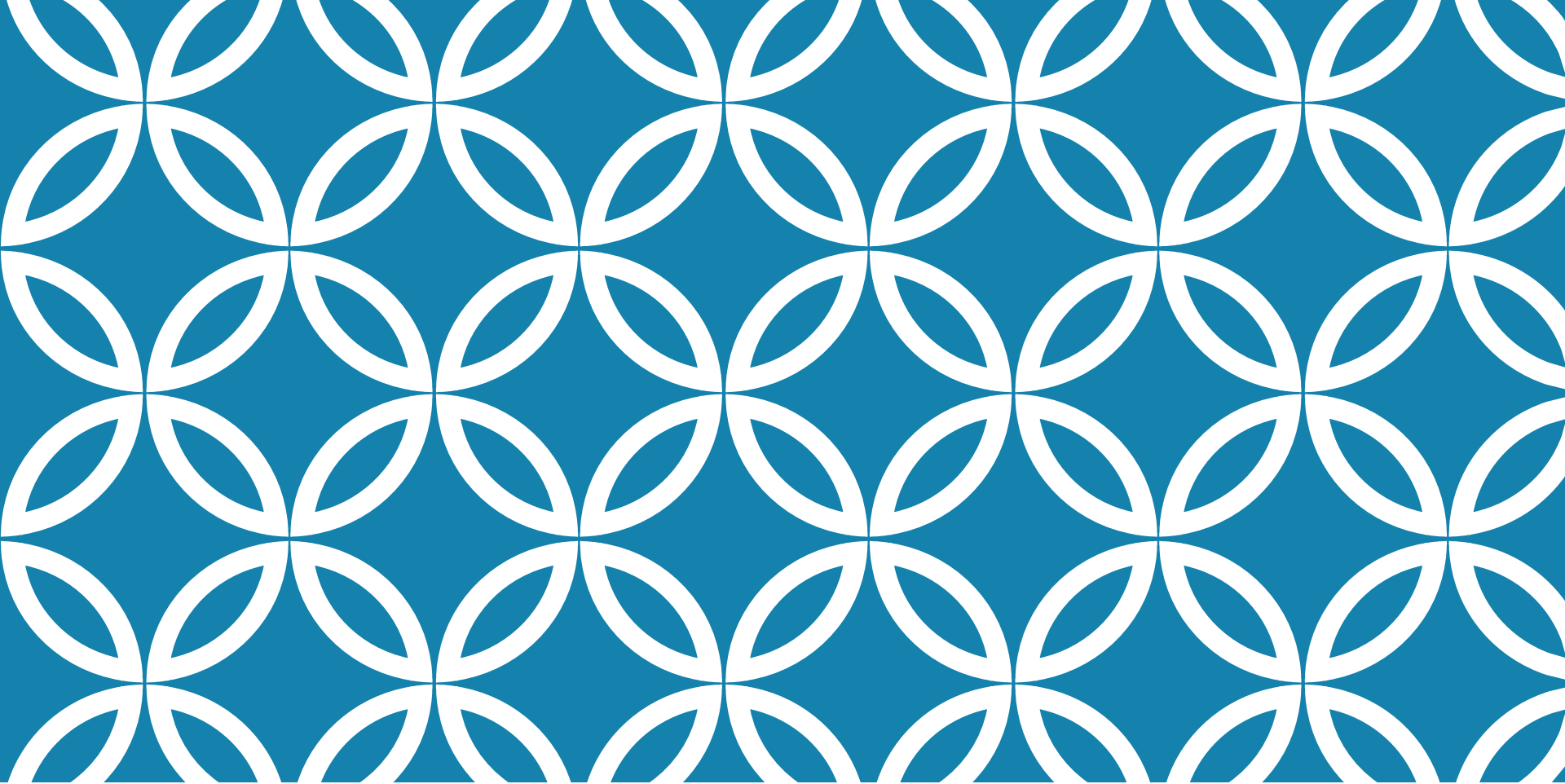


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# FROM ISOLATION TO CONNECTION

