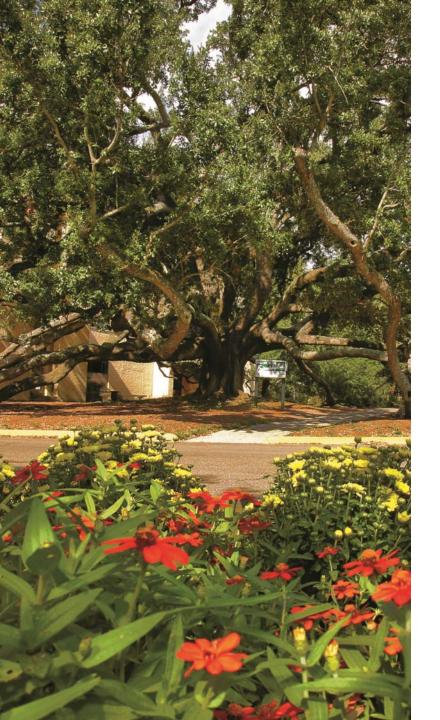# The University of Southern Mississippi-Gulf Coast Autism Project: A Statewide Resource for System Change

Mississippi Speech-Language Hearing Association
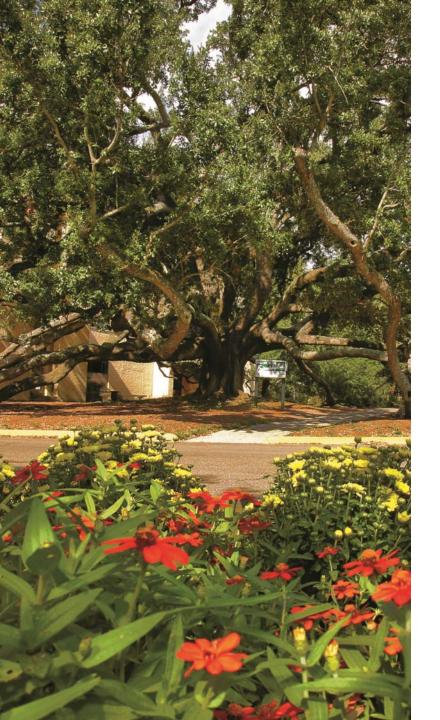2012 Conference
Jackson, MS
March 30, 2012

THE UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI.

Training Overview

1. Welcome and Trainer introduction

2. Purpose of today's presentation

3. Introduction to Autism

4. The USMGC Autism Project

5. Foundational Elements of a School-Based Program

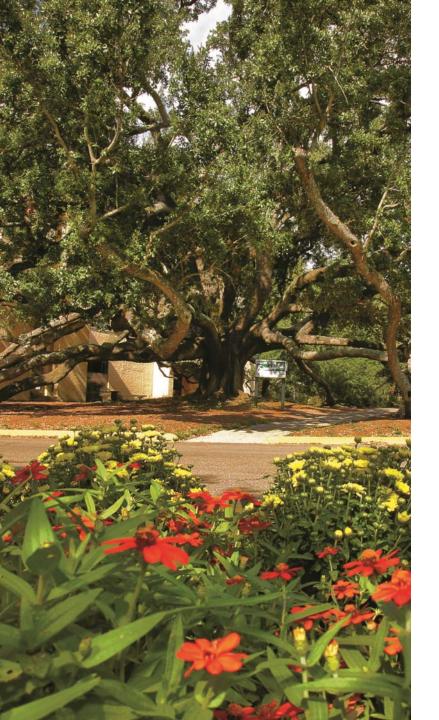6. Language, Communication, and Literacy

7. Information You Can Use Tomorrow

Welcome and Trainer Introduction

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Purpose of Today's Presentation

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Introduction to Autism

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Autism: A Brief History

1. 1943 - First attempt at defining the disorder by Dr. Leo Kanner

2. 1980 – Autism is defined for the first time in the DSM-III

3. 1990 – Autism becomes a separate category of disability in the IDEA

4. 2013 - New definition for the disorder in the DSM-V?
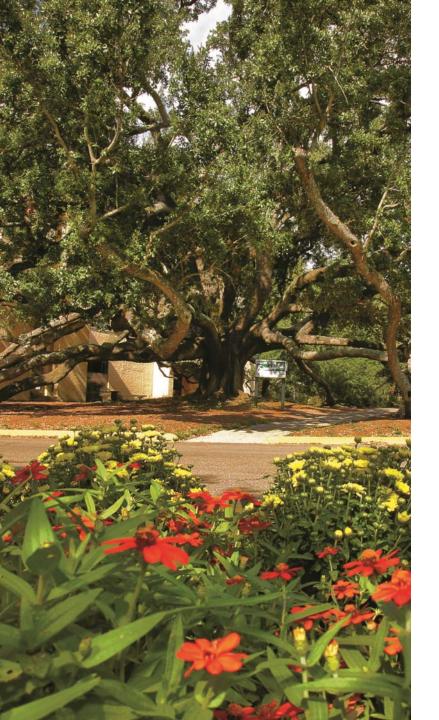
Autism's Behavioral Markers

