

FAMILIES ON THE SPECTRUM: PROVEN STRATEGIES FOR FAMILY SUCCESS

Robert Hock, PhD, LiSW-CP
Carissa Stevens, M.A.



EDNA BENNETT PIERCE
PREVENTION RESEARCH CENTER



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OBJECTIVES

Provide an update on a new parenting intervention study with over 200 SC families.

Shift our attention to our whole family, including children, co-parents, and others.

Teach simple, practical skills we can use in everyday life to increase family connection, effectiveness, and mental health.



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CO-CAREGIVERS AS 'COMMAND CENTER' OF FAMILY AND SERVICES

- Commonly called the “executive subsystem” of the family
- Decision-making
- Service Coordination
- Time and energy: Affection, basic needs, safety, transportation, etc.
- Financial resources
- Skill acquisition and generalization



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THE AUTISM PARENT NAVIGATOR (APN) PROGRAM

- NIH Clinical Trial [Grant # R01HD099295]
- Five-year trial
- Purpose: To test the effectiveness of two parent support programs for improving parent mental health, parenting quality, ASD service engagement, child challenging behaviors, and child adaptive functioning.




Autism Parent Support Research Study

FAMILY ELIGIBILITY

- 1 Your child was diagnosed with Autism in the past 12 months and is between 18 months and 8 years old.
- 2 Two parent/caregiver household
- 3 This is your first child diagnosed with Autism

Receive support in understanding your child's diagnosis and navigating services/resources from a trained and experienced parent of a child with autism. All support sessions can be completed from the comfort of your own home via zoom or phone calls.

Receive up to **\$500** for participating

CONTACT ABIGAIL MOJICA, RESEARCH COORDINATOR

(803) 777-1306
mojica@email.sc.edu

SIGN UP HERE!



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OUR TEAM

					
Brenis Aaron, LMSW Research Assistant	Tamara Grimm, LISW-CP Graduate Research Assistant	Heather May, BS Graduate Research Assistant	Robert Hock, PhD, LISW-CP Principal Investigator	Abigail Mojica, M.A.T. Research Coordinator	Megan Streetman, LMSW Recruitment & Outreach Coordinator
					
Anja Wilson Autism Parent Navigator	Carissa Stevens, MA Autism Parent Navigator	Weezy Knott Autism Parent Navigator	Laura Sigman Autism Parent Mentor	Courtney Heuer Autism Parent Mentor	Takia Barnett Autism Parent Mentor



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Autism Parent Navigators



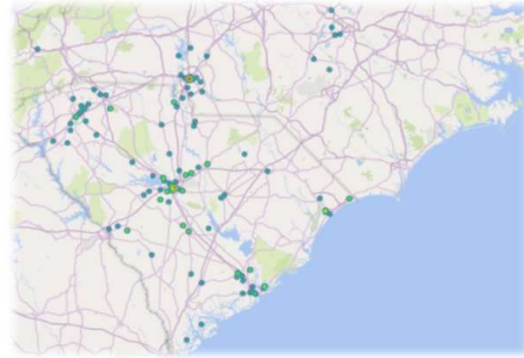
PARENT WORKBOOK
Autism Parent Navigators



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THE AUTISM PARENT NAVIGATOR (APN) PROGRAM

- 196 families enrolled
 - 40 counties in SC
 - 7 counties in NC
- Average time to completion was 15 weeks.
- 31 families dropped during intervention
 - Reasons: time commitments, family health problems, moved out of state, unknown



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STOP

Stop what you are doing. You may need to pause briefly, go to a quiet place, or just pay attention.

BREATHE

Breathe to help yourself both relax and tune in to your physical and emotional feelings.

FTC

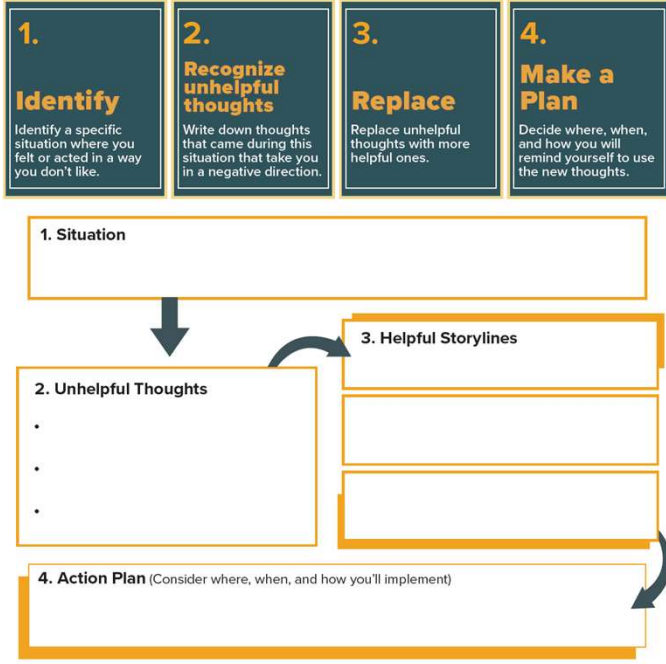
Feelings, Thoughts, Communication. As you are calming down a bit, you can use the phrase FTC- Feelings, Thoughts, Communication



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CHANGING THE STORYLINE




- Our thoughts are not us.
- Our thoughts drive our feelings and behaviors.
- We can gain direct our thoughts toward the things we value.



