



Welcome to

JAN 2026

# VISTA'S Newsletter



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“It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.”

- Audre Lorde

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## Vista News

- Social Group is back on Tuesdays from 3:30-5pm
  - One spot open, need-level dependent
- Vista closed:
  - Pro-D Day (Feb 3)
  - Family Day (Feb 16)
  - Spring Break (Mar 16-27)
  - Easter Long Weekend (Apr 3-6)
  - Pro-D Day (Apr 27)

## Upcoming Events

- Show & Tell - every Wednesday morning
- Spirit Days:
  - Superhero Day (Feb 6)
  - PJ Day (Apr 14)
  - Rainbow/Colour day (May 13)
- Theme Days:
  - Jan - Dino Day
  - Feb - Alphabet Day
  - Mar - Spring Day
  - Apr - Safari Day



UPDATE: Vista's  
NEW 3:1  
Homeschooling  
Program!



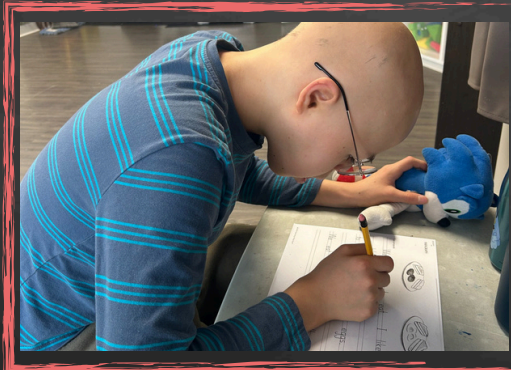
## 3:1 Alternative Homeschooling

Vista launched our first 3:1 Alternative Homeschooling program back in September 2025 and it's been a huge success! This program allows learners to focus on academics while prioritizing social and communication skills, regulation and executive functioning. Learners follow a typical 9am-2pm academic schedule and the higher ratio reduces the out-of-pocket costs for families. 3 learners are currently enrolled in our classroom and it has been so amazing to see the friendships develop as each learner continues to learn and grow. Limited spots are still available - inquire to [office@vistaacademy.org](mailto:office@vistaacademy.org) if interested.



# Student Spotlight

AN has been working hard at Vista since October of 2023 and he has accomplished so much during his time at Vista. When AN first started here, school work was a tough task! AN was learning about functional communication, number identification, and was learning the basics of writing with a pencil. AN has worked so hard to develop new skills and build a better relationship with school and is now writing in his own journal, practicing reading throughout his session, and working on sequential counting while also practicing addition with linking cubes! AN has developed strong relationships with so many of the BIs at Vista, even the ones he doesn't directly work with, due to his playful humour and his desire to include friends. AN has even begun to play with other learners at Vista by swinging, playing board games, and playing chase games. We are excited to see all the new games AN will come up with and the new skills he will develop throughout his school year. We are so happy to have such an imaginative and curious learner here at Vista. Thank you for being you, AN!



## Local Events & News

- Home gifted to Autism Okanagan to meet growing needs in the Okanagan community
- Building understanding and support: Okanagan College offers Autism Spectrum Certificate
- Kelowna International Airport and Canucks Autism Network Launch Autism-Friendly Resource Kit for Families
- 182 New Licensed Child Care Spaces to Support Kelowna Families

## Local Groups

- PLAN Okanagan
- Autism Support Network of British Columbia - Parent Facebook Group
- Kelowna Kids Events & Things to Do Facebook Group
- Autism & Neurodiversity: Family Support in BC Facebook Group
- ADHD Parent Neurodivergent support- British Columbia (BC) Canada Facebook Group
- Okanagan Family Fun Adventures
- Autism Okanagan Groups
- Canucks Autism Network Groups
- City of Kelowna: Adaptive Programs

Scroll to the bottom to find the website links for all underlined words!

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**Community**  
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Lily  
Krank

"The ability to see the world differently should be celebrated, not stifled. Vista creates a safe space where children's uniqueness and creativity can flourish, which is why I am deeply grateful to be a part of the Vista community."

