



Incentives for Change: Motivating People with Autism Spectrum Disorders to Learn and Gain Independence

Lara Delmolino, Sandra L., Ph.D. Harris

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As many parents and teachers know, people with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) can be difficult to motivate, especially when asked to learn something new. Finding the right incentives to support learning is one of the crucial first steps in teaching them new skills. Written by two autism specialists with nearly 50 years combined experience, 'Incentives for Change' explores systems for determining what incentives children and adults with ASD will find rewarding, and ways to use motivation as a tool to affect their learning and behaviour. This easy-to-follow guide explains a variety of motivational methods and systems, including how to: Identify potential incentives; Transition from concrete to intangible incentives; Use reinforcements or rewards to increase motivation; Teach a child to express what he wants; Understand 'establishing operation' and other concepts that affect motivation; Motivate children with ASD to make choices; Implement token systems to enable children to delay reinforcement; Encourage independence and self-management skills. What skills and behaviours can be taught using the motivational techniques presented in this book? Parents and teachers will find methods for teaching a wide variety of social skills, such as interacting playfully with others and making eye contact, and life skills such as getting dressed and doing chores. These techniques can also help students with ASD learn academic subjects in school and control interfering behaviours like hand flapping or rocking back and forth. This book contains many real-life case studies of families who are using motivational systems in a variety of situations to help their child learn and gain a greater measure of independence. When put to use, these systems can enhance learning opportunities for every person on the autism spectrum from the youngest to the oldest, and from the least to most receptive to change.

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