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MODULE 4

DESIGNING AND USING DIGITAL SOCIAL STORIES

Upskilling Preservice Teachers to Support Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder through Digital Social Stories

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5. MODULE 4 - Designing and Using Digital Social Stories

5.1. Module objectives & prerequisites

By the end of this module, students will:

- Use digital tools to create interactive and engaging social stories.
 - Utilize editable templates and classroom-ready examples to guide personalized story creation.
 - Incorporate multimedia elements such as images, audio narration, and videos to enhance engagement and accessibility.
- Design personalized social stories aligned with selected digital media for young children with ASD to support emotional regulation, communication, and social understanding.
 - Apply key principles for creating effective and individualized digital social stories tailored to the developmental and emotional needs of each child.
 - Develop digital social stories based on real-life classroom scenarios and case studies.
- Integrate digital social stories into daily classroom routines.
 - Embed digital social stories into transitions, behavioural interventions, and emotional learning activities.

Before starting this module, students are expected to have:

- Comprehensive understanding of ASD: Knowledge of the core characteristics of ASD; cognitive profiles associated with ASD; the impact of ASD on communication, emotional regulation, and social interactions; sensory processing profiles and their impact on learning.
- Knowledge of typical and atypical social-emotional development in young children (ages 3–7): Understanding the differences between typical social-emotional milestones and the atypical patterns seen in children with ASD, as covered in Module 1,
- Familiarity with inclusive educational principles and interventions: An awareness of the importance of inclusive strategies for supporting social skills and emotional awareness in neurodiverse learners.
- Basic digital literacy skills: Prior comfort with using digital tools and resources such as software and application tools (like Story Creator, Canva, web 3 tools, and potentially AI-based tools) and accessible multimedia tools (images, audio narration, video).

Modul 4	Contact hours		Self-study
	Lectures	Workshops/Seminars	
	2	5	10-15

5.2. Module learning outcomes

Knowledge	K10 - Identify and describe various digital tools and resources that can be used to create and present digital social stories
	K11- Describe the digital story types
	K12 - Explain how digital social stories can be integrated into daily classroom routines, transitions, and behavioural interventions
	K13 - Describe the features of the digital social stories used for young children with ASD
	K14 - Describe the possible benefits of the digital social stories on emotional regulation, communication, and awareness of social interactions
	K15 - Understand how observation and assessment methods are used to monitor and evaluate whether target behaviours or skills are achieved through digital social stories.
Skills	S11 - Utilize digital tools (e.g., templates, apps, editing software-if possible) for social story creation.
	S12 - Create digital social story scenarios that accurately describe a specific social situation relevant to preschool students with ASD in an inclusive classroom, including identifying the setting, characters, and target behaviour or skill
	S13 - Apply strategies to integrate digital social stories into daily classroom routines, embedding them into transitions, behavioural interventions, and emotional learning activities for young children with ASD

Competence	C11 - Evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of various digital tools and multimedia components for creating personalised, interactive, and engaging digital social stories
	C12 - Design t a systematic approach for creating and using digital social stories tailored to individual preschool students with ASD, ensuring usability and accessibility
	C13 - Collaborate effectively with parents, colleagues, and other professionals to develop, implement, and evaluate digital social stories as part of a comprehensive support strategy for young children with ASD

