



# Social Play & Engagement

In this webinar you will:

- Implement strategies to increase engagement and identify child's interests
- Create environments that set up for successful play
- Teach a variety of foundational social communication skills

## Jenny Baggett

Jenny Baggett is an educational consultant at the Treatment and Research Institute for Autism Spectrum Disorders (TRIAD). She specializes in applied behavior analysis and caregiver coaching for autistic individuals and their families. She hosts webinars that cover a variety of topics related to best practices in early intervention that reach hundreds of providers in Tennessee each year. Jenny is a strong believer that all children can learn skills that help them advocate for themselves, keep themselves safe, and lead them down a path for a fulfilling life. She is passionate about empowering caregivers to teach their children the skills they need to do this. In her personal life, she enjoys baking and traveling with her husband and two young children.



## Amanda Spiess



Amanda Spiess earned her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Middle Tennessee State University in 2008. Amanda worked in the early childhood setting for 4 years before transitioning into a therapist role, providing ABA services within clinic and home settings to children diagnosed with Autism. In 2016 Amanda enrolled at Arizona State University online to pursue coursework in applied behavior analysis and curriculum instruction. Amanda graduated her master's program in 2017 and is now a Licensed Board Certified Behavior Analyst. Amanda has worked at TRIAD for 9 years as a part of the early intervention team. In this role Amanda is able to support parents and early interventionists by coaching them in evidence-based practices that support the child and family. Amanda truly enjoys being a team member on the first services family receive through TEIS. In her free time Amanda enjoys running, reading and spending time with her family.

## What is engagement?

Engagement is two or more people attending to or interacting with each other at the same time

*Dyadic*: two or more people

*Triadic*: engagement occurs around play or other routines

It looks like:

Skills we teach while "Playing"

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### Engagement & Autism

#### Social Communication

- Paying attention to others
- Taking turns
- Imitating others
- Using social smiles
- Using gestures and language

#### Focused Interests & Repetitive Behaviors

- May want something done the same way
- May have \_\_\_\_\_ interest for reinforcement
- Sensory preferences or avoidances

## ABCs of Engagement

Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence
Event that occurs _____ a behavior	Anything that the child does that can be _____	What happens immediately _____ the behavior

Reinforcement \_\_\_\_\_ the likelihood that the child \_\_\_\_\_  
do the behavior again under similar circumstances

## Building Engagement

1. Positioning/Spotlighting
2. Incorporate interests
3. Be a fun play partner
4. Keeper of good things
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Reduce demands
7. Imitate
8. Be helpful
9. Pause
10. \_\_\_\_\_



## Sensory social routines (SSR)

Sensory social routine is when two people are engaged in the same activity with ongoing back and forth sensory and social interaction

### Emerging

- Child may not play or act a role in the routine, even if he or she likes it
- Child may be interested in the routine but is unsure about what is going to happen
- Caregiver has only done the routine a few times before

### Established

- Child knows what will happen during this routine
- Looks expectantly at caregiver
- Captures and keeps child's attention
- Child and caregiver know what the most exciting part of the routine is

### Steps to teach SSR

1. Find the \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ SSR: Continue same routine  
Established SSR: Move to step 3
3. Back and \_\_\_\_\_
4. Opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_

#### Word Bank

Communicate

Emerging

Smile

Forth

## Teaching peek-a-boo

### Visit 1 Observation

Caregiver behaviors/strategies:

Child behaviors:

What went well?

What can you coach on?

### Visit 2 Observation

What's different?

What strategies did you observe this caregiver use?

### Visit 3 Observation

Next step?




## Joint attention & Object play

Set up home for play:

1. Set up the need to communicate
2. Set up a defined play space
3. Limit distractions
4. Rotate toys

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### Structuring Joint Routines

	<p><b>Set up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choices</li> <li>• Enticement</li> <li>• Toys with multiple pieces</li> <li>• Objects with multi-function</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Theme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take turns doing actions</li> <li>• Name objects and actions</li> <li>• Sound effects</li> <li>• Songs and finger play</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Variation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New materials</li> <li>• New actions</li> <li>• More steps</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Closing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child/adult boredom</li> <li>• Clean up</li> <li>• Model phrase "all done"</li> </ul>

