

Skill Area(s): Non-verbal language
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The Nonverbal Language Kit

Level: beginner, intermediate, advanced

Goal: to help children understand nonverbal language and how it is used for communication.

Materials needed: The Nonverbal Language Kit, Carolyn LoGiudice and Margaret Warner (You can check this out from the Autism Resource Specialist or find it on-line through LinguiSystems. Developmental age 7-16.

Activity:

This kit is ready to pick up and use. It contains the instructor's manual (contains ideas and lessons for an array of nonverbal social skills), 100 cards illustrating facial expressions, gestures, and postures, and a game called Face It. The facial expression cards are great because they really focus in on the important features of the face that we look at when determining other's facial expressions. These are the eyes and forehead, the nose and cheeks, and the mouth and chin. On the back of each card it lists synonyms that go with the feeling and a description of the facial expression. They also have words that people might be saying when they feel that way. For example: on the back of the happy card it says, "Great, they liked my speech!" and "I finally got my braces off." The cards feature 4 different children so they are great for boys and girls.

The instructor's manual is broken up into 7 chapters.

1. Nonverbal Language
2. Eye Contact
3. Facial Expressions
4. Gestures and Postures
5. Other Nonverbal Factors
6. Assessment
7. Nonverbal Language Training

It is best to scan through these chapters because they contain a lot of useful information that may affect the way you choose to help students learn these skills. You can either use this kit alone or as a supplement to another activity or lesson you have already planned. Simply look up the skill you want to work on and follow the ideas it gives you. The kit follows a nice progression of the nonverbal skills. But you can pick and choose, as you need. Another nice feature about this kit is that it contains assessment sheets. These are great to record baseline information and then information later on to show progress. You can share them with the students and parents to help them see even the smallest gains.