



# Building Bridges Across the Autism Spectrum

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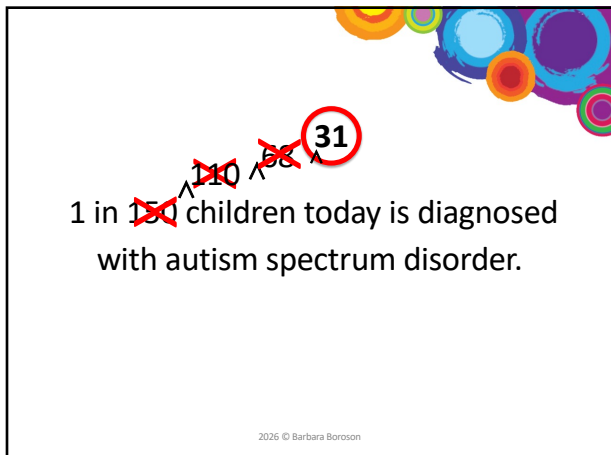
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1 in ~~150~~ children today is diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

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### Areas of Challenge

- Anxiety
- Behavior
- Cognition
- Communication
- Engagement
- Executive Function
- Sensation
- Socialization

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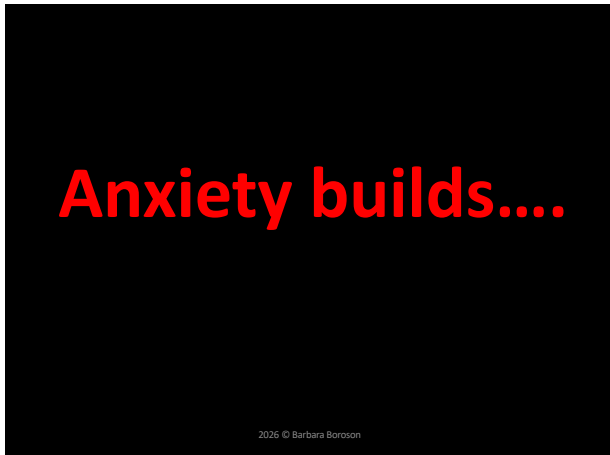
