



### Assess Needs

- How does autism manifest itself in this child? (Gather background information from parents.)
- What are the child's interests?
- What are the child's goals and/or reasons for participating?
- Does the child have social interaction difficulties? If so, what are the triggers?

### Design the Sports Environment

- Does the child have any sensory sensitivities—hypersensitivity or hyposensitivity?
- Do you need to adjust the intensity of the gym lighting?
- Are there activities that will generate too much noise and overstimulate this child?
- Is there any sensory calming equipment you can use to help prevent overstimulation?
- Is there adequate space for the child to move freely? (PE held in a small classroom may heighten the anxiety of a child who feels overwhelmed in confined or crowded spaces.)  
that seem to be agitating the child.

### Try New Coaching Techniques

**(Remember, every child with autism is different, so not all of these will work with every student!)**

- Modify voice tone and volume so as not to intimidate or overstimulate children with heightened hearing sensitivity.
- Consider using an aide (perhaps a peer) to act as a clarifier, personal support, and instructional guide for the child.
- Short coaching instructions plus lots of modeling behavior may help the child understand what is expected.
- Strong use of visual schedules might help you convey your ideas.
- Prepare the child for transitions between activities by using a cue like a finger tap on the shoulder.

### Use Differentiation Strategies

- Although many children with autism are comfortable working on their own, working in groups is great for learning and social development. Flexible grouping is a useful strategy.
- Choice boards with lots of visual explanations can provide appropriate activities that let children regulate their pace and pursue their interests within the framework of your class.
- Activity content should be modified to reflect the interests of the child and yet still tie in with your instructional goals. (Does the child love trains? Try a game of Train Tag that the whole class will enjoy!)