

Autism Initiative: Training Series

ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Chapter 3.3: Part 1 – Structural and Visual Supports

Part 1: Review of Concepts

- A *supportive environment* is a safe and friendly place, which also promotes social, academic, physical, and emotional development for an individual.
- Some important components to consider when creating a *visually structured environment* include:
 - General layout of the rooms
 - Boundaries set between different areas
 - Organization of materials and supplies
 - Minimizing distractions when possible.

Part 2: Discussion Questions for Staff

1. *What is important to consider in the general layout of the rooms?*
 - **Answer:** There is not a “correct” answer for this question. Encourage discussion among staff about their thoughts.
2. *What are the types of areas typically used in classrooms?*
 - **Answer:** Individual activity areas, group activity areas, leisure activity areas and storage areas.
3. *What are some ways to help individuals distinguish where different areas are?*
 - **Answers:**
 - Use visual boundaries (example: tape)
 - Use furniture/objects to create boundaries (example: room dividers, tables, rugs)
 - Organization (use of labels, signs, pictures, colors to distinguish areas)
 - Keep the room easy to navigate around!
 - Keep it clean – free from distractions and clutter (on tables, walls, desks, use study carrels, use blinds/curtains, etc).