

# Nonverbal Communication

## Autism & ABA Therapy Social Skills

### Activity Title:

"Mirror Me: Understanding Nonverbal Communication"

### Objective:

To improve the understanding and use of nonverbal communication cues such as body language and facial expressions.

### Materials Needed:

- A set of cards with different facial expressions or body postures (happy, sad, angry, surprised, etc.)
- A mirror (optional, for self-observation)
- A comfortable, distraction-free space

### Activity Setup:

Prepare the Cards:

- Create or find cards that clearly show a range of facial expressions and body postures.
- Include basic emotions and expressions that are commonly used in everyday interactions.

Choose a Quiet Space:

- Select a calm and comfortable area where the child feels at ease and is less likely to be distracted.

### Activity Steps:

Expression Imitation:

- The adult shows a card to the child and demonstrates the expression or posture.

- The child tries to imitate the expression or posture as closely as possible.
- Use a mirror so the child can see themselves and adjust their expression or posture.

#### Role Reversal:

- Allow the child to choose a card and demonstrate the expression or posture.
- The adult then imitates the child.
- This encourages observation and attention to detail in nonverbal cues.

#### Guess the Emotion:

- The adult or child shows an expression or posture without revealing the card.
- The other person guesses the emotion or message being conveyed.
- Discuss why certain expressions or postures represent specific emotions or messages.

#### Storytelling with Expressions:

- Create a simple story and ask the child to add nonverbal cues at key points in the story.
- For example, "When the character found his lost toy, how did he feel? Show me his face/body."

#### Feedback and Encouragement:

- Provide positive reinforcement throughout the activity.
- Offer gentle corrections and explanations to improve understanding.

## **Skills Targeted:**

- Recognizing and interpreting facial expressions and body language
- Expressing emotions nonverbally
- Enhancing observational skills
- Building empathy by understanding others' nonverbal communication