1. A clinical diagnosis of Autism, as well as a special education eligibility determination in the category of Autism, is made based upon (a) the presence and (b) interpretation of behavioral markers that constitute what have been referred to as Autism's "triad of impairments"

    a. Qualitative impairments in social interaction skills
    b. Qualitative impairments in communication skills
    c. Restricted behavioral repertoire

Five Distinguishing Features

1. Social interaction

2. Communication skills

3. Restricted, repetitive behavioral repertoire and/or areas of interest

4. Sensory processing
   a. Hypersensitivities
   b. Hyposensitivities

5. Cognitive processing
   a. Theory of Mind
   b. Weak central coherence
   c. Executive functioning

Prevalence

1. CDC reports a prevalence rate of 1:110
   a. 1:70 boys
   b. 1:340 girls

2. American Psychiatric Association = 1:91

3. A recent study conducted in South Korea reported a prevalence rate of 1:38

4. Most recent MDE data
   a. 2,160 out of 459,000 students
   b. 1:317
   c. A 368% increase in the past decade?

The USMGC Autism Project

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USMGC Autism Project Elements

1. Funded by the Mississippi Department of Education- Office of Special Education

2. Mission Statement = "Autism in the Schools"

3. USMGC Autism Demonstration School housed at Long Beach Middle School

    a. Direct services to select students with autism

    b. Training

USMGC Autism Project Staff

1. Full-Time Staff

2. Part-Time Staff

3. USM Support Personnel; Others

Autism's "Triad of Impairments" and Teacher/Related Services Collaboration

1. Special education teacher/Speech language pathologist focus

2. Mississippi State Policies allow for SLP as a related service

USMGC Autism Project:
Select Underlying Principles

1. Safety

2. Autism focus and specialization

3. Autism in the schools

4. Value of the professional

5. Give away knowledge

6. Quality takes time

USMGC Autism Project: Foundational Elements

1. Mississippi State Policies Regarding Children With Disabilities

2. Triad of Impairments/Characteristics of Thinking and Learning

3. Applied Behavior Analysis

4. Positive Behavior Support

5. Professional Literature/Evidence-Based Interventions

Student Intake Process

1. On-site observation of the student

2. Classroom and Evaluation Screener

3. Parent and Teacher interview

4. Parent and School personnel tour of the Autism Demonstration School

5. IEP review

6. IEP Team meeting

2011-2012 Trainings

1. Four regional trainings

2. Mississippi Coastal Conference, Transition Conference, Parent Conference

3. On-site trainings at the USMGC Autism Demonstration School
   a. Parents of enrolled students
   b. School requests
   c. Two-day, Hands-on
   d. Other (USM Graduate Class)

"System Change"

1. Teacher is the key (See National Research Council (2001) report, "Educating Children With Autism")

2. Teachers learn by doing

3. Adult Instructors = The tools to get the job done

4. Building Mississippi's internal capacity

The USMGC Autism Project
Located at Long Beach Middle School

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The USMGC Autism Demonstration School
Long Beach Middle School, D Hall

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The USMGC Autism Demonstration School
Long Beach Middle School, D Hall

LBMS, D Hall, Room 10:
Main Office

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LBMS, D Hall, Room 10:
Main Office

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LBMS, D Hall, Rooms 8 & 6:
Demonstration Classrooms

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LBMS, D Hall, Rooms 8 & 6: Demonstration Classrooms

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LBMS, D Hall, Rooms 8 & 6:
Demonstration Classrooms

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LBMS, D Hall:
Boys' Restroom