- Lily Krank, Board Member, Vista Academy

## Community Spotlight

Lily Krank is a PhD graduate student in Clinical Psychology at the University of British Columbia Okanagan and a strong advocate for inclusive, evidence-based mental health care. Based in Kelowna, she is actively engaged in academic, clinical, and community initiatives that support mental health and neurodiversity across the Okanagan. Lily works as a psychologist assistant and researcher with the Provincial Health Services Authority at the Kelowna Forensic Psychiatric Clinic, with research interests in forensic psychology, decision-making, and reducing stigma for marginalized populations. She is a graduate researcher in UBCO's Truth and Trust Lab and a graduate teaching assistant in undergraduate psychology, currently in Child Development. In the community, Lily provides neuropsychological assessments and evidence-based therapy, frequently supporting individuals with Autism, ADHD, and learning disabilities. She is an executive member of UBCO's Mental Health Awareness and Advocacy Club, where she helped lead a fundraiser for Vista Academy, and is also a Vista Academy board member and former employee who proudly supports neurodiversity-affirming education.



## General News



- The Assembly: A new show highlighting neurodivergent voices
- Moncton is the first city in Canada to raise the neurodiversity flag.
- Dubai becomes first autism-certified destination
- Radisson Blu Resort Lanzarote becomes one of Spain's first certified autism-friendly hotels.
- Finding Calm Through the Lens: Caitlyn's Story

## Resources

- Neurodiversity & Mental Health: Resources for Families and Caregivers
- Neurodiversity & Mental Health: Resources for Educators
- Autism Information Services British Columbia (AIS BC)
- Variety – The Children's Charity of BC
- Individual and Organization Funding - CKNW Kids' Fund
- Physical Activity Grants - Canadian Tire Jumpstart
- Physical Activity Grants - KidSport Canada



Check out these Instagram accounts to learn more about neurodiversity:

@neurowild\_

@learnplaythrive

@everybrainisdifferent

@kidsmasterskills

# Antecedent Strategies

Antecedent strategies are commonly used in schools, 1:1 learning, and sometimes even in homes to promote supportive behaviours and decrease challenging ones. Antecedent strategies refer to how we modify and change the environment before difficult circumstances arrive (Hardesty et al., 2014). We use lots of antecedent strategies at Vista but they don't have to be limited to just school! Here are some antecedent strategies that might be helpful for parents and guardians in home environments:

## 1) Environmental changes to stimulation levels

- This involves altering the environment to suit your learner's needs to increase their regulation during harder activities
- What does this look like?
  - decreasing the amount of light or noise when doing a non-preferred activity
  - providing additional stimulation to regulate such as fidgets or a comfy blanket

DID YOU  
KNOW



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Hardesty, E., Roberts, B., & Kane, T. (2024, October 24). *Antecedent-based interventions: Is there science behind that?* Association for Science in Autism Treatment. Retrieved from: <https://asatonline.org/for-parents/becoming-a-savvy-consumer/is-there-science-behind-that-antecedent-based-interventions/#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20National%20Clearinghouse,and%20away%20from%20challenging%20behavior.>

Hume, K., Steinbrenner, J.R., Odom, S.L. et al. (2021). Evidence-based practices for children, youth, and young adults with Autism: Third generation review. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 51, 4013-4032. doi:10.1007/s10803-020-04844-2

# Antecedent Strategies

## 2) Priming

- This involves exposing the learner to the idea of something harder before the hard thing occurs
- What does this look like?
  - using a visual support to show the learner what comes next
  - giving a time limit with a visual timer



## 3) Providing choices

- This involves giving your learner some control over what happens next by giving them options.
- What does this look like?
  - “Do you want to use a green or red pencil when you do your math?”
  - “Should we do \_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_ first?”



## 4) Visual supports

- This was briefly mentioned in “Priming,” but visual supports are a great strategy to provide consistency and structure for your learner while providing a concrete image of what to expect next.
- What does this look like?
  - Using a “first/then” visual to show what they get to do after a less-preferred activity



# Antecedent Strategies

## 5) Using learner preferences

- This strategy involves applying things you know your learner loves to the harder activities they may need to complete.
- What does this look like?
  - “Let’s see if we can do this chore as fast as Lightning McQueen would!”
  - “I know getting ready in the morning is hard. I bet Spiderman also has a hard time with it. Let’s try our best just like Spiderman would.”



Research supports antecedent strategies as an evidence-based practice to support positive behavioural outcomes (Hume et al., 2021), and some of these strategies only require small changes in the way we present difficult tasks to our learners. We use a mix of these strategies here at Vista and we always try to remember that each learner is different so it's important to try a combination of strategies. It can even vary by the day! It may be worth it to try out some of these strategies with your learner (if you haven't already) to continue supporting them through difficult moments!