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STARTING CONVERSATIONS GENTLY

<p>NUMBER ONE</p> <p>Speak Calmly</p> <p>Avoid sarcasm or blame.</p>	<p>NUMBER TWO</p> <p>Say how you feel</p>	<p>NUMBER THREE</p> <p>Describe the specific behavior or situation</p>
<p>#1 EXAMPLE:</p> <p>"Can we talk about something?"</p> 	<p>#2 EXAMPLE:</p> <p>"I feel annoyed when you..."</p> 	<p>#3 EXAMPLE:</p> <p>"When you interrupt me during treatment team meetings..."</p> 

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PRACTICE - WHICH WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR?

- "It looks like a bomb went off in here! What have you been doing all day?"
- "Every Thursday I come home to a dirty house. Why won't you help me clean up? You know that the Early Interventionist comes on Thursday."
- "I feel frustrated when you don't help me clean the house on Thursdays before the Early Interventionist visits."



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VALUES CONNECT WHERE TACTICS DIVIDE

- Many conflicts arise about tactics – How we think things should be done.
- Talking about our parenting values provides a point of connection.
- Ask yourself, "What are the most important things I want for my child's life."
- Pick three Most Important to Me
- Pick three Least Important to Me
- Then discuss.



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VALUES ACTIVITY

Try hard	Be able to express love and affection	Be well-behaved
Be as independent as possible	Get married	Fit in with peers
Be able to work things out and solve problems	Be sensitive to others	Have good morals
Be a community member	Have friends	Be happy
Support himself/herself financially	Contribute to society	Be confident

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SPEAKER-LISTENER





Speaker

- Speak
- Dig Deep
- Talk openly about how you feel

Listener

- Listen carefully
- Do not comment, give feedback, or make judgments



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PARENT MENTOR VOICES



This experience meant everything to me. It gave me a chance to use everything I learned and help others. For so long I felt as if I wasn't accomplishing anything. I gave up everything to stay home and parent my child. This gave me the chance to use that experience and knowledge in a professional setting. I felt valued.



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WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?



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Support for
Parents of children with autism



Connect, learn, and grow.

You're not alone. Connect with a community of parents who understand the challenges and joys of raising a child with autism. Each 8-week session is led by experienced peer facilitators who provide guidance, encouragement, and a space to share. Take care of yourself so you can fully be there for your child.

SUPPORT GROUPS



Parents of children with autism



Dads of children with autism



Parents of adults with autism



Autistic mothers

Dates coming for this Summer and Fall!

GET CONNECTED WITH OUR RESOURCES

Contact Us
for more information

-  Asabea Twinn
-  (803) 777-5861
-  atwinn@email.sc.edu
-  www.aadfaaresearch.com

Complete interest form to learn more:







PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS – STARTING THIS SUMMER!




