

In this video we present the activity of a laboratory on autonomies that takes place at the Vaccari Institute. The group consists of 4 boys and girls between 12 and 14 years and diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The video was filmed after returning from the summer holidays.

The first phase of work is the welcome.

They enter the room and sit on chairs arranged in a circle, together with their operators. In this phase we work on emotions, on social reciprocity and on narrative skills.

The questions of this phase are:

"How do you feel today?";

"What have you done today?";

"What did you do this summer?"

The operators facilitate the response to requests by giving verbal assistance and where necessary, physical assistance.

The second phase of the work is to make table games all together. This fun activity allows us to work on various aims. First of all we work on the ability to choose; then on the ability to organize the work, taking turns to put the images of emotions in place. The boys have learned to do it more independently, so we've faded the aid.

Moving to another area of the room is a way of giving a clear organization of the spaces and times. This helps them to bear fear because everything is organized and predictable.

The first game proposed is a bingo with animals that allows working on a series of objectives including: discrimination of various animals; respect of the shift; interaction with each other. Moreover, the use of social reinforcement first of all allows them to be motivated to play and then promotes learning.

The second is a memory game, which we need for short-term memory processing, and then to work on focused attention and respect of the shifts.

The teen are a reward for the right answer and a social reinforcement.

The third phase consists in work on domestic autonomies and on the organization of the snack.

The work is structured with the organization of tasks on a scoreboard and then they have to choose which task they prefer to perform.

Also this activity involves a change of setting and they reach another table to have snack. And if the environment is small and there are no other rooms available, you can structure the room in a clear and defined way, in a mood that every space has its function.

The steps in this phase are: Set the table; Clear the table; Wash the dishes and dry them; Clean the table.

To make a snack every time you choose whether to shop and go out to buy the ingredients and then prepare it or, as on this occasion, choose to use the vending machines.

The objectives of this phase are: to obtain a purchase the snack; remember and organize the snack routine; work on domestic self-employment.

The washing of the dishes is divided into various steps, which are given to them: there are those who soap and those who rinse; the trays are used to facilitate and the better structure the passages.

In all phases the operators help them to complete or facilitate the actions. Each of them is assigned to a job. If the operator notices the inactivity of one of them, which could frustrate him or demotivate him, he involves him/her. In this video Sara was sitting and had finished her task, the operator notices the moment of inactivity and involves her in the cleaning of the table.

The fourth and last phase is dedicated to greetings. Also this phase is structured: the group moving in a different environment and put themselves in a circle. This arrangement favors exchanges between group members and reciprocity.

We work on imitation of movements and on gross motor skills, because we sing a song and make movements. The last phase is a pleasant moment in general. They appear happy and this allows to make both the activity itself and the participation in the laboratory in general, motivating them to return and work together with the group.

The atmosphere in the laboratory is pleasant and every time we choose activities that are appropriate to the state of the participants, modulating the difficulties so as to facilitate learning.

Information is asked from the careers of the participants in order to understand which activity to favor that day. Finally, feedback is sent back to the careers so as to prevent problem behavior at home or on the way and to allow the family members to understand his/her state and behave appropriately.