



Training Activities in Autism Education

In a world that continually evolves, so do the challenges faced by educators and caregivers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It is in this context that the "TIPS" project has taken root, striving to create innovative educational tools that cater to the unique needs of children with ASD. The project centers on empowering adult educational trainers and parents to enhance the life skills of these children using a Teaching Interaction Procedure (TIP) and two digital tools. Two key training events, the first held in Burgos, Spain, and the second in Skopje, North Macedonia, mark significant milestones in the project's journey.

Before we delve into the training activities, it's crucial to understand the key deliverables of the TIPS project. The project emphasizes the development of essential life skills, particularly social skills. This curriculum, designed for adult educators and parents of children with ASD, is poised to empower trainers with the knowledge and competence to educate parents on nurturing these vital skills. It bridges the gap between theory and practice by addressing the challenges children with autism face in their homes and communities, their deficits in social and communication skills, and the absence of comprehensive training programs.

As part of the TIPS project's mission to enhance autism education, an engaging Digital Game inspired by the classic 'snakes and ladders' concept, allows two users to engage in a transformative educational experience. Players answer questions, and make choices related to various social situations, all within a 30-minute game session. What sets this game apart is its integration with the TIPS curriculum, serving as a dynamic tool to nurture essential social skills. Interactive questions within the game lead to consequences mirroring real-life decisions and effects, creating a safe environment for users to make and learn from their choices. The game's simulated school setting ensures secure exploration of social interactions, and every decision is accompanied by context and explanations.

The TIPS project has also created an Interactive Comic, a powerful tool for fostering social skills in individuals with autism. These social stories align with the curriculum's objectives and infuse gamification and storytelling elements into the learning process. This approach creates engaging and motivating educational experiences for people with autism and their parents. It also offers real-world scenarios and guidance, empowering parents to work with their children with autism. The project is committed to ensuring accessibility across various devices and web channels while prioritizing a user-centered design approach to enhance usability.

In this context the first training activity, held in Burgos, Spain, from July 3rd to July 7th, 2023. It was a significant step in the TIPS project's journey as it brought together specialized trainers in the field of autism. These experts conducted immersive sessions aimed at providing theoretical and practical knowledge of autism, equipping the trainers with the skills necessary to plan and implement effective learning activities for parents.

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The second training activity, held in Skopje, North Macedonia, from September 25th to September 29th, 2023, took a unique approach. This training involved five parents and caregivers of children with autism, providing them with a platform to share their experiences and gain insights from the curriculum developed during the project. Their participation was instrumental in ensuring that the training materials are not only theoretically sound but also practical and relevant to the everyday challenges they face in nurturing their children's social skills.

By bringing together experts and parents, the project ensures a holistic approach that combines research-backed methodologies with real-world insights. This synergy created a valuable resource for adult educators and parents of children with ASD, equipping them with the tools to empower the next generation. The journey of the TIPS project is one of collaboration, innovation, and, most importantly, the unwavering commitment to enhancing the lives of individuals with autism.

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