Assessing the effectiveness  
of an intervention model  
for students with social and  
communication challenges

# PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

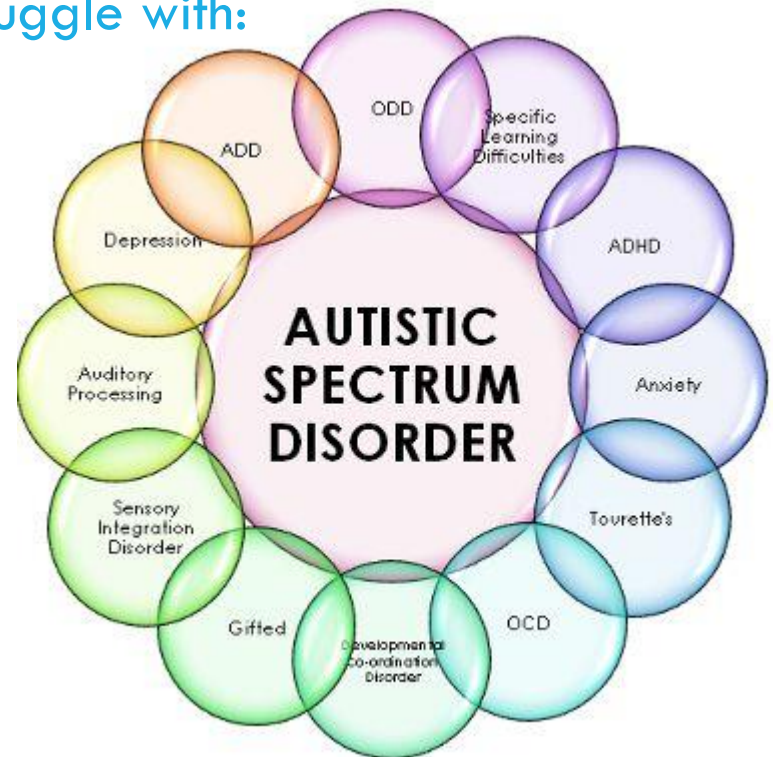
- ❖ Overview of *The Social Group*
- ❖ How improving communication skills translates into retention and student success
- ❖ How assessment can be used to enhance quality of programs

# AUTISM SPECTRUM ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Estimated that up to 2% of enrolled students nationwide are diagnosed with ASD and they have an 80% incompleation rate  
(VanBergeijk, Klin, & Volkmar, 2008)

College Students with ASD often struggle with:

- ❖ Communication Skills
- ❖ Social Interaction
- ❖ Academics
- ❖ Transition and navigation
- ❖ Independence



# COLLABORATION BETWEEN CAPS & OSSD

Each department independently observed the need for more services for students with ASD:

- ❖ Academic Coaching
- ❖ Individual Therapy
- ❖ Social Skills Training

Developed “The Social Group” as a way to meet these needs

# PROBLEM STATEMENT & NEED FOR ASSESSMENT

- ❖ Inconsistent Participation
- ❖ Communication was not improving
- ❖ No social interaction outside of group meetings



# HOW WE ASSESSED PROGRESS

## Qualitative

- ❖ Direct observation
- ❖ Interviews with our students
- ❖ Self-report from participants
- ❖ Informal reports from faculty & staff who interact with our students

## Quantitative

- ❖ Retention Rate
- ❖ Cumulative GPA
- ❖ Number of participants who consistently show up to meetings

# RESULTS OF INITIAL ASSESSMENT

Instead of our choosing the topics each week, assessment indicated that the participants wanted these specific topics:

- ❖ Understanding the unwritten rules of texting
- ❖ Non-verbal communication skills
- ❖ Oral communication skills
- ❖ How to understand patterns of communication (dating, job interviews, friendships)





# EXAMPLE: WORKING ON ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

What is your partner's name?

Where are they from?

Do they have any siblings?

What is one thing they like?

What is one thing they dislike?