5.3. Syllabus & topics

	Type	Topic	Self-study activity	Resources	Hours
1	Lecture	<p>Introduction to Digital Social Stories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of digital tools and multimedia elements - Understanding digital story types, features, and their relevance for young children with ASD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research digital tools and platforms (mentioned in the class) used for story creation - Explore examples of digital social stories and their formats 	<p>RIGA, Asimina; Ioannidi, Vasiliki; Papayiannis, Nikolaos. Social Stories and Digital Literacy Practices For Inclusive Education. European Journal of Special Education Research, [S.l.], v. 7, n. 2, june 2021. ISSN 25012428. Available at: <https://oapub.org/edu/index.php/ejse/article/view/3773>. And LINK FOR ACCESS</p> <p>https://elearningindustry.com/18-free-digital-storytelling-tools-for-teachers-and-students</p>	1
2	Lecture	<p>Principles of Designing Personalised Digital Social Stories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applying principles into storyboards for effective, individualized stories for children with ASD - Tailoring format, usability, and accessibility using multimedia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyse how multimedia can enhance accessibility and engagement for young children with ASD 	<p>Omar, S., & Bidin, A. (2015). The Impact of Multimedia Graphic and Text with Autistic Learners in Reading. <i>Universal Journal of Educational Research</i>, 3(12), 989-996. LINK FOR ACCESS</p>	1
3	Workshop	<p>Digital Social Story Scenario Creation & Content Drafting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing realistic scenarios based on real-life classroom situations/case studies - Identifying settings, characters, and target behaviours/skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hands-on practice with a chosen digital tool to structure the story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital tools on the Internet or installed on the computer - EARLY-ASD digital social stories 	3

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Drafting descriptive and coaching sentences for each storyboard- Selecting and incorporating multimedia elements			
4	Workshop	<p>Implementing, Collaborating, and Evaluating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Strategies for ensuring effective usability and access for the child and effective integration.- Evaluation methods (observation, assessment) to measure the effectiveness of the digital social stories.- Peer feedback and discussion of drafted stories/scenarios.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Design a mini-lesson by incorporating digital social stories into regular teaching practice.- Preschool experiment	<p>Camilleri, L. J., Maras, K., & Brosnan, M. (2024). Effective digital support for autism: Digital social stories. <i>Frontiers in Psychiatry, 14</i>, 1272157.</p> <p>LINK FOR ACCESS</p> <p>Como, D. H., Goodfellow, M., Hudak, D., & Cermak, S. A. (2024). "A scoping review: Social stories supporting behaviour change for individuals with Autism". <i>Journal of occupational therapy, schools & early intervention, 17</i>(1), 154–175.</p> <p>LINK FOR ACCESS</p>	2

5.4. Teaching & learning methods

- Interactive lectures with multimedia
- Group discussions
- Hands-on workshops
- Video-based case analysis
- Hands-on digital social story development
- Critical Review of research articles
- Literature analysis

5.5. Proposed assessment methods

Method	Description	Weight
Case Study Analysis & Reflection	Analysis of a real-life classroom scenario, including a problem behaviour and writing a reflective report on how to solve the challenging situation by creating and using a social story presented in a digital media.	30%
Digital Social Story Project	Design of a personalized digital Social Story using multimedia tools.	35%
Observation Report	Observing a child's behaviour before and after using a Social Story through data collection and reflection on the effectiveness of the intervention.	25%
Workshop Performance & Peer Review	Portfolio including completed storyboard worksheets, mind map, and completed peer feedback	10%

5.6. List of Materials

*All materials are included in APPENDIX D

1. PowerPoint presentations:
 - Digital Tools for Story Creation (Appendix D.1.1)
 - Digital Story types (Appendix D.1.2)
2. Worksheets:
 - Examples from the Internet and EARLY-ASD (Appendix D.2.3)
 - Digital social story analysis form (Appendix D.2.4)
 - Digital social story and storyboard planning (Appendix D.3.1)
 - Mind map about digital social stories for young children with ASD (Appendix D.4.2)
3. Other:
 - Digital social story checklist (Appendix D.3.2)
 - Handout – Core principles of digital social stories (Appendix D.2.1)
 - Pop quiz – Core principles of digital social stories (Appendix D.2.2)
 - Digital social story usability and accessibility checklist (Appendix D.4.1)
 - Peer-review form for developed digital social stories (Appendix D.3.3)
 - Observation form - Evaluating the effectiveness of a digital social story (Experiment with a child) Appendix D.4.4)
 - Peer feedback sheet for improvement Principles of designing personalised digital social stories (Appendix D.4.5)
 - Research Analysis Worksheet - Frank J. Sansosti, K. Powell-Smith (2008). Using Computer-Presented Social Stories and Video Models to Increase the Social Communication Skills of Children With High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hzjZbMZ0aMBHttJuDH7ALqu8b3qslURh/view> Appendix D.1.3)
4. Resources
 - [Reader 1: Effective digital support for autism: digital social stories](#) (Part of Appendix D.4.2)
 - [Reader 2: A scoping review: Social stories supporting behaviour change for individuals with Autism](#) (Part of Appendix D.4.2)