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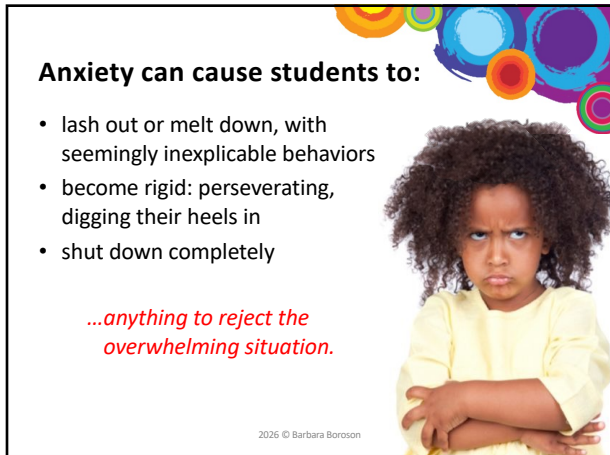
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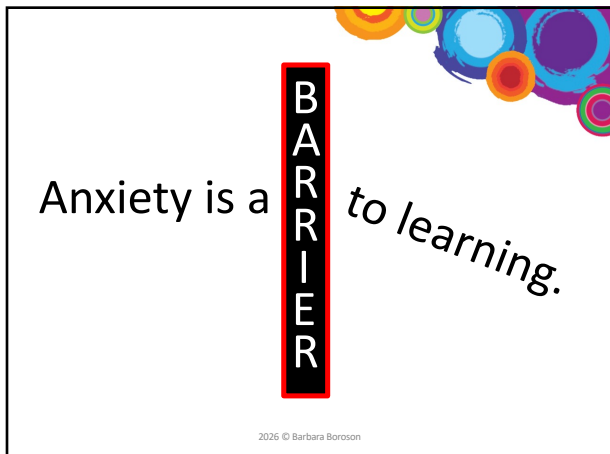
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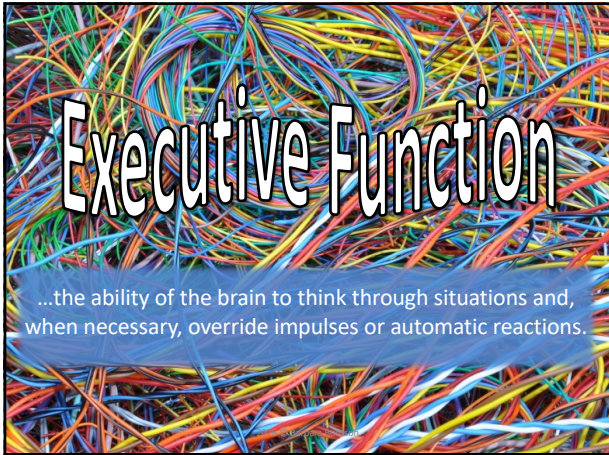
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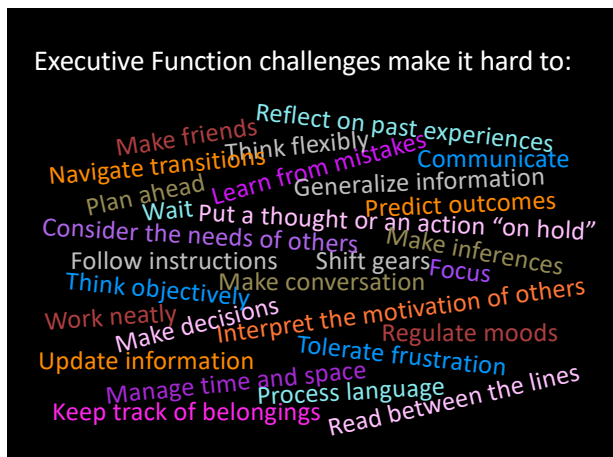
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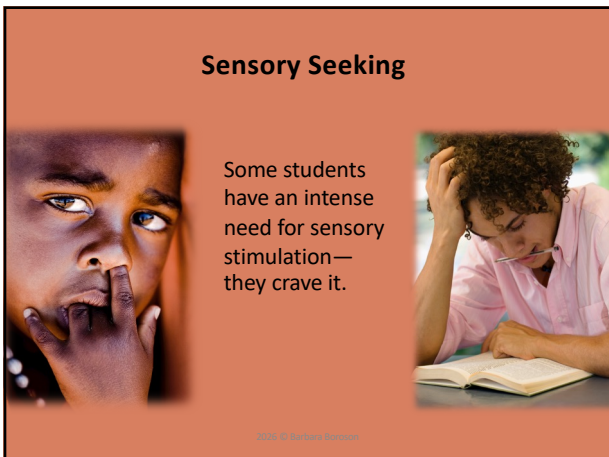
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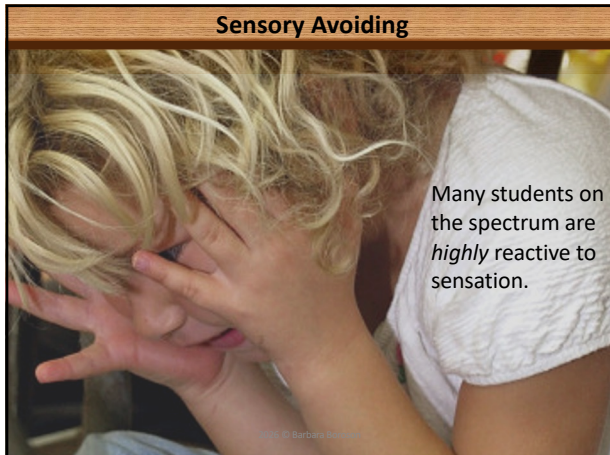
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**Stims**

