



#1 Visual Supports (VS) for increasing engagement

A picture or visual enhances communication and instruction. VS are any visual display that supports the client engaging in a desired behavior or skill. VS are easily implemented and should be part of every workout. Examples include:

- Pictures
- Written words
- Visual schedules
- Checklists



#3 Reinforcement for success

Positive reinforcement with verbal praise throughout the workout increases the likelihood that the client will continue with exercise. When coaching clients, encourage the Exercise Connection philosophy, “persistence, not perfection.”

Top 3 Evidence-Based Practices for Exercise Programming in Autism



#2 Video Modeling (VM) for quick exercise skill acquisition

Video-recorded demonstrations of the skill or targeted behavior can be shown to the client to assist with learning and skill uptake. VM can be viewed during instruction or at a later time. VM also reduce the amount of verbal instruction required, limiting distraction and promoting independence.

Effective exercise programming across a diverse client base includes evidence-based practices (EBPs). Three procedures shown here produce positive outcomes for exercise engagement, particularly for clients with autism. These EBPs involve universal design, which increases inclusivity and utility in different settings for this population.

Note: We respect the use of person-first or identify-first language based on individual identification. The Exercise Connection community is representative of people who identify as “autistic” as well as “person(s) with autism.” To know which language is preferred by your client, we encourage you to ask your client and/or their caregiver.



Made in partnership with Exercise Connection