One Piece of the Puzzle

“Helping you, help your child complete their puzzle of life.”

Kayla Bhikam, Michelle Bungay, Michele Colafranceschi, Stephanie Mucha & Amanda Watson
What is the Issue?

• There are not enough resources and programs available for parents of children with autism to learn strategies to further educate and support their child
Why is it Important?

• Parents of children with autism who have recently been diagnosed may have a lack of confidence in their parenting styles resulting in familial stress.

• Need for consistent education for children with autism to help them progress in school and develop life success.

• Children with autism who have achieved school success are more likely to be contributing members of society.
What is it the Context?

• Many programs stop at the age of 5 for children with autism
• Yearly, more children have been diagnosed with autism
• 1/88 children are diagnosed with autism in Canada (Statistics Canada)
The Program

• One Piece of the Puzzle

• Mission Statement: to train and support parents of children who are 4 to 9 years old living with autism, on how to educate and interact with their child
Objectives

1. To develop and deliver workshops that will cover a range of topics that are important and relevant to families

2. The parents will increase confidence in their parenting styles by learning new teaching strategies within 6 months
Objectives

3. The children will further develop their lifelong learning abilities and gain school success through individual and collective participation in all aspects of the program.

4. The children will grow to their full potential and be contributing members of society, ultimately decreasing parental stress.
How is the Program Created?

Committee:

• 3 parents of children with autism who have recently been diagnosed
• 3 parents of children with autism who have been diagnosed for over five years
• 1 early childhood educator
• 1 special education teacher from Peel
• 1 behavioural therapist
• 1 psychologist
Funding

- Funded by donations - money, space, equipment, etc.
- Government grant
- $10 drop in fee per family
How is the Program Delivered?

Workshop:

• Held in a school located near Square One (donated space)
• Held by specialists who are parents of children with autism or a special education resource teacher
• Each family will receive their own specialist who focuses on the child's needs and development
What does the Program Cover?

• Focuses on teaching parents how to educate their children with autism at home through the incorporation of ABA and the Ontario Curriculum

• Creates consistent education from home to school life that helps children progress in both settings

• Promotes inclusion in society

• Helps with the integration of children with special needs into society
CURRICULUM DESIGN
Workshop Schedule

• Based on the Applied Behavioural Analysis approach
• Mondays and Thursdays - two hours each day
• Last Sunday of every month will be a four hour drop-in
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How does the Program meet Goals/Objectives?

The parents will increase their confidence in the parenting styles through attending our workshops through:

✓ The teacher demonstrating the activity with the child to the parent
✓ The parent having the opportunity to demonstrate the activity independently
✓ The parent and teacher communicating the results
Children will further develop their lifelong learning abilities and gain school success through individual and collective participation in all aspects of the program through:

✓ The children will having an opportunity to engage actively in one-on-one learning experiences, based on the school curriculum within the workshop

✓ The children having a safe welcoming space to increase social communication when engaging with other children/adults at the center

✓ The children learning skills such as social behaviour, self-regulation, cooperation, organization, cause vs. consequence and other lifelong learning strategies
Children will grow to their full potential and become contributing members of society, decreasing parental stress through:

✓ The parents being less concerned about their child’s ability to contribute to society

✓ Teachers demonstrating and instructing how to incorporate these lifelong learning strategies into everyday life

✓ The children having the ability to learn about career options they will have in the future
Example

Workshop: Teaching Behavioural Management

Objective: Teachers will instruct the parents on how to teach their child about different behaviours

AGE 5-9 teachers will provide parents with a behaviour wheel to give a visual representation to the child of different choices they could make when responding to conflict
Example Con’t

Step 1:
• Teacher will introduce the child to the good behaviours on the behaviour wheel
• The teacher will then read a story about a child using bad behaviours such as pushing
• The teacher will ask the child “what should have been done instead of pushing?”
• After the child answers, the teacher praises him for his efforts
Example Con’t

Step 2:
• The parent will individually try the activity with their child

Step 3:
• The specialist and parent will discuss how they felt about the activity, what went right, what went wrong, and other ways they can use it in their daily lives
EVALUATION DESIGN
Formative Evaluation

- **Timeline**: immediately prior to program implementation
- **Format**: interview (needs assessment)
- **Use**: to ensure committee members (stakeholders) voices have been heard and to address any concerns that might be missing from the program
Example Questions

• “How do you feel that your voice has contributed to the overall program?”
• “Do you believe that these workshops are relevant and important to families?”
Summative/Process Evaluation

- **Timeline:** during program implementation before parents enter a workshop, after parents have attended 5 workshops, and again after 20 workshops
- **Format:** survey (impact assessment)
- **Use:** to ensure our program is meeting its objectives (content validity)
Example Questions

• “What do you know about ABA?”
• “How confident do you feel in your parenting style?”
• “Would you recommend this program to someone who has a child with autism?”
Summative Evaluation

• **Timeline:** during the implementation of the program and after the child/family has left the program (grade 2, 6, 9, 12 and two years after the child has graduated)

• **Format:** longitudinal study of children who have participated in the program for at least one year

• **Use:** to determine the child’s school and life success, and a cost/benefit analysis to the community if the child has become a contributing member of society
Example Questions

School Success

• “How would you rate your child’s grades?”
• “Have you seen an improvement in your child’s grades?”
• “How would you rate your child’s social success?”
Example Questions

Life Success

• “Has your child moved on to college/university/jobs?”
• “Do you feel your child is a confident individual?”
• “How would you rate your child’s happiness?”
Note

**We also meet with other committee members once every two months to ensure every one’s needs are being met.**
CONCLUSION
Conclusion

• The Program is dedicated and designed to providing the means necessary to assist, educate, and support families and parents of children with autism

• The Issue at hand is that there is not enough resources available that give families and parents the ability to become knowledgeable on how to further support lifelong learning for their child with autism at home
Conclusion

How do we plan to fix this?
• With a collaborative program committee
• Professional and personal knowledge
• Effective foundations in which we build our workshops on

Our Ultimate Goal:
• To offer families and parents the opportunity to feel confident in their parenting and teaching strategies when supporting and educating their child with autism
Conclusion

Let’s review!
References