## Imitation & Turn Taking

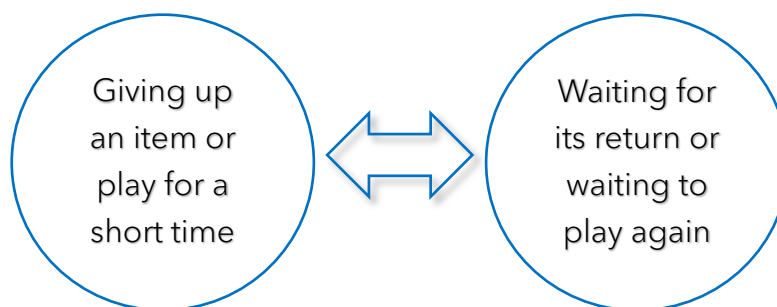
**Imitation** is the child's ability to mirror, \_\_\_\_\_, and practice the action of others

Important because:

1. Children learn by watching
2. Encourages the child to engage with caregiver
3. Helps increase spontaneous language, vocalizations ,engagement, and attention

Imitation video observation

**Turn taking** is two communicative partners engaging in repetitive back and forth exchanges.



Teach turn taking...

- ❖ Use language paired with gestures
- ❖ Keep turn short
- ❖ Wait for child to communicate they want a turn
- ❖ Return material or item





## Case study – Craig

Craig is a 2.5 year old autistic boy. His parents report that they would like for him to allow them to play with him and with his toys more. During the day, he likes to build with magnetic tiles, sit and scoot on riding toy in the house, and ride his bike outside. Craig's parents describe his communication as limited. When he needs help or wants something, he will try and get it himself, he will put his body in proximity of the item and cry or hand-lead caregivers to what he wants. Currently, Craig will play independently but when a parent sits down to play with him, he gets up and moves his toys to another location.

1. What can the child currently do?
2. What does he like?
3. What skill(s) would you teach next?
4. What strategy might you use?
5. How might you set this up in an ABC framework?

Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence

6. What type of prompting might be helpful when teaching this skill?

## Case study – Ruby

Ruby is a 3-year-old autistic girl. Ruby can communicate by using phrases and can imitate most words or gestures that are modeled for her when she needs help. Ruby likes doing things with her mom. After mom picks her up from school, they have about 2 hours together before bed. During this time, mom talks to Ruby, reads books to her, or gets her engaged in meal prep. On weekends, they're out in the community often. When mom has people over or when she's on the phone, Ruby constantly engages in dangerous behavior. Thus, mom must stop what she's doing to attend to Ruby. Mom reports that she can't ever have a minute alone and is very overwhelmed.

1. What can the child currently do?
2. What does she like?
3. What skill(s) would you teach next?
4. What strategy might you use?
5. How might you set this up in an ABC framework?

Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence

6. What type of prompting might be helpful when teaching this skill?

## Case study – Kyle

Kyle is a 2-year-old autistic boy. He has just learned how to walk while holding up to a steady object. He loves to play peek-a-boo with mom and really enjoys when mom sing songs to him, but it is all caregiver-led. He laughs and makes eye contact during these songs but shifts his attention to something else when mom stops. Mom describes his attention as fleeting, and she never knows what he wants. He currently communicates by crawling to areas where he wants something or needs help. Mom also describes him as a “pretty easy-going kid” and is usually satisfied with whatever they give him. She would like to increase his engagement with her and get him involved in the interaction.

1. What can the child currently do?
2. What does he like?
3. What skill(s) would you teach next?
4. What strategy might you use?
5. How might you set this up in an ABC framework?

Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence

6. What type of prompting might be helpful when teaching this skill?



# Appendices

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## TRIAD's Early Intervention Basic Online Training Module Engagement & Social Play Series Table of Contents



### Engagement I: What It Is and Why It's Important

#### Session Objectives

- \* Understand what engagement means in the context of interactions with young children
- \* Understand why building engagement is foundational to teaching children new skills



### Engagement II: Building Engagement with your Child

#### Session Objectives

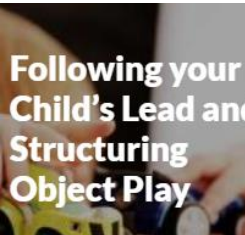
- \* Parent will learn strategies to help build their child's ability to engage with them during activities and routines



### Songs, Social Routines, and Communication During Play

#### Session Objectives

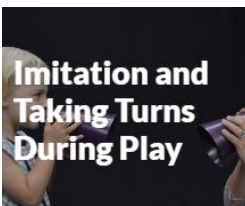
- \* Find an activity your child likes
- \* Build a routine with an enjoyable activity
- \* Learn ways to work on communication during run routines



### Following your Child's Lead and Structuring Object Play

#### Session Objectives

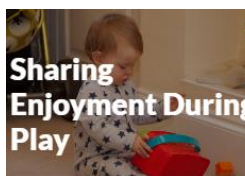
- \* Identify your child's interests
- \* Follow your child's lead in play by narrating, helping, and imitating your child
- \* Organize play by setting up, offering choices, and closing out activities
- \* Set up a theme for play and then develop variations