*Self-stimulatory behaviors* (known as “stims”) are behaviors that help to regulate the stimulation of the sensory system.

- flapping hands
- chewing on objects
- spinning in circles
- making noises
- poking people
- flicking fingers
- head banging
- rocking

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*Extinguishing coping mechanisms serves only to extinguish coping.*

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**Support Coping**

Find a replacement behavior that serves the same function, but in a more adaptive way.



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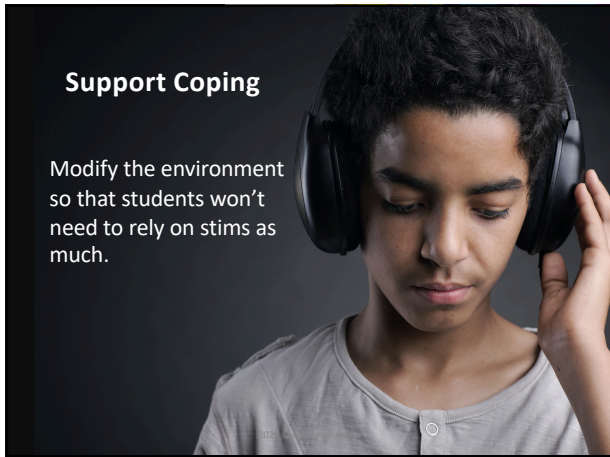
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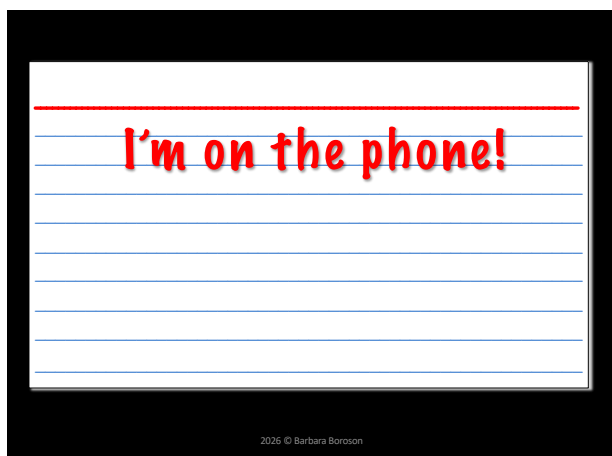
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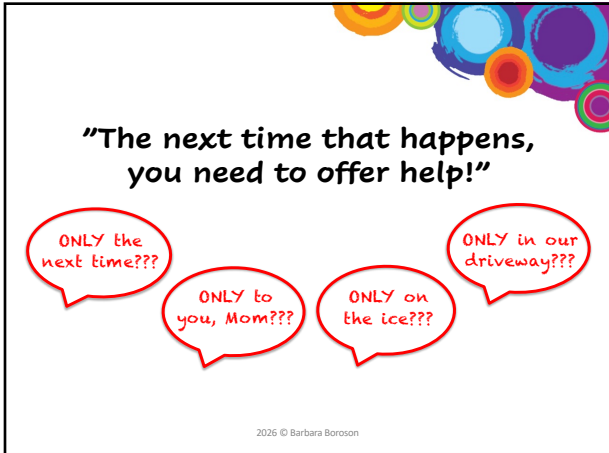
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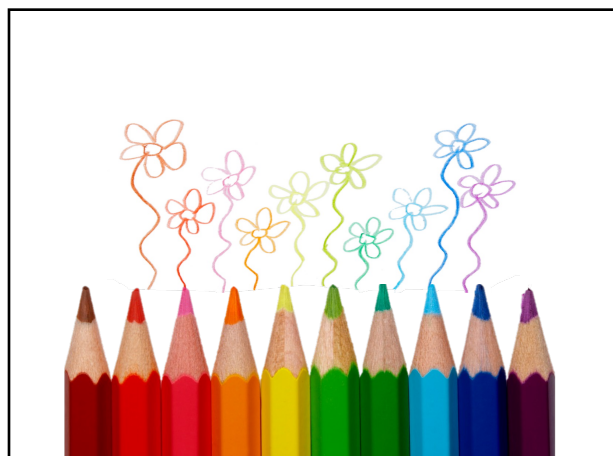
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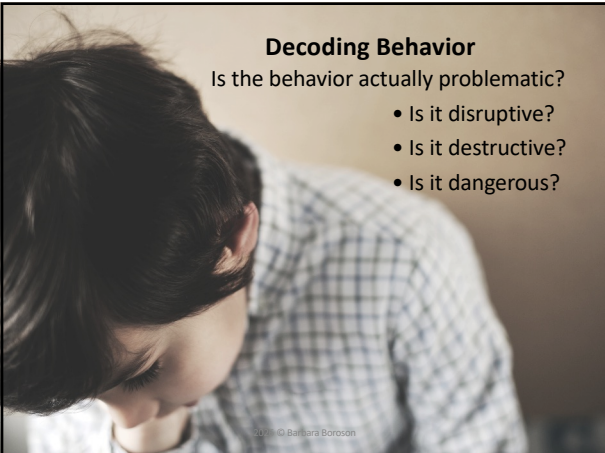
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**Decoding Behavior**  
Is the behavior actually problematic?

- Is it disruptive?
- Is it destructive?
- Is it dangerous?

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**Let It Be**

Unexpected behavior may be serving a critically significant function:

*It may be a coping mechanism!*

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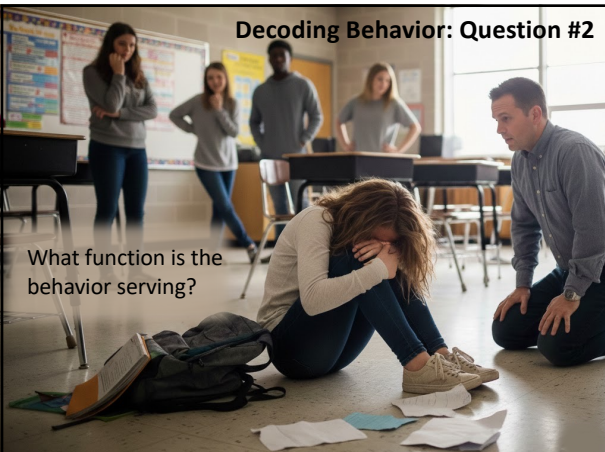
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**Decoding Behavior: Question #2**

What function is the behavior serving?

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**Sensory Diet**

1. Schedule change: OT or Phys Ed, almost every day
2. Squeeze ball and bouncy bands
3. Crunchy or chewy snack and lunch items
4. “Jumping Jacks Jam” as part of daily morning meeting

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**Pro Tips for Decoding Behavior**

- ★ Trust that students behave if they can....
- ★ Recognize that all behavior is communication....
- ★ Reflect on the array of common challenges....
- ★ Intervene at the level of causation....

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- Email me: [barbaraboroson@gmail.com](mailto:barbaraboroson@gmail.com)
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