Support Group Interest Form


<https://forms.office.com/r/VNcszV5E0P>



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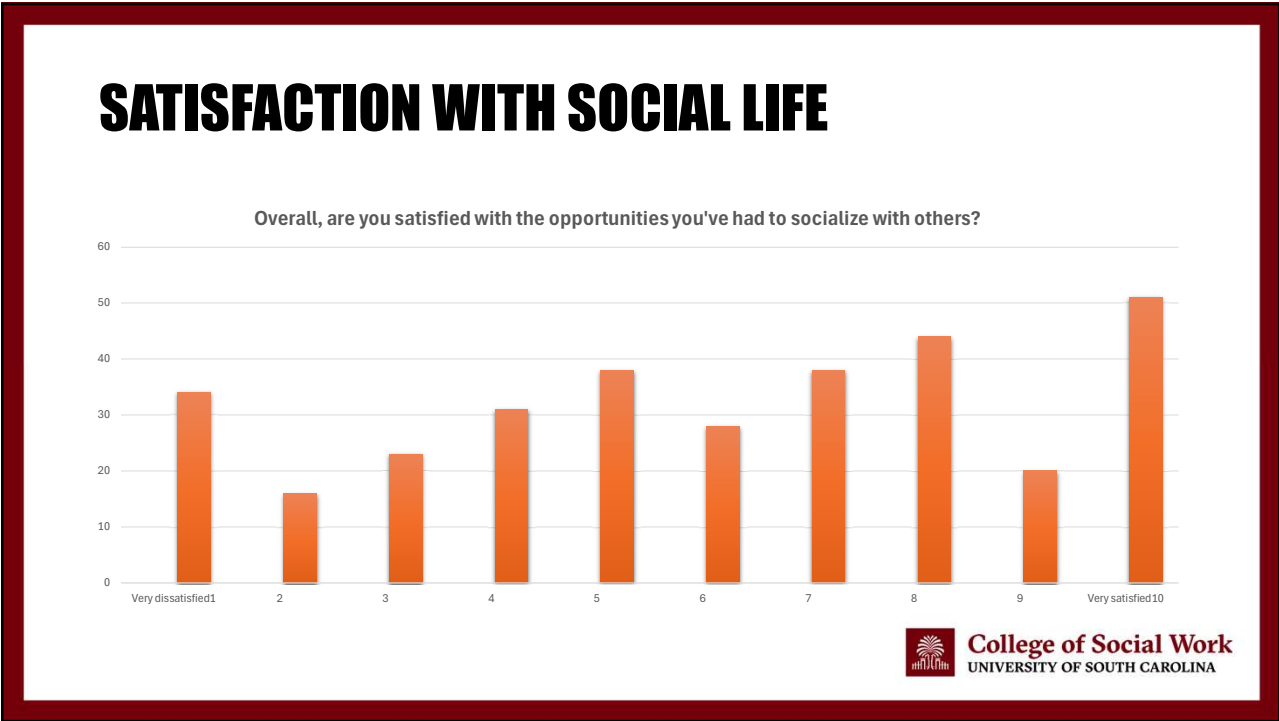
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THANK YOU!

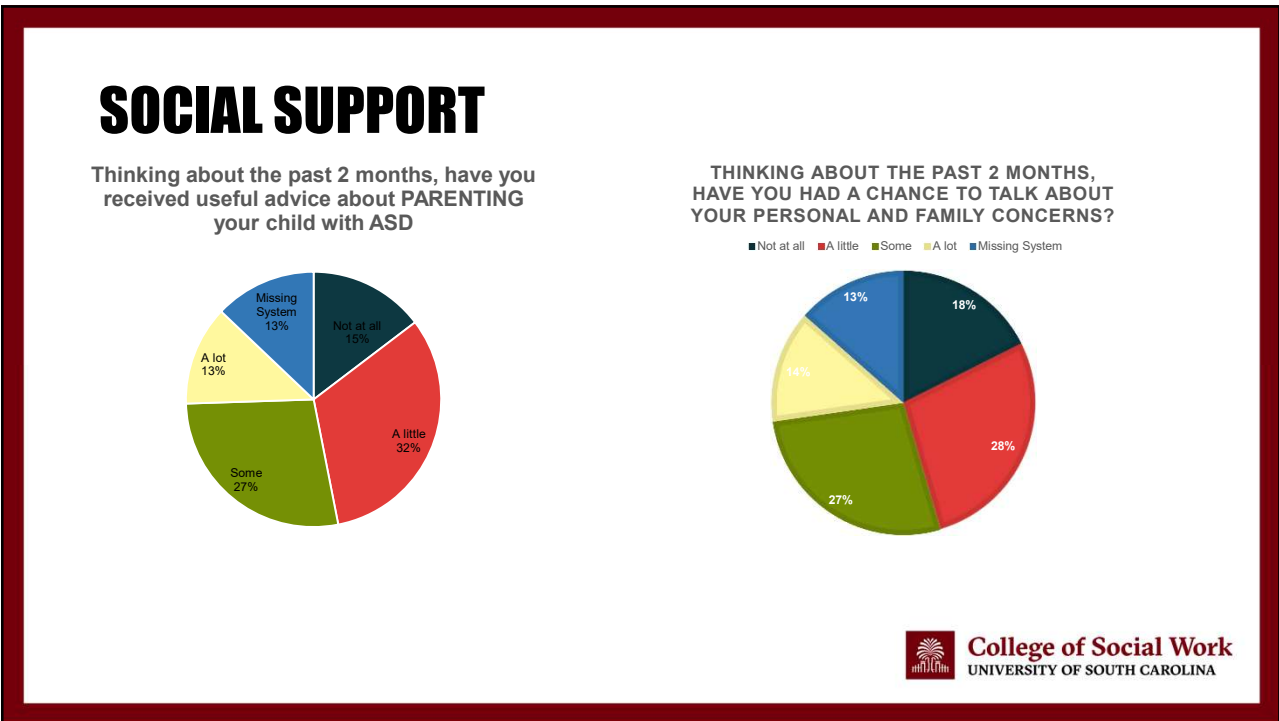


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