### Imitation and Taking Turns During Play

#### Session Objectives

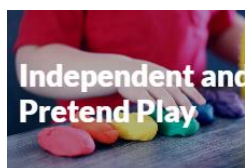
- \* Use strategies to teach imitation of sounds and actions in
  - o Sensory social routines
  - o Joint activity routines
- \* Identify opportunities for balanced turns



### Sharing Enjoyment During Play

#### Session Objectives

- \* Understand what is joint attention and why it is important
- \* Teach joint attention skills by guiding your child to give, show, and point to items
- \* Make sharing attention rewarding for you and your child



### Independent and Pretend Play

#### Session Objectives

- \* Understand the importance of teaching children to play independently
- \* Use the ABCs to set-up opportunities for independent play
- \* Increase your child's motivation to play independently
- \* Understand the importance of pretend play
- \* Incorporate pretend play within daily routines

## Observing Engagement

In which activities does my child currently engage with me?

- Blocks/ legos
- Cars and trains
- Playdoh
- Songs and social games
- Puzzles
- Books
- Art materials
- Pretend play routines
- Games with rules
- Outdoor play
- Sensory play (balloons, bubbles, sand, water)
- Other:

What behaviors let me know he is engaged with me?

- Stays in proximity when I join
- Looks at me
- Smiles at me
- Gives and takes pieces
- Imitates my actions
- Lets me help him
- Other:



In which routines does my child currently engage with me?

- Bath
- Snack and mealtime
- Hand washing
- Brushing teeth
- Getting dressed
- Other:

What behaviors let me know he is engaged with me?

- Stays in proximity without help
- Looks at me
- Smiles at me
- Makes choices when offered
- Tries to complete steps in the routine
- Lets me help him
- Other:



## Building Engagement

What activities is my child current interested in?

How can I get at eye level when I join in?

What can I do to join in without placing demands?

What can I narrate?

What can I imitate?

How can I be helpful?

How can I be the keeper of good things?

How will I know when my child is engaged with me?

When he \_\_\_\_\_



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What routines will my child engage in?

- Bath
- Snack
- Book reading
- Bedtime
- Washing hands
- Brushing teeth
- Other:

What meaningful turns could I give my child during these routines?

- Learn to complete a step independently
  - E.g. dry hands
- Learn to follow a direction
  - E.g. turn the page
- Learn to make a choice
  - E.g. Which snack do you want?



## Sensory Social Routines

### Find the smile

- Join your child when he/she is not engaged in anything
- Repeat short games/songs two or three times and then pause
- Pause before the big event

### Develop back and forth routine

- How will my child participate?
- Keep your turn short
- Avoid “entertaining” your child
- Look expectantly and wait for some action or sound

### Incorporate Opportunities for Communication

- Narrate and give it a “name”
- Pause and wait for cues to continue
- Position yourself face-to-face
- Watch for signs to end the game

### Build a Repertoire

- Find variety of times during the day to build in SSRs
- Once it feels repetitive, add some variation
  - New verse, sound effect, step to routine, props, another person



Name SSR:	Current Communication:	Caregiver goal:	Child goal:

## Sensory Social Routines (SSR)

Increase your child's smiles and laughter during face-to-face social games, songs, and social exchanges. The more FUN your child is having, the longer they are attending to and interacting with you, and the more learning opportunities you can provide.

We learn communication, language, object use, imitation, play, friendship and emotional intimacy through daily family life. Let's increase social- communication learning!



### Possible SSRs

- Songs with motions
- Lotion or shaving cream
- Raspberries on your child's feet, hands or belly
- Chase or "I'm gonna get you"



### Learning Opportunities Through SSR's

Caregiver goal: Once an SSR has been established, pause just before the most exciting part of the routine, and wait to see how your child responds.

Child goal: When the caregiver pauses during the routine, the child will increase the use of one of the following skills to cue the caregiver to continue:

Skill	Explanation	Examples
Gestures	Gestural imitation can lead to verbal imitation	"Rolling arms" During Wheels on the Bus "Open mouth" in anticipation of raspberries "Rub arm/hand" during or after bath lotion routine "Extending arms" in anticipation of "Get you" game
Eye contact	WAIT on your child and continue the routine when he/she provides you with quick eye contact.	When you have caught your child after one round of chase, back up from them and WAIT for a quick instance of eye contact and immediately chase them again.
Verbal communication	Increase your child's opportunities to use verbal language.	Pause before saying "Round and Round" during Wheels on the Bus Give a choice "Lotion on hands or feet?" Narrate as you go with simple language "Mary's toes" (Child's name+ body part getting raspberries)
Increase engagement	Increasing your child's engagement for longer periods of time increases the amount of possible learning opportunities.	A first step for your child may be to tolerate songs and new routines. Do the routine 1 or 2 times and come back to it later on in the day. Start with 1 verse of Wheels on the Bus and increase weekly by adding a new verse. (Babies "Wa Wa Wa," Mommies "Sh Sh Sh")