5.7. Detailed class plan

Lecture – Introduction to Digital Social Stories

Segment	Learning Activity	Materials & Resources
Overview of digital tools and multimedia elements	Introduction to various digital tools and platforms for creating social stories, including basic presentation programs	Slides 1-8 (Digital tools for story creation) (Appendix D.1.1) • Internet – Web Browsing
Research on editable templates and example stories	Searching websites offering editable social story templates and existing examples for personalized story design	Slide 9 (PPT - Digital tools for story creation) (Appendix D.1.1) • Internet – Web Browsing
Overview of digital story types	Examining different digital story types, features, and their relevance for young children with ASD	Slides 1-8 (PPT – Digital Story Types) (Appendix D.1.2)
Group Discussion	Discussion of paper	• Frank J. Sansosti, K. Powell-Smith (2008). Using Computer-Presented Social Stories and Video Models to Increase the Social Communication Skills of Children With High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders LINK FOR ACCESS Research Analysis Worksheet_ (Appendix D.1.3)

Lecture – Principles of Designing Personalised Digital Social Stories

Segment	Learning Activity	Materials & Resources
Overview of core principles for digital social story development	Examination of core principles for effective and individualised digital social stories	Handout 1 for the 2nd Lecture – Core Principles (Appendix D.2.1) Pop Quiz – Core Principles of Digital Social Stories (Appendix D.2.2)
Hands-on Activity	Analysis of social stories provided online.	Examples from the Internet and EARLY-ASD (Appendix D.2.3)

		Worksheet 1 for Lecture 1 - Digital social story analysis form (Appendix D.2.4)
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Workshop - Digital Social Story Scenario Creation & Content Drafting		
Segment	Learning Activity	Materials & Resources
Group Discussion	Scenario selection and problem definition	Worksheet 2 For Workshop 1– Digital Social Story Planning – Storyboards included (Appendix D.3.1)
Group Work	Drafting storyboard cells using 4 sentence types - Selection and integration of multimedia components (audio, visuals)	Worksheet 2 For Workshop 1– Digital Social Story Planning – Storyboards included (Appendix D.3.1)
Group self-assessment	Assessment of the developed social story	Digital Social Story Checklist (Appendix D.3.2)
Inter-groups assessment (or peer reviews if stories developed individually)	Peer reviews	Peer-Review Form for Developed Digital Social Stories (Appendix D.3.3)

Workshop - Implementing, Collaborating, and Evaluating		
Segment	Learning Activity	Materials & Resources
Group work	Creating editable digital social story templates	Digital tools mentioned in the 1st presentation
Group work	Creating a digital social story by using the prepared templates	Digital tools mentioned in the 1st presentation
Group assessment	Usability and Accessibility of the created digital social stories and their templates	Strategies – Digital social story usability and accessibility checklist (Appendix D.4.1)

Group work	Creating a mind map upon reading the articles provided.	Strategies – Mind map about digital social stories for young children with ASD (Appendix D.4.2) READER 1 – READER 2 (Part of Appendix D.4.2)
Self-study	Designing a mini-lesson by incorporating digital social stories into regular teaching practice.	Digital social stories created either by the students or EARLY-ASD team
Preschool experiment	Applying the mini lesson with a preschool child. Monitoring the child after the application to observe short-term and long-term impacts (if applicable).	Digital social stories created either by the students or EARLY-ASD team
Evaluation from students	Social Story Application Observation Peer review for teaching practice in the preschool	Social Story Observation Form (Appendix D.4.3) Peer Review for Improvement (Appendix D.4.4)
Group Discussion	Discussion on how to collaborate with other teachers, parents and caregivers to use digital social stories more effectively	Student’s Portfolios including checklists, observations, and reviews