

Caravel Behavior Experts Present:

Navigating Everyday Parenting  
Challenges:

Shopping with Kids Doesn't  
Need to be Scary!



**CARAVEL**  
AUTISM HEALTH





# CARAVEL AUTISM HEALTH

A provider of **Applied Behavior Analysis** services, diagnostic, and counseling services to children with **autism** and their families.

We currently serve the Greater Chicagoland area, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Washington, and Wisconsin.





## Our Mission

## We change lives.

Caravel Autism Health's team of autism health professionals is dedicated to working with children with autism and related developmental disabilities and their families to develop skills, create connections and instill confidence. Our approach to ABA therapy is rooted in research and results.

Our founders and therapists are committed to being the most passionate clinicians in the autism health field. At Caravel Autism Health, our mission is to change lives.

## Our Presenters

### Betsy Utesch

BCaBA, Betsy graduated from UW-Madison in 2014 and is currently pursuing her MA in Applied Behavior Analysis from Ball State University with an emphasis in ASD. She earned her BCaBA in 2018. She has 8 years of experience in the field of ABA, starting as a behavior technician during her undergrad at UW and falling in love with supporting autistic children and their families. She has a passion for teaching self-advocacy, self-regulation, and functional communication while helping families create a more supportive environment.

### Sarah Mehta

BCBA, Sarah graduated from SIUC in 2001 and pursued her MA in special education at NIU. She graduated in 2006 and is a certified learning behavior specialist for K-21. Knowing that there had to be another way to help individuals on the spectrum and their families, she began exploring ABA. She graduated from Ball State University in 2018 and became a BCBA in 2019. She has worked in schools, residential schools, day cares, clinics and within the home. She has a passion for functional communication training and working within the natural environment.

# Agenda

1. The "Dos and Don'ts" of shopping in public with children
2. How to deal with scary moments at the store
3. How to develop your plan for trips to the store
4. Examples and templates for supports will be provided
5. Where to find other resources to support trips to the store



# The "Dos and Don'ts" of Shopping in Public with Children

## Do's

- Start small
- Know your store
- Pick your time
- Set expectations
- Practice

## Don'ts

- Big lists
- Stores that have triggers
- Be in a rush
- Panic
- All day shopping

# How to Deal With Scary Moments at the Store

- Know what you are comfortable sharing with others
  - Medical alert/learning support cards
- Recognize early signs of your child needing to leave or being overwhelmed
  - Reinforce EARLY and honor body language/words
- Recognize YOUR personal triggers and remember to reward yourself for wins
- Pick your battles

# How to Develop Your Plan for Trips to the Store

- Reinforcement works!
  - Know what behaviors you're trying to teach
  - Stick to your reinforcement support plan for teaching those behaviors as your child uses those skills
- Fake it 'til you make it!
  - Stay CALM and NEUTRAL
  - Stay CONFIDENT



# Visuals and Templates

- Social Stories
- Shopping List/Map
- Visual Schedules

# Writing a Social Story

- Short and simple how-to story for event or activity
  - For new or hard to practice situations
- Be specific to your kiddo and the store/shopping trip
- Use first person language
  - i.e. "I can follow my schedule" versus "Jimmy can follow his schedule"
- Include expectations, social "unwritten" rules, how actions might affect others
- Keep POSITIVE TONE and focus on TRYING OUR BEST
  - Avoid definitive language or "I have to do this or else..."

# Example Social Story (5 pages long)

My name is:\_\_\_\_\_. I'm a big helper and will be helping my mom/dad at the store today.

We will drive to \_\_\_\_\_ and follow our list to get what we need.

I will stay by my family. I can help push the cart. I can help carry the shopping list. I will use my quiet voice and walk in the store. My parents will get the shopping done as quickly as possible. They will be happy that I can help them.

We will need to wait in line to pay for our stuff. I will try keep my hands down and not stand too close to others. This may take some time but when we are done we will/ I will get \_\_\_\_\_.

Shopping can be fun. My parents will be happy we got our shopping done safely. I can be proud that I helped.

# Visual Example Social Story



We are going to the store



We will drive to the store



I can push the cart



I can help get everything on  
our list



We will nicely wait in line



We will pay for the groceries



After I will get fries



My parents will be happy and  
proud of me



# Making a Shopping List

- Decide between using visuals (pictures) or written lists
  - Can incorporate both!
- Watch items "go away" as they're added to a cart/basket
- Start with a small list and gradually increase as trips are successful
  - 1-2 items to start depending on starting point, build up 1 item each trip
- Start with specific items and add in more general labels as trips are successful
  - i.e. 3 packages of hot dog buns, 1 loaf of white bread, and a package of everything bagels vs. bread

# Examples of Shopping Lists



eggs



bread



milk

# Making a Visual Schedule

- Aide using pictures or simple words to set expectations of what will be happening over a period of time
- Teach the child what a schedule is
- Can start with a "First/Then" board and then increase to longer schedule once successful
- Make sure schedule length matches trip length
  - Not too long or too short dependent on time you have at the store
- Set schedule up so that highly desired items come AFTER the less desired items
  - i.e. Buying vegetables comes before buying cookies
  - i.e. First specific store, Then ice cream

# Examples of Visual Schedules

First



Then





# Where to Find Other Resources

- Specific store websites
  - Store maps
  - Potential sensory-friendly/population-specific hours
  - Support services/resources available
- Autism resource websites
  - When in doubt, google it!
  - Sample search phrases:
    - Social stories
    - Video models
    - Autism-friendly stores

# Review

- ✓ DO start small
  - Keep the trips short and successful!
- ✓ DO set clear expectations
  - Use social stories, lists, and visual schedules
  - Show your child the plan before and during shopping!
- ✓ DO practice consistently
  - Make sure trips are regularly occurring
  - Follow the same consistent routine!
- ✓ DO reward the behaviors you said you would
  - Stick to the expectations!
- ✓ DO give yourself and your child grace
  - Be patient with the process!
  - Find joy in the little wins!

# And remember... **YOU'VE GOT THIS!**



# Questions?





# Thank you for attending today!

For more information on  
**Caravel Autism Health** and our  
services, please contact our intake  
team at: **844.583.5437**