## Setting Up Your Home for Play

### Why is play important?

Setting up your home for play will set your child up for success by increasing learning opportunities during object play with a play partner as well as independent play time. Strategically arranging their toys will increase skills in social communication, cognition and joint attention.

### Play is a great way to:

- Build new skills through repetition (i.e., by trying again and again to complete a puzzle, putting things in and take them out of containers, drawing a circle, etc.)
- Practice skills that have already been mastered and find pleasure in “showing their skills.”
- Find creative new ways to play with toys and other objects.

### Set Up the Need to Communicate:

- Using items your child cannot activate/open without you (i.e. spin tops, musical instruments, closed containers or balloons, etc.)
- Providing small amounts of food or drinks during snack or meal time to teach your child to request more by handing you their bowl, cup, or the food/drink container and verbally requesting the food or drink by labeling it.
- Placing favorite toys or objects into containers and bags to teach your child to request a play item by handing you the bag, pointing to the item or verbally requesting the item.

### Set up a Defined Play Space





- This space should have physical boundaries to keep your child close to you. If you only have an open space, try rearranging furniture to make a smaller, more intimate space.
- Organize toys on a low shelf so your child can independently chose a toy and put it away when they are finished.
- Place pieces to toys in containers, bins, or baskets and multiple pieces in baggies to access all of the items to a play activity in one trip.

### Limit Distractions

- Increase your child’s attention to you by limiting sounds, smells, sights, and other distracting sensations in the space.
- Do not have the TV on or food available (if it’s not the play theme) and separate the play area from a space people need to walk through.
- Make sure to have only a few toys available at a time. The more things there are in the space, the more distractions there are for your child.




### Rotate Toys

- Separate your child’s toys into several groups. Have only one group of toys available at a time.
- When your child becomes uninterested in the group of toys, it is time to rotate to the next group.

Structuring Joint Routines	Examples	Examples in Session	Homework
<p>1. Set up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize for choices</li> <li>• Limit number of choices</li> <li>• Wait for your child to initiate</li> <li>• Entice</li> <li>• Choose objects with several pieces or with ability to do different things</li> </ul>			
<p>2. Theme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take turns doing an action</li> <li>• Imitate your child's actions</li> <li>• Entice and demonstrate</li> <li>• Name objects and actions</li> <li>• Make sound effects</li> <li>• Position face to face</li> <li>• Have identical objects or take a quick turn</li> <li>• Try songs and finger plays (i.e. "Daddy Finger" or "Where is Thumbkin?")</li> </ul>			
<p>3. Variation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure your routine is established</li> <li>• Add new materials</li> <li>• Add new actions</li> <li>• Add more steps to the theme</li> </ul>			
<p>4. Closing (organize for success):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You or your child is getting bored</li> <li>• Have a container ready</li> <li>• Make cleaning up successful</li> <li>• Model the phrase "all done"</li> <li>• After cleaning, transition to new activity</li> <li>• If resistance, entice to another object and then clean up</li> </ul>			

## A-B-C Homework Sheet

### Teaching Sharing Attention




	<b>Antecedents</b> Opportunities to Teach	<b>Behavior</b> Skill	<b>Consequences</b> Caregiver Response
<b>Reinforcement Example</b> <b>(Teaching Show)</b>	Child is holding a cat puppet Parent: <i>"Show me cat"</i>  	Child holds out cat puppet	<b>Let your child keep hold of the puppet.</b>  Parent: "Wow, what a cool cat puppet" (While admiring the item)
<b>Prompting Example</b>	Child is holding a cat puppet Parent: <i>"Show me cat"</i>  	Child continues to holds on to cat puppet	Parent: <i>"Show me cat puppet"</i> (while holding out your hand and guiding child's arms forward, but not taking it) "Wow, what a cool cat puppet!"
<b>Non - Example</b>  <b>When teaching "show me" avoid taking the object from your child.</b>	Child is holding a cat puppet Parent: <i>"Show me cat"</i>  	Child holds out cat puppet	Parent takes cat puppet from child's hand

