

The following list contains some general tips on teaching students with ASD how to ski/snowboard.

- Verbiage needs to stay simple
- Interview family or care givers, if available, to help determine:
 - Previous routines – don't try to fix it if it isn't broken
 - Communication needs
 - Learning style
 - How to deal with tantrums
 - Reward systems
- Need to be in a routine – for returning guests, the process needs to remain the same (if possible, same instructor, same sequence of events)
- Avoid areas of stimulation overload
 - Snow guns
 - Large crowds
 - Teaching around the chairlift
 - Busy areas of the lodge
- Many are “literal” thinkers – using “pizza” to describe a wedge may have them looking for lunch and they will lose focus on the task and the lesson
- Use visual cues – Board Maker, drawing in snow, photos, props such as hand puppets or stuffed animals
- If there is space available to work inside, introduce tasks that can be transferred to snow.
- Avoid physical contact and eye contact – these are social interactions that they may not tolerate
- Need to move – avoid being stagnant
- Normal “games” may not work – keep instruction simple and concise
- Teach in front, skiing backward so that the student cannot ski away from you
- Use adaptive tools – ski bra, tether – to assist in controlling movement when teaching a skill
 - **VERY IMPORTANT** to have a plan in place before using adaptive tools. Once you apply the tools (ski bra, tether), how are you going to wean from them. Too many become dependent on such apparatuses.
- Use established reward system; avoid food unless established with parents/caregivers
- Have fidget toys available – AVOID latex products
- Many like the stimulation of being on the chairlift. If concerned with a student that may move around too much, use a ski pole across their lap and into the arm of chairlift. Safety belts with lanyards can also be used in more involved cases.
- Use positive verbiage. Instead of “No or Stop” hitting’, try “Use soft touch”