

Cotting Consulting

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Focusing on Core Vocabulary:

● What is Core vocabulary?

Core vocabulary is a small set of simple words, in any language, that are used frequently and across contexts (Cross, Baker, Klotz & Badman, 1997).

Core words dominate everyday speech for toddlers (Banajee, 2003), preschoolers (Marvin, Beukelman & Bilyeu, 1994), adults (Balandin & Iacono, 1999), and seniors (Stuart & Beukelman, 1997).

● What about grammar?

“Several authors have suggested that children with ASD have difficulty with functors such as prepositions, conjunctions, and pronouns” (Eigsti et al., 2010).

Children with ASD are “found to have a more limited “syntactic repertoire,” relative to their MLU” (Scarborough, Rescorla, Tager-Flusberg, Fowler, & Sudhalter, 1991).

● How to use it?

- Attribute meaning whenever possible
- Model the use of CORE
- Repeat what students say and model how to ADD a LITTLE more
- Build context-specific receptive vocabulary
- Use CORE to talk about NEW concepts

● The Challenge:

- 1) How many ways can you protest using core vocabulary?
- 2) How many ways can you direct someone else using core vocabulary?
- 3) How many ways can you comment using core vocabulary?
- 4) What is the longest phrase or sentence you can make?

● The Take home

- Once you have completed the challenge, write down a select number of target words/phrases (shoot for about 8, given your child/students level) on your calendar.
- Once you have your list of target words/phrases, make a plan. Fill in the calendar with 1-2 words/phrases a week that you can focus on each week.
- Brainstorm how you will model this language!
- For example:
 - Target words: stop it, go here, want more, want stop, make it go, don't make it go
 - Week 1 - stop it (M, T, W) & want more (Th, F, S)
 - Activity: Stop it - playing: tickles, wind up toy
 - Activity: Want more - meal time: requesting favorite snack piece by piece