

Aspect Autism Advisor Program

Video modelling

Video modelling involves the use of videos to support the teaching of everyday skills and expected behaviours in social situations. If you have ever watched a cooking show or searched how to do something on YouTube then you have used video modelling to learn new skills.

Children on the autism spectrum tend to be visual learners, which means they often process visual information more readily than verbal information. Creating videos to teach specific skills incorporates the visual learning strengths of children on the autism spectrum with their interest and enjoyment of videos.

Video modelling can involve:

- the child watching other people perform the skills they are learning
- the child being videoed performing a skill that they can watch back later.

Examples of skills you could teach through video modelling:

- Following routines e.g. going to bed, getting ready in the morning.
- Communication skills e.g. asking for things, responding to questions, sharing information, conversations.
- Self-help skills, e.g. dressing, brushing teeth, washing hands, eating.
- Turn-taking or sharing.
- Perspective taking - an understanding of how another person might be feeling
- Modelling functional play or extending play skills with familiar activities.
- Gross motor play e.g. ball skills.
- Concepts, e.g. body parts, emotions, labelling objects, fine motor activities e.g. drawing, cutting with scissors, handwriting.

Planning your Video

With increased access to online resources, you can find free videos online that have already been created to teach specific skills. Try searching through platforms such as YouTube to see what is available before creating your own videos. If you need to create your own video here are a few tips which may help.

1. Identify the skill you want to teach your child, e.g. turn taking, dressing or pretend play skills.
2. Break down the skill, concept or event into a step by step sequence.

3. Write a plan for what will you say - keep it simple and use only key words.
4. Choose who will be in the video, e.g. self-modelling (child), siblings, peer.
5. Gather any relevant materials such as toys and visual supports (photographs and play sequences) to be used.
6. The goal of video modelling is for a child to copy the observed behaviours, therefore focus on positive skills - the skills/behaviours we want to see. Keep your video short and simple.
7. Make the video as interesting as possible for your child. You could include their favourite songs, toys, activities and interests.

Tips for Video Modelling

- Organise your equipment i.e. a digital camera or phone.
- You can also use mobile apps such as iModeling or iMovie to support the creation of videos.
- Minimise distractions i.e., visual clutter and background noise, and make sure the lighting is not too bright or dark.



Once you have created your video, sit with your child to watch it and model how to imitate the actions along with the video. Ideally this should be just prior to them participating in the skill/activity you are trying to teach. Give your child plenty of opportunities at other times to watch the video.

Once your child has mastered the skill, it is important to practice it in different environments to ensure they can generalise this skill in different places and with different people. Additional videos may be needed to support this.

Seek support from professionals who are working with your child, as they may also have some good ideas on how to support their learning through videos.