## A-B-C Homework Sheet Teaching Sharing Attention

<b>Play Routine</b>			
	<b>Antecedents</b> Opportunities to Teach	<b>Behavior</b> Skill	<b>Consequences</b> Caregiver Response
<b>Reinforcement Example 1</b>			
<b>Prompting Example 1</b>			
<b>Other Daily Routine</b>			
<b>Reinforcement Example 2</b>			
<b>Prompting Example 2</b>			

## A-B-C Homework Sheet

### Teaching Imitation

	<b>Antecedents</b> Opportunities to Teach	<b>Behavior</b> Skill	<b>Consequences</b> Caregiver Response
<b>Reinforcement Example</b>	Parent: <i>Rolls car down ramp</i> 	Child: <i>Rolls car down ramp</i>	Parent gives child another car and allows the child the opportunity to choose the next action
<b>Prompting Example</b>	Parent: <i>Rolls car down ramp</i> 	Child: <i>Holds car in hand</i>	Parent models rolling car again then takes child's hand and prompts him to roll the car and praises child "Yay, you rolled the car!"
<b>Punishing Example</b>	Parent: <i>Rolls car down ramp</i> 	Child: <i>Rolls car down ramp</i>	Parent takes car and puts gas in car



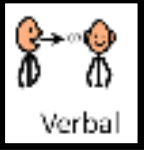




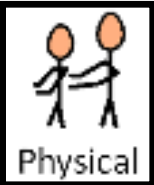
## A-B-C Homework Sheet Teaching Imitation

Play Routine			
	Antecedents Opportunities to Teach	Behavior Skill	Consequences Caregiver Response
<b>Reinforcement Example 1</b>			
<b>Prompting Example 1</b>			
Other Daily Routine			
<b>Reinforcement Example 2</b>			
<b>Prompting Example 2</b>			

## Prompting

A prompt is a cue we give a child to help him or her provide a desired response for behavior. Prompts are provided to **promote** desired behaviors and responses while **preventing and correcting** undesired behaviors and incorrect responses. Prompts can be utilized to clearly indicate to the child what response or behavior is expected, to ensure his or her success, and reduce the child's overall frustration level.

### Types of Prompts (listed from least to most intrusive)

 <p>Verbal</p>	<p>Verbal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilizing words or sounds to cue or model the desired response or behavior             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Example: when a child reaches for a cookie, prompt him or her to say "cookie" (just provide the verbal prompt, "cookie," and not, "say cookie")</li> </ul> </li> <li>Verbal prompts are the most difficult to fade</li> </ul>
 <p>Modeling</p>	<p>Modeling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrating all or part of the desired behavior so the child will imitate the desired response or behavior             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Example: turn a key (the prompt for the child to perform the same task)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Can be generalized to the natural environment by teaching him or her to utilize peers as models</li> </ul>
 <p>Visual</p>	<p>Visual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presenting visual cues or models (e.g., written word, photographs, line drawings, etc...) that highlight key information about the desired response or behavior             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Example: Show the child a picture card of "sit" as a prompt for him or her to sit down</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p>Positional</p>	<p>Positional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positioning the correct response in a way that the child is more likely choose it (often used in direct instruction situations)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Example: You say "Touch car," since the car is closer to the child than any of the other objects; he/she is more likely to focus on it and choose it</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p>Gestural</p>	<p>Gestural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilizing facial expressions, physical movements, or eye gaze to cue the child to perform the desired response or behavior             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Example: point to the light switch to cue the child to turn out the light</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p>Physical</p>	<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Touching the child or moving his or her body to achieve the desired response or behavior             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Example: Use hand over hand to assist the child to dry hands with a paper towel</li> </ul> </li> <li>Physical prompts are the easiest to fade</li> </ul>

# How to Watch TRIAD Early Intervention Brief Online Training Sessions (BOTS)

## STEP 1: REGISTER

Go to [triad.vkclearning.org](http://triad.vkclearning.org)

Create an account by clicking on “Register”

Fill out the form and select “TRIAD” under “Choose the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Division for Course Access”

You will receive an email for verification. Once you do, click the link to verify your account.

## STEP 2: LOGIN

① Login at [triad.vkclearning.org](http://triad.vkclearning.org)

② Click on “Early Intervention Services”

③ Click on the training you’d like to view.  
» Session One applies to Challenging Behavior, Communication, and Social Play. Start there for those curricula.

④ Click the right arrow to launch

Need help? Read about frequently asked questions at [triad.vumc.org/bot-faq](http://triad.vumc.org/bot-faq).

Contact [morgan.l.burnett.1@vumc.org](mailto:morgan.l.burnett.1@vumc.org) with questions.

