



# THE SOCIAL COMPASS CURRICULUM

## A Story-Based Intervention Package for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

by

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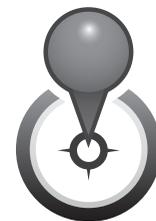
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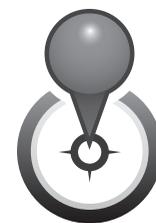
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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**LouAnne Boyd, M.A., BCBA**, is a private practitioner and the owner of ABAcus: Behavioral Tools for Social Engagement. In addition, she is Autism Coordinator for the North Orange County Special Education Local Plan Area in California. LouAnne conducts social skills groups in her community for both students with autism and neurotypical children. She conducts staff and parent trainings for social, communication, and behavioral interventions for home and school. LouAnne teaches graduate-level courses for in-service special educators focused on evidence-based interventions in the classroom at California State University, Fullerton. Since the early 1990s, she has served in clinic, community, and school settings. Her current interests include assessment, intervention, and generalization of social skills training.

**Christina McReynolds, Ed.S, M.S., BCBA**, is a behaviorist at the North Orange County Special Education Local Plan Area, where she is Autism Coordinator and supports five surrounding districts through research, professional development, and consultation for staff who work with individuals with autism. She is a Nationally Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), has a master of science degree in education, and has credentials in educational leadership, special education, and early childhood special education. She is also certified in behavior intervention case management, crisis intervention, and behavioral intervention for individuals with autism spectrum disorders. She has been involved with individuals with disabilities since the late 1990s and has worked as a teacher, coordinator, and university instructor. Christina coauthored *The Social Compass Curriculum* as a response to the tremendous need for social cognition support that has been apparent throughout her career. She has conducted several research projects and presented at conferences throughout Orange County.

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# LESSON 3C

## ACCEPTING CHANGE IN ROUTINES



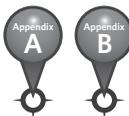
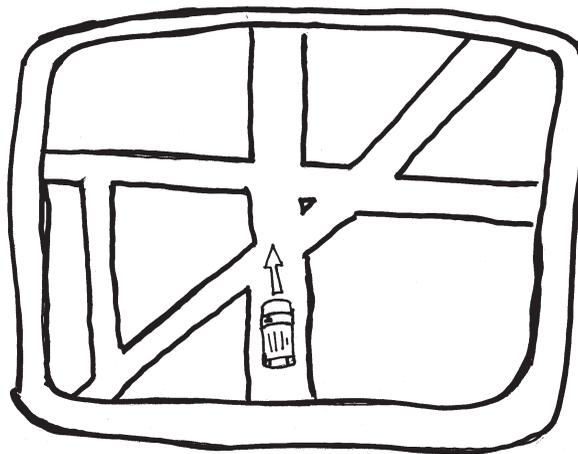
### STEP 1. *EXPLAIN THE GOAL AND VISUAL SUPPORT.*

#### 1a) Goal

A change in routine can be very upsetting and disruptive for some children. The goal of this lesson is to have students practice how to effectively handle changes in routines.

#### 1b) Visual Support

On most GPS devices, an alert pops up when the user deviates from the suggested route and changes course. Typically, clicking an "accept" button allows the user to continue to be guided by the map. The visual support for this lesson is the GPS Alert, which will help students accept change and move on with their routines.



#### 1c) Hand out Module 3, Lesson 3C Self-Monitoring Data Sheets to the students.

Provide all lesson handouts for the students to follow through with the remaining steps.