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LBMS, D Hall:
Boys' Restroom
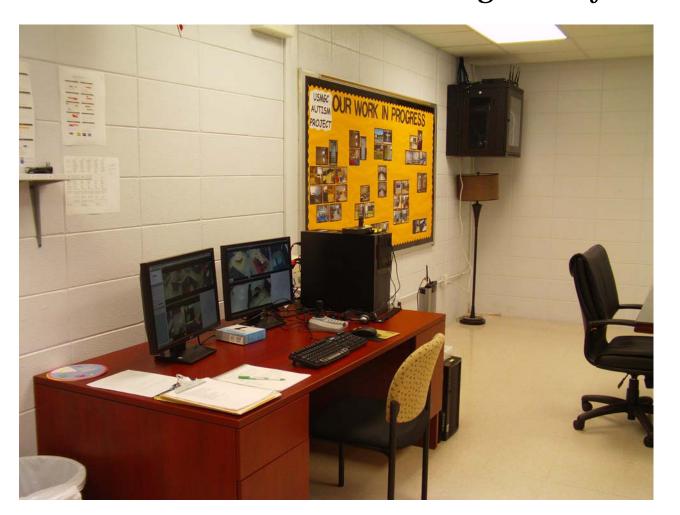

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GULF COAST

LBMS, D Hall, Room 7:
Mock Classroom

LBMS, D Hall, Room 9:
Extended Classroom/Training Facility

LBMS, D Hall, Room 9:
Extended Classroom/Training Facility

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LBMS, D Hall, Room 11:
Workroom

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LBMS, D Hall, Room 11: Workroom

Outdoor Play Area

Outdoor Play Area

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Lodging:
Holiday Inn Express, Long Beach

Fundamental Features of Autism and School-Based Interventions

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Basic Programming Issues

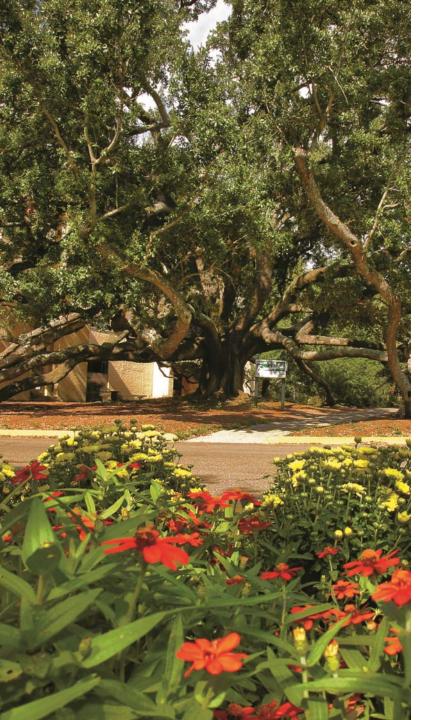1. Curriculum, Instructional materials, and Instructional strategies

2. Relationship between curriculum and environmental arrangement

3. Characteristics of thinking and learning/ Fundamental features of Autism

Characteristics of Thinking and Learning

1. The fundamental features of Autism

2. Most of these features are not unique to Autism

3. What distinguishes Autism are the number, severity, combination, and interactions of problems, which result in significant functional impairments. Autism is the composite of the deficits, not any one characteristic.

4. Addressing these features enables you to establish a foundation for your programming efforts on behalf of students with autism

Characteristics of Thinking and Learning

1. Attachment to routines
2. Distractability
3. Relative weakness in learning from models
4. Strong impulses, Intense personal interests
5. Indifference to social reinforcers
6. Visual versus auditory learning
7. Prompt dependency
8. Generalization
9. Concrete versus abstract thinking
10. Sensory differences
11. Time
12. Organization and Sequencing

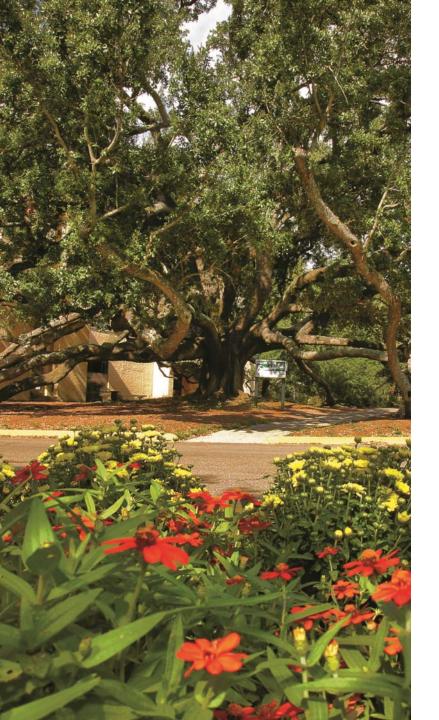# Overview of Language, Communication, and Literacy

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Language, Communication, and Literacy

1. Key terms defined
2. Modes of Expression
3. Representational strategies within Modes of Expression
4. Representational strategies for receptive language
5. Circles of Communication Partners
6. Visual immersion program
7. Repair strategies
8. Conventional literacy
9. Pragmatics

Information You Can Use Tomorrow

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SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI.

Thank You for Attending!

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