

Autism Society Manitoba Presents
Our 25th Annual Conference
featuring



Linda Hodgdon M.Ed., CCC-SLP
 Speech-Language Pathologist
 Consultant for Autism
 and Related Learning Challenges

**Discovering the Possibilities
 with Visual Strategies:**

Meeting the Communication, Behaviour
 & Social Skill Challenges in
 Autism Spectrum Disorders & Related
 Learning Needs

April 19, 2013
NKMB Church Gymnasium
1315 Gateway Road
SE Corner Gateway & Springfield Road
Winnipeg, Mb.
8:50am-3:00pm

*Register early and you will be entered into a
 draw to join us for dinner with Linda Hodgdon.
 Details on dinner will follow.
 Returned cheques subject to a \$25.00 fee.
 Lunch and coffee breaks included.
 Conference begins promptly at 8:50am
 Please respect the no smoking policy on this
 property.*



Group discounts available. A limited number of subsidized spots are also available. Contact us for more info.

Autism Awareness Centre will be present with books and reference materials. Please bring a sweater as the room may be chilly. Dietary needs must be declared prior to April 3, 2013 at the latest or stated on the registration form.

825 Sherbrook Street
 Winnipeg, Mb R3A 1M5
www.autismmanitoba.com
 204-783-9563
info@autismmanitoba.com

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Member

175.00

Early bird

200.00

After Dec 20th

Address _____

Non Member

200.00

225.00

Postal Code _____

Membership

25.00

25.00

Email _____

Special Dietary needs _____

Phone # _____

Please make cheque or P.O. to Autism Manitoba
 825 Sherbrook Street Wpg, Mb R3A 1M5 204-783-9563 info@autismmanitoba.com paypal www.autismmanitoba.com/store.php

Discovering the Possibilities with Visual Strategies:

Meeting the Communication, Behaviour & Social Skill Challenges in Autism Spectrum Disorders & Related Learning Needs

Communication challenges are a defining feature of Autism Spectrum Disorders and many students with related learning needs. The difficulties with social skills and appropriate behaviour that are common in these students are frequently related to the communication difficulties these students experience.

Current thinking suggests that communication impairments transcend all aspects of the life of students with autism, Asperger's Syndrome, and others with moderate to severe communication or behaviour challenges. While it is common for educational programming to focus on the development of communication skills for these students, that focus tends to be directed toward developing the student's *expressive* communication skills. Comparatively little attention is directed toward increasing the student's ability to *understand* the communication in his life.

For these children, their struggle with communication is far more complicated than just the development of verbal language. Understanding the communication of others, trying to figure out what is happening or not happening, handling changes and transitions, and interpreting cues and signals in the environment can all be areas of difficulty that result in frustration and behaviour that is seen as disruptive.

At the same time, research demonstrates that most of these students display a relative strength in *visual* skills compared to their auditory abilities. Visual strategies capitalize on that strength. Using visual strategies to support communication helps students organize their lives, significantly reduces behaviour problems and increases functional communication. This is accomplished in part by developing a system of visual tools and aids to increase comprehension. Schedules, aids to give directions, aids to give information, and aids to establish and communicate rules are some of the tools designed to increase the student's understanding of what's happening around him.

Visual tools and supports are not magic. They won't fix every problem that students have, but they will provide a valuable framework to support their lives. Implementing a system of visual tools and supports significantly reduces various behaviour problems and increases effective communication interactions for most students.

The principle of visually supported communication is simple; the impact on the functioning of most students with autism spectrum disorders and others with communication and behaviour challenges, however, is profound. While many people use a few visual tools in their homes and education environments, few use this medium of communication support nearly as much as would be beneficial for these students.

This program will demonstrate how and why to expand your use of visual strategies, and explore a number of strategies, including APPS and video, for use at school and home. The use of visual strategies is effective across skill levels, for students from early childhood through adult. Visual strategies work for verbal and nonverbal students. Children with high or low skills benefit from visual supports designed to match their capability. Numerous systems and strategies will be presented that have significantly improved both receptive and expressive communication, social interaction, educational participation and overall behaviour

Participant Objectives

Participants will learn to:

- ✦ Identify significant factors in student learning and functioning style that affect communication.
- ✦ Informally assess the student's communication strengths and challenges.
- ✦ Recognize situations where communication breakdowns can affect the student's understanding, behaviour and participation.
- ✦ Use the *Guide for Assessing Behaviour Situations* to identify causes of behaviour problems.
- ✦ Develop visual tools to support communication, behaviour & social skills

Identify uses for high tech tools such as iPads, Apps and video for meeting communication & learning needs.

Bio

[Linda Hodgdon](#), M.Ed., CCC-SLP is a Speech-Language Pathologist who is internationally known as a pioneer in developing the use of visual strategies to support communication for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and related learning challenges. Her training programs are packed with best-practices and effective ideas for using a range of low tech to high tech visual tools, including video and tablets like iPads and Apps, to meet the communication, behaviour and social skills needs of these students. A powerful and entertaining presenter, Linda shares practical information that inspires program participants to accomplish new goals with students immediately.

Linda is the author of [Visual Strategies for Improving Communication](#) and [Solving Behaviour Problems in Autism](#). Considered essential resources for professionals and parents, these are two of the most recommended books in the field. She provides support for Speech-Language Pathologists, educators and parents of students with special learning needs with her blog and video training materials.

Linda Hodgdon is the Director of Cornerstone Communication Center, an organization that provides consultation, training, and professional development with the goal of improving communication.

www.LindaHodgdon.com

www.UseVisualStrategies.com

www.AutismFamilyOnline.com

REGISTER EARLY AS SPACE IS LIMITED. DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION IS APRIL 03, 2013