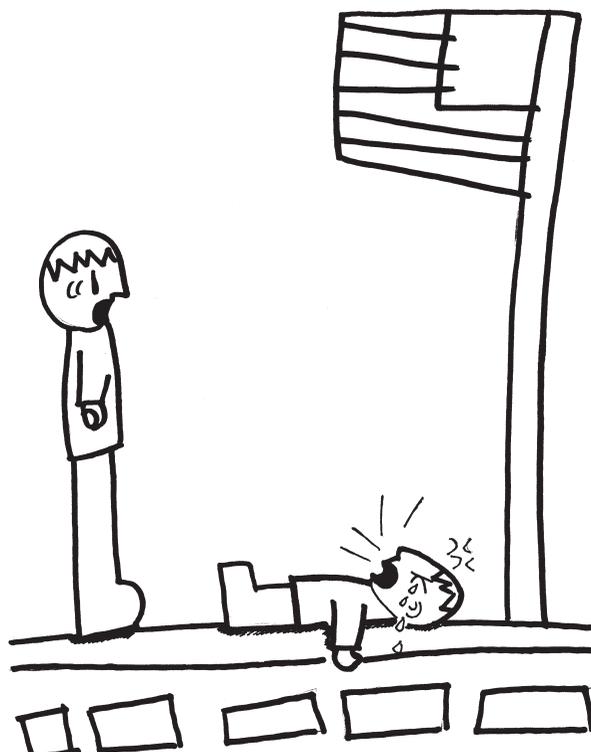
### STEP 2. *READ THE SOCIAL COMPASS STORY.*

#### 2a) Read "Ricky Rides the Bus."

Ricky rides the bus to and from school every week day. Ricky likes knowing what is going to happen each time he gets on the bus. He knows the bus routine.

When he rides the bus, he knows that he should wait quietly in the bus line, say hello to the bus driver, always sit down in the seat on the bus, use his inside voice, and keep his hands and feet to himself. He also knows what time the bus comes to his house and gets to the school each day. Ricky knows when the bus will come back to school to pick him up and take him back home at the end of the day.

One day, there was a change in the bus routine because the bus driver was sick, so there was a substitute driver. The substitute driver is different from the bus driver that Ricky knows and not part of the usual routine. On this day, the substitute bus driver took more time than Ricky's usual bus driver to find her way to the school. After standing in line for a long time with everyone else, Ricky knew his routine was going to be different, but he did not know why. Ricky had a tantrum; he screamed and cried. He scared the other kids who were also waiting for the bus.



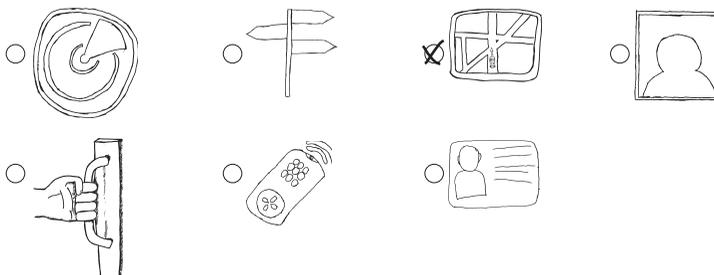
The next day, Ricky's teacher told him that when there is a change of plans, or change in his routine, he can picture in his mind an alert going off on his GPS Alert tool. She told him to picture an alert button on his GPS when routines change. The alert button will let him know there has been a change in plans, and he can then push the "accept" button to help him relax. He can take a deep breath, remember that he will get home soon, and enjoy the trip home.

**2b) Have the students answer comprehension questions.**

The answers should resemble the following:

**MODULE 3 READING COMPREHENSION SHEET**

1. What was the visual support? Select one.



2. Who was the story about? Select one.

- Al   
  Pat   
  Brad   
  Bob   
  Freddy   
  Tanya   
  Ricky

3. What was his or her problem? Select one.

- Didn't control anger
- Got upset over a change
- Didn't listen to the teacher
- Didn't get included
- Interrupted the class
- Didn't know how to handle being teased
- Focused on others and not on self

4. What did he or she learn to do about it? Write your answer.

*He learned to accept the change and enjoy the ride.*

5. Draw or summarize the story.

*Ricky got upset when the bus routine changed. He learned to stay calm by remembering his GPS Alert visual and accept the change.*

