Visual tools for teaching students with ASD

Boardmaker pictures, or "boards", are used to provide a visual presentation of a task or schedule. Boards are arranged in a sequence so that the individual can visually understand what the sequence of a process should be or what the task(s) look like.

Specifically for those who are teaching in snowsport schools, the student may need a sequence of how they get to the ski hill. That may include pictures of a school, a school bus, a ski lodge. Then they may need to know what to do once they arrive – use the restroom, put on ski clothing (in order and including as many of the articles as possible), and pick up equipment. Have a schedule of how the session will go and review it with the student. Include breaks for snacks and restroom. Boards can be used to show ski position (parallel/wedge) and riding the chairlift.

There are a few different formats to use for the Boardmaker boards. A laminated sheet with a Velcro strip (example #1) is nice for inside and can be set up in advance. For use on the hill, a Velcro strip (example #2) can be easily set up and folded to be carried in a jacket pocket. Some prefer boards that are attached to a ring (example #3) and can be flipped through. Small photo books (3.5x5 or 4x6) (example #4) can also be used with the boards inserted into the pockets. If students are familiar with the Boardmaker system, many of them like to remove the boards from the Velcro strip as they are achieved. The boards can then be stored in a pocket. This gives the student the sense of accomplishment.

Photos can also be used in place of the Boardmaker system. The same general process would still apply, but with photos, and personal system can be made.

If access to Boardmaker boards is limited (many school systems have programs), Clip Art or simple drawings can serve the same purpose.

Laminating the pictures, no matter what system us used, is highly recommended. This will increase the durability of the product and provide protection from the elements of our industry.