

*"A brilliant manual aiding in the meaningful inclusion and effective education of both children on the autism spectrum and persons supporting them in the school community."*

—Stephen Shore, nationally recognized expert on autism and author of *Beyond the Wall: Personal Experiences with Autism and Asperger Syndrome*

*An innovative new approach  
for successful inclusion of students  
with Autism Spectrum Disorders!*



# *Building Bridges*

**A Multidisciplinary Team Approach to Supporting Students with Asperger's Syndrome and Autism in the Classroom**

*A comprehensive, electronic resource for:*

Psychologists

Guidance Counselors

Speech-Language Pathologists

Classroom Teachers

Parents

Social Workers

Special Educators

Occupational Therapists

Teaching Assistants

Community Stakeholders

Developed and implemented by the Division of Special Education  
**Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Maryland**

Congratulations on your purchase of *Building Bridges, A Multidisciplinary Team Approach to Supporting Students with Asperger's Syndrome and Autism in the Classroom*.

The CD includes:

**Building Bridges Resource Guide pdf\***

**Building Bridges Binder**

- files for printing
  - print version (*with tabs*)
  - print version (*without tabs*)
  - tabs
  - cover and spine
- printing instructions

**F.A.D.S. Game**

**(Feel it • Act it Out • Draw it • Say it)**

*used in Social Skills Lesson Plans Section*

**Poster Templates**

- Kids with Autism
- Autism is...

**Reproducible Brochures**

- An Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder
- An Overview of Asperger's Syndrome

**Permission Slip Templates (MS Word)**

**Licensing Agreement**

\* *The Building Bridges Resource Guide requires Adobe Acrobat Reader. Download a free copy of the software at [www.adobe.com/reader](http://www.adobe.com/reader)*

A brief history of

# Building Bridges

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*Educators in the 21st century must prepare all students to participate and contribute to society as fully as possible. Accomplishing this requires extending opportunities for direct instruction about Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) to school staff and to students.*

*In 2005, Anne Arundel County Public Schools initiated the Building Bridges project based on:*

- a perceived lack of empathy in typical peers for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders*
- a perceived lack of sufficient knowledge and understanding among general educators and special educators about the unique needs of students with Autism Spectrum Disorders*
- a lack of abilities to connect with peers by students with Autism Spectrum Disorders*

*A multidisciplinary team of educators, psychologists, speech-language pathologists, and community advocates recognized the need for a guide that supports educators need to understand Autism Spectrum Disorders.*

*The team developed explicit instruction in social skills for students with ASD to achieve social competence and to develop successful interactions and relationships with their peers. These lessons can be implemented by various school personnel at all school levels.*

*Building Bridges focuses on ASD; however, the materials can be used for other disabilities. Feel free to personalize this guide to meet the needs of your individual school population.*

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*Building Bridges* is divided into nine sections:

## *Introduction*

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This section outlines the development of *Building Bridges*. Resources and recommendations used in the development of *Building Bridges* are also included in this section as well.

## *Reproducible Brochures*

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Two fully reproducible brochures describe the key characteristics and instructional recommendations to consider with students with Asperger's Syndrome (AS) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Distribution suggestions include teachers, school staff, bus drivers, substitute teachers, lunch monitors and community members

## *Meeting Language Needs*

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This section outlines the role of the Speech-Language Pathologist in social skills training. Speech-Language Pathologists provide expertise in the area of language and the identification of skills that require remediation.

## *Social Skills Lessons Plans*

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This section was written to target social skill needs, as well as the pragmatic needs of students with ASD. Targeted lessons were written to include visual cues, role playing and modeling, break cards, scripts for teachers and templates for future use. Each plan can be used for single implementation and individual use; however, a collaborative approach is recommended to build school capacity. Lesson plans include activities and materials lists.

## *Friendship/Empathy Training*

This section focuses on teaching peers, teachers and community members the importance of understanding learning differences. The lessons were written to address issues such as bullying, verbal abuse and feelings of social isolation. The development of peer friendships is also a focus of this section.

All three training lessons (elementary and secondary) may be implemented within the classroom by any school staff. Lessons include information about learning styles and needs and interactive activities such as role playing, scripting and hands-on experiences. The lessons are recommended for use early in the school year to promote healthy peer relationships. It is important to note some lessons require a brief video, not included with *Building Bridges*, but available from [www.coultervideo.com](http://www.coultervideo.com).

## *Social Skills Group Outlines—Clinical*

This section includes outlines for use in middle and high school settings. The outlines were written by social workers and school psychologists and carry an overtone of a clinical perspective. The outlines are recommended for a small group setting with the same students and facilitator each week.

Ten outlines focus on targeted skill development. The outlines include support for ASD although group participants should not be limited to students on the spectrum. The outlines address fading supports and have been written to address specific learning needs such as requiring sameness, routine, break opportunities, scripting, visual cues and building a safe environment. Skill acquisition may require repetition of frequent introduction and priming in order for generalization to occur in all settings.

## *Meeting Sensory Needs*

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This section offers many strategies to support the sensory needs of students with ASD in the school setting. The role of the Occupational Therapist is presented as well as examples of Sensory Diets.

## *Permission Slips*

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This section includes examples of permission slips that can be used by a facilitator to begin a social skills group, lunch bunch or other social peer group in elementary and secondary schools.

## *Additional Resources*

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Many resources are included in *Building Bridges* to support both student and family. Additionally, reading materials, videos, web sites, guidelines for teachers, teaching tips, samples of behavioral point sheets and ASD support group information are included.

# How to navigate through Building Bridges

Click to move to the next (or previous) page

The image shows a PDF viewer window titled "BuildingBridges.pdf". At the top, there are navigation arrows (back, forward, search) and page information (43 / 446, 84.4% zoom). A bookmarks sidebar on the left lists various sections, with a red circle highlighting a bookmark for "Teacher Directions for 'Colors' Activity Worksheet". A red box labeled "Section" points to the "Teacher Directions for 'Colors' Activity Worksheet" section in the sidebar. Another red box labeled "Lesson Plan" points to the "Teacher Directions for 'Colors' Activity Worksheet" section in the main content area. A third red box labeled "Supporting Materials" points to the "1) Write your name on the line with a blue crayon." instruction in the list. A fourth red box labeled "Clicking the triangle reveals the contents of the section" points to a small triangle icon next to a bookmark in the sidebar. The main content area displays the following text:

**Teacher Directions for "Colors" Activity Worksheet**

Do not repeat directions, and do not wait for students who are not listening. For particular group of students.

- 1) Write your name on the line with a blue crayon.
- 2) Color the boy's shoes green.
- 3) Color the girl's shoes red.
- 4) Color the boy's overalls blue.
- 5) Color the girl's skirt purple.
- 6) Color the flower on the girl's blouse orange.
- 7) Color the girl's blouse yellow.
- 8) Color the boy's shirt red.

11) Draw a purple flower next to the girl's shoe.

12) Put an orange ball in the boy's hand that is not on the girl's shoulder.

AACPS - Building Bridges - 2007

Click on a bookmark to navigate to the first page of each section, lesson plan, set of supporting material, and resource.

Use the arrows (at the top to of the window) to move through the section page by page.



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