework for Teaching Responding	Login required

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↘ Academic Feedback

At Expectations (3)

- Oral and written feedback is mostly academically focused, frequent, and mostly high quality.
- Feedback is sometimes given during guided practice and homework review.
- The teacher circulates during instructional activities to support engagement, and monitor student work.
- Feedback from students is sometimes used to monitor and adjust instruction.

Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}

- During instruction, staff deliver instructional cues clearly, prompt as needed, and reinforce correct responses or deliver error correction as needed.
- Positive feedback is provided to students frequently and at a rate that exceeds corrective feedback.

Evidence-Based Practice Resources

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Click a resource title below to view		
Tip sheet	Visuals and Scripts for Academic Self-Advocacy: An Overview	
Tip sheet	Responding to Formative Assessment Data with Academic Adjustments	
TRIAD course	Prompting Series	Login required
TRIAD course	Guided Support and Practice	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Direct Instruction Webinar Series	Login required

To access TRIAD courses and webinars, first [register](#) for a free account. Learn more [here](#).

➤ Grouping Students

🎯 *At Expectations (3)*

- ❑ The instructional grouping arrangements (whole-class, small groups, pairs, individual; heterogeneous or homogeneous ability) adequately enhance student understanding and learning efficiency.
- ❑ Most students in groups know their roles, responsibilities, and group work expectations.
- ❑ Most students participating in groups are held accountable for group work and individual work.
- ❑ Instructional group composition is varied (e.g., race, gender, ability, and age) most of the time to best accomplish the goals of the lesson.

👍 *Quality Classroom Indicators^{1,2,3}*

- ❑ Staff create opportunities to promote communication with peers.
- ❑ Staff use visual cues to prompt students.
- ❑ Schedule and activities reflect a variety of learning formats for each student, and an appropriate distribution of curriculum for the age, level, and individual needs of students in the classroom.
- ❑ Positive feedback is provided to students frequently and at a rate that exceeds corrective feedback.
- ❑ Teacher uses modeling and praise to support positive behavior of students.

☆ *Evidence-Based Practice Resources*

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Click a resource title below to view		
Tip sheet	Structured Academic Partners: An Overview	
Tip sheet	Peer-Based Intervention and Autism Spectrum Disorders	
Tip sheet	Task Analyses: An Overview	
Tip sheet	Incorporating Social and Personal Competencies Into Classroom Instruction and Educator Effectiveness	
Article	Indiana Resource Center for Autism Group Work in a General Education Classroom for Students with ASD	
TRIAD course	Building Social Connections in Schools	Login required
TRIAD course	Task Analysis	Login required
TRIAD course	Social and Personal Competency Modules	Login required
TRIAD webinar	Visual Supports Webinar	Login required

To access TRIAD courses and webinars, first [register](#) for a free account. Learn more [here](#).

↘ Teacher Knowledge of Students

🎯 *At Expectations (3)*

- ❑ Teacher practices display understanding of some students' anticipated learning difficulties.
- ❑ Teacher practices sometimes incorporate student interests and cultural heritage.
- ❑ Teacher sometimes provides differentiated instructional methods and content to ensure students have the opportunity to master what is being taught.

👍 *Quality Classroom Indicators*^{1,2,3}

- ❑ Visual structure and supports are appropriate for students' level of symbolic functioning and are used throughout the day.
- ❑ Reinforcement is based on individual student preferences.
- ❑ Schedule and activities reflect a variety of learning formats for each student, and an appropriate distribution of curriculum for the age, level, and individual needs of students in the classroom.
- ❑ Instructional materials are differentiated based on student need/ability.
- ❑ Activities build students' language skills and staff encourage appropriate use of language to comment, ask and answer questions.

☆ *Evidence-Based Practice Resources*

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Click a resource title below to view		
Tip sheet	Neurodiversity in School Age Populations	
Tip sheet	Evidence-Based Practices for Autistic Students	
TRIAD course	Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder	Login required
TRIAD course	Neurodiversity in School Age Populations	Login required
TRIAD course	Building Rapport: A Reinforcement-Based Approach	Login required
TRIAD course	Administrators: Supporting Teachers of Autistic Students	Login required
Webinar	KTASN: Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder	
Webinar	KTASN: Preparing for your New Student with Autism	

To access TRIAD courses and webinars, first [register](#) for a free account. Learn more [here](#).

References

1. New York State Education Department (2001). Autism program quality indicators: A self-review and quality improvement guide for schools and programs serving students with autism spectrum disorders. Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities.
2. Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (n.d.). Autism observation instrument for general education classrooms. University of South Florida.
3. Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (n.d.). Autism checklist: Self-contained classroom. University of South Florida.