LESSON 59
Understanding Unwritten Social Rules

Objective

Students will understand unwritten social rules and learn to apply them.

Performance Criteria

This skill will be *performed adequately* when the student:
1. Understands certain key unspoken social rules, protocols, or conventions.
2. Observes the behavior of others to determine additional social rules.

Materials Required

Situation cards for role-playing

Other Preparation

Additional resources: *Unwritten Rules of Social Relationships* by Grandin & Barron (2005).

Special Considerations

Although many social protocols and conventions are understood by the majority of people, individuals with ASD do not pick up on these "unwritten" rules. This is a difficult, gray area for individuals with ASD to understand.

Forms and Supplementary Materials (see CD)

Homework form

Technology Resources

iPad/iPhone app: Hidden Curriculum for Adolescents (AAPC)

Related Lessons

Lesson 30, Volume 1: Reading Facial Expressions
Lesson 31, Volume 1: Understanding Nonverbal Communication Cues
Lesson 33, Volume 1: Understanding Sarcasm and Irony
Lesson 58: Analyzing Social Situations
Lesson 73: Reading Facial Expression and Interpreting Others' Emotions

PROCEDURES 7 STEPS

Step 1 Establish the Need
a. Initiate a class discussion of rules, written and "unwritten." Provide some examples of social protocols and conventions, for example:
    1) Don't park in someone else's parking space.
    2) Don't date your best friend's ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend.
    3) If there are empty seats in a movie theater, don't sit right next to a stranger.
    4) Don't use the urinal right next to someone who is using a urinal.
    5) Throw your gum in the trash, don't spit it out on the street.
b. Ask students to identify situations where they unknowingly violated a social convention or rule.
c. Elicit that it is important to learn to recognize and remember unwritten social rules because some people will confront you when you do not follow unwritten social rules and some people will avoid you when the rules are violated.

Step 2 Identify Skill Components
a. Tell students that the lesson will help them
    1) Learn certain key unwritten social rules.
    2) Learn ways to identify new or different unwritten social rules.

Step 3 Model the Skill
a. Using carefully selected Youtube video clips, model analyzing the violations of unwritten social rules depicted on the video.
b. Model two ways of handling a situation involving unwritten social rules. Have students decide which "version" breaks the rule.

Step 4 Role-Play
a. Group students in threes. Have two students role-play various situations where they break a social rule. Have the observing student explain why the unwritten rule is important.
b. Via class discussion, establish the consequences of breaking the social rule for each role-playing situation.
c. Emphasize the role of others (e.g., how others feel in the situation).

Step 5 Practice

    a. On a few selected occasions, use additional carefully selected Youtube videos to practice identifying violations of unwritten social rules.

    b. Assign students to observe different areas/settings in the school (e.g., cafeteria, locker room, library) and report on unwritten social rules they identified.

Step 6 Generalization

    a. Give students homework assignments to interview parents or other family to collect a list of unwritten social rules that when violated annoy the family members.

    b. Take students into community settings to identify and practice following some of the previously identified unwritten social rules.

Step 7 Evaluation

After a period of time it is necessary to determine if the skills taught are being sustained and generalized. The following practices are used to determine long-term success of instruction.

    a. Periodically observe the students in general education settings and rate their performance according to the performance criteria listed at the beginning of the lesson.

    b. Ask general education teacher(s)/other support staff to rate students according to the performance criteria.

    c. Collect data using progress-monitoring strategies.

    d. Design individual interventions for students not benefiting from small-group interventions (i.e., students who perform the skill inadequately or fail to generalize the skill to other settings).

**CHAPTER
5**