Do you have anything in common?

# SIGNIFICANCE

## Retention

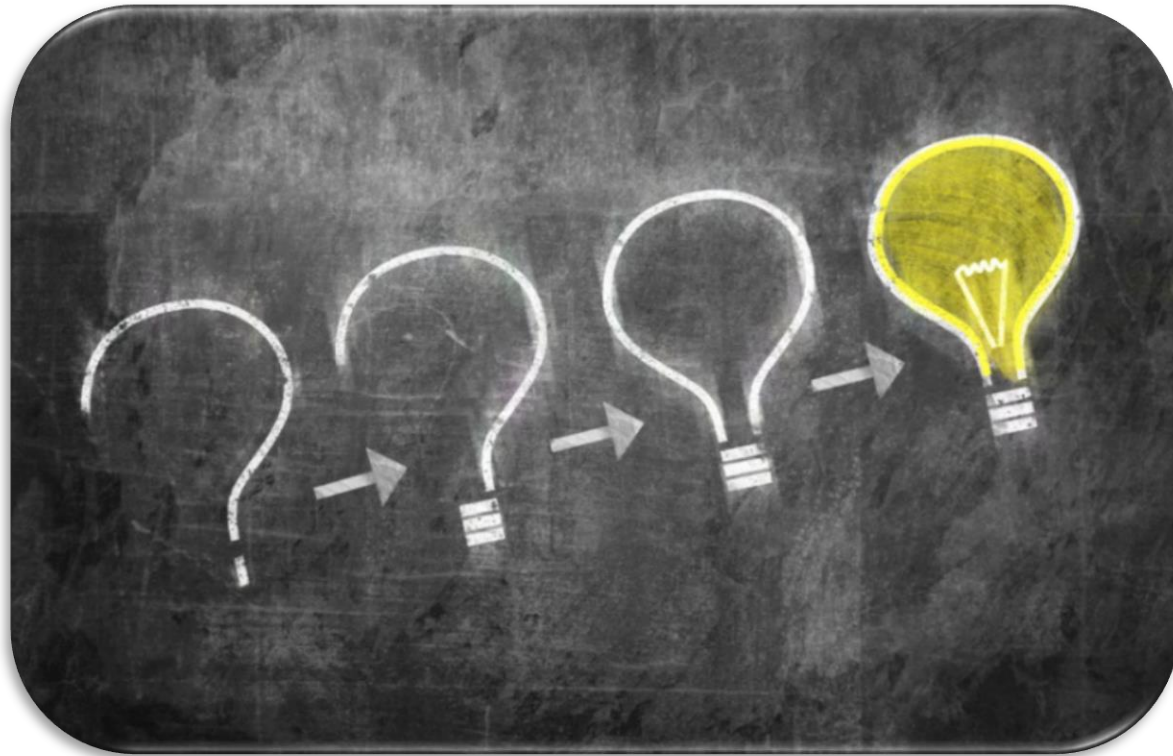
- On average ASD Students attend **3** to **4** institutions before they either drop out or successfully settle in at a school
- We have a 99% retention rate for our members (25 Members over the past 3.5 years)
- Students reach out to OSSD, CAPS, and each other initiate conversation and problem solve instead of isolating and retreating
- Students reach out to other departments on campus

## Student Success

- Feedback from faculty that they observe improvements in our students navigating course expectations
- Participant Average GPA: 3.25
- Participants form social bonds with each other (parties, movies, dates)
- Participants go on co-op, and successfully interview for jobs in their fields

# HOW ASSESSMENT CAN BE USED TO ENHANCE QUALITY OF PROGRAMS

- ❖ Helps determine if we're meeting our learning objectives
- ❖ Transforms programs to provide a quality experience for participants



Danny Nuss  
Director, OSSD  
[dnuss@pacific.edu](mailto:dnuss@pacific.edu)

Kimberlee DeRushia  
Associate Director, CAPS  
[kderushia@pacific.edu](mailto:kderushia@pacific.edu)