### STEP 3. MODEL AND REHEARSE.

#### 3a) Model why coping with change is important.

1. Provide an immediate example of a change, and model strategies to cope with that change. Explain to the students that coping with change is important because change happens so frequently everyone needs to be prepared for it.
2. Announce that the students' chairs are not to be used and everyone needs to sit on the floor immediately.
3. Point to the GPS Alert visual icon to indicate a change is happening and the students should accept it and move on with the new activity.
4. Praise students who follow through without complaint or hesitation. Have the students label strategies for coping with change. Ask students to label strategies to try when asked to change. Examples include staying calm and following through with sitting on the floor.
5. Direct students to record their data on Line A of the Self-Monitoring Data Sheet.

#### 3b) Have students rehearse making changes by having them change their seats.

1. Have the students walk around the room until you say, "Sit."
2. As they go to sit in their seats, change the rule about how or where they should sit by saying, "Sit one chair to the left of your (usual) seat."

3. Provide feedback on students' ability to adapt to last-minute change in directions. Then, have them walk around the room again, and when it's time for them to sit down, try another change such as "Sit on your chair backwards" or "Sit on the floor next to your chair."
4. Give feedback about the students' ability to follow through with these changes.
5. Praise them for accepting the changes, and point to the GPS Alert icon to prompt accepting the change.

**3) Prompt the students to mark their data on Line B for each of the previous trials on the Self-Monitoring Data Sheet.**

*I can rehearse making changes in a group game format of musical chairs*

by myself

with peer help

with teacher help

**STEP 4. ROLE-PLAY AND REINFORCE.**

**4a) Have the students role-play accepting a change in their routines.**

1. Place the students in pairs.
2. Have the students practice accepting a change in their routines by notifying each other about various changes (e.g., their teacher is absent, their parent can't pick them up from school that day, they need to move their seats to the back of class, they can't go outside for recess that day).
3. The partner receiving the news responds to it by accepting the change and going along with it.
4. Solicit feedback from each pair after they role-play in front of the class, and solicit feedback from the observers as well. Be sure each student has an opportunity to play the role of the person who needs to accept a change in plans.

**4b) Prompt the students to mark their data on Line C of the Self-Monitoring Data Sheet.**

*I was able to accept a change in my routine in role play with a peer*

by myself

with peer help

with teacher help

**STEP 5. PROMOTE GENERALIZATION.**



**Send home the Parent Follow-Up Page.**

Follow-up directions are provided on the Parent Follow-Up Page.



# 3C SELF-MONITORING DATA SHEET ACCEPTING CHANGE IN ROUTINES

Rate the following behaviors as

1—I did it by myself

2—I did it with peer help

3—I did it with teacher help

SKILL	TRIAL 1	TRIAL 2	TRIAL 3	TRIAL 4
A. I can label a behavior to cope with change.				
B. I can rehearse making changes in a group game format of musical chairs.				
C. I was able to accept a change in my routine in role play with a peer.				

Comments:



## 3C PARENT FOLLOW-UP PAGE ACCEPTING CHANGE IN ROUTINES

This lesson helps students identify why coping with change is important. It is important because change happens so frequently that one needs to be prepared for it. The visual support for this lesson is a GPS Alert. Just as a GPS in a car helps guide the driver through any obstacles to a final destination, the GPS Alert is a reminder for students that a change may occur, but they can get through it.

Practice coping with a change in routine at home by creating changes in the environment (e.g., where family members sit for dinner, which route you take to get to a familiar location—such as a park or the mall). You might want to prepare your child that you're practicing this skill so that he or she can recall the story from class, refer to the visual, and be guided and comforted through the change in routine.

Point to the GPS Alert to indicate for your child that a change is happening and he or she should accept it and move on with the new activity.

As always, be sure to gently guide your child to get the correct response, and praise every job well done. Also, remind your child that changes in routines can happen at any time, but with the right tools and preparation, he or she can be prepared.

