



Welcome to

SEPT 2025

VISTA'S Newsletter

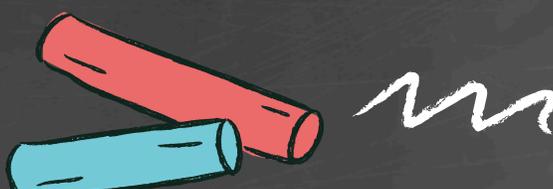


“

Never assume a person who has difficulty communicating has nothing to say.

- Stacy Sekinger

”



Vista News

- Social Group is back on Tuesdays from 3:30-5pm
 - One spot open, need-level dependent
- Vista closed:
 - Labour Day (Sept 1)
 - Truth/Reconciliation Day (Sept 30)
 - Pro-D Day (Oct 8)
 - Thanksgiving (Oct 13)
 - Remembrance Day (Nov 11)
 - Pro-D Day (Nov 21)
 - Winter Break (Dec 15-Jan 2)

Upcoming Events

- Show & Tell - every Wednesday afternoon
- Spirit Days:
 - Silly Sock Day - Sept 15
 - Costume Day - Oct 31
 - PJ Day - Nov 19
- Theme Days:
 - Sept - Ocean Day
 - Oct - Fall Day
 - Nov - Space Day
 - Dec - Winter Day



Vista's NEW
program is
starting this
September!

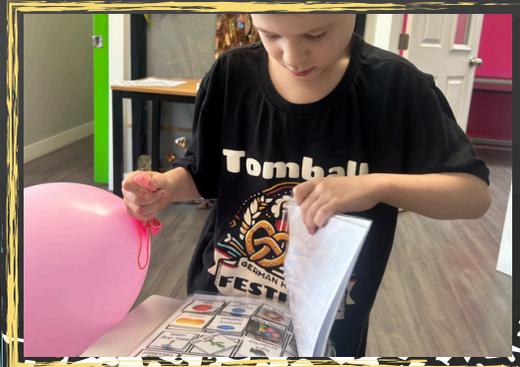
3:1 Alternative Homeschooling

We are now introducing our 3:1 alternative homeschool option! This program allows your learner to focus on academics while prioritizing social and communication skills, regulation and executive functioning. This program runs from Monday to Friday, 9 am - 2 pm, providing learners with a typical academic schedule, while the higher ratio reduces the out-of-pocket costs for families. This program is designed for learners who possess the skills to function in a small group, such as following a group plan, adhering to directions, tolerating peers, and being able to engage in some academics at a table. Limited spots are still available - inquire to office@vistaacademy.org if interested.



Student Spotlight

C has been learning at Vista since July, 2023 and we are so proud of all that he has done in his time at Vista. When C first started here, he was learning skills such as imitation, following one-step situational instructions (ex. "come here"), and responding to his name. C has been working so hard to progress through all of his programs and is now working on tolerating wearing his shoes for safety and has been making so much progress on using his new Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)! C started off by observing as his BIs modelled PECS communication to him and then being prompted through the motion of exchanging a PEC visual with his BI in order to request something. Now, it's not uncommon for C to independently flip through his PECS binder to search for an item he wants to request! C has developed strong relationships with his BIs and when he comes to Vista he loves to swing, count, and play with toy food and puzzles. C continues to learn about and explore new ways to regulate himself and we can't wait to see all the ways he will grow and glow in the future. Thank you for being you, C!



Local Events & News

- ARC Kelowna launches caregiver support group for neurodiverse children
- Fall registration now open at Little Kitchen Academy Kelowna
- Canucks Autism Network brings employment skills program to Kelowna
- New inclusive play features added at Strathcona Beach Park
- Kelowna paddlers make waves at second annual 'Making Waves for Autism,' event



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



Local Groups

- Autism Support Network of British Columbia - Parent Facebook Group
- Kelowna Kids Events & Things to Do Facebook Group
- Okanagan Licensed Child Care Centers and Preschools Facebook Group
- Lower Mission Families Facebook Group
- Okanagan Family Fun Adventures
- Autism Okanagan Groups
- Canucks Autism Network Groups
- City of Kelowna: Adaptive Programs



Greg Ashley

"Every child deserves to be seen, to belong, and to thrive. That's what we're building at Vista—a place full of heart, hope, and possibility."

- Greg Ashley, Board Chair, Vista Academy

Community Spotlight

Greg Ashley, Board Chair of Vista Academy, was born and raised in Kelowna and still calls it home while splitting his time between Kelowna and the Lower Mainland. Married to D'Arcy and dad to Abbey, Katie, and Molly, the entire family are strong advocates for kids on the spectrum. Deeply connected to the community that shaped him, Greg believes every child deserves access to every opportunity—whether in education, the arts, or sports—and always with play and fun at the heart of it. At Vista Academy, he is dedicated to working alongside Directors Chloe and Molly and the rest of the board to continue building a place where learners love to come, families feel welcomed and supported, and everyone is valued and learns in a way that's best for them.

Greg is a real estate developer in the resort and destination development business, and when not in Kelowna or the Lower Mainland, his work often takes him to resort locations across North America. A seeker of fun, Greg loves travel and time with his girls—whether skiing together in the mountains or waterskiing on the lake.



replaydestinations.com



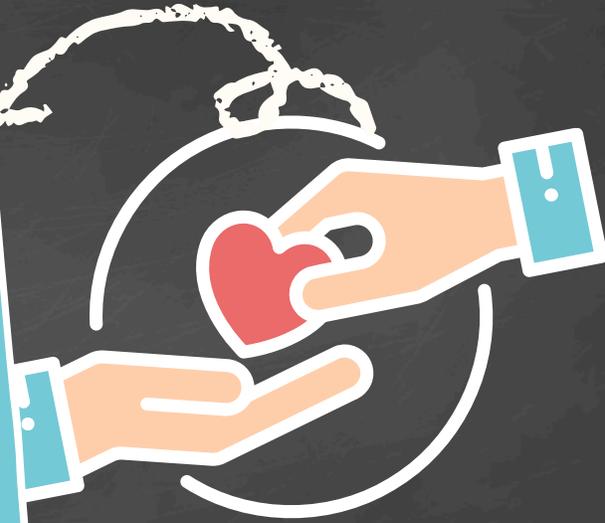
General News

- October marks ADHD Awareness Month, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Month & Dyslexia Awareness Month
- Countdown to 2026: Medicine Hat Gears Up for Special Olympics Canada Summer Games
- Autism Community Training (ACT) "Understanding the Individual Education Plan (IEP)" Sept 10 & 11



Resources

- Autism Information Services British Columbia (AIS BC)
- Child Grants - Variety Children's Charity of BC
- Funding for Families - Cops for Kids
- Individual and Organization Funding - CKNW Kids' Fund
- Funding for Families - Autism Canada: Community Assistance Program (CAP)
- Physical Activity Grants - Canadian Tire Jumpstart
- Physical Activity Grants - KidSport Canada



Check out these Instagram accounts to learn more about neurodiversity:

@findingcoopersvoice
@neurodivergent_lou
@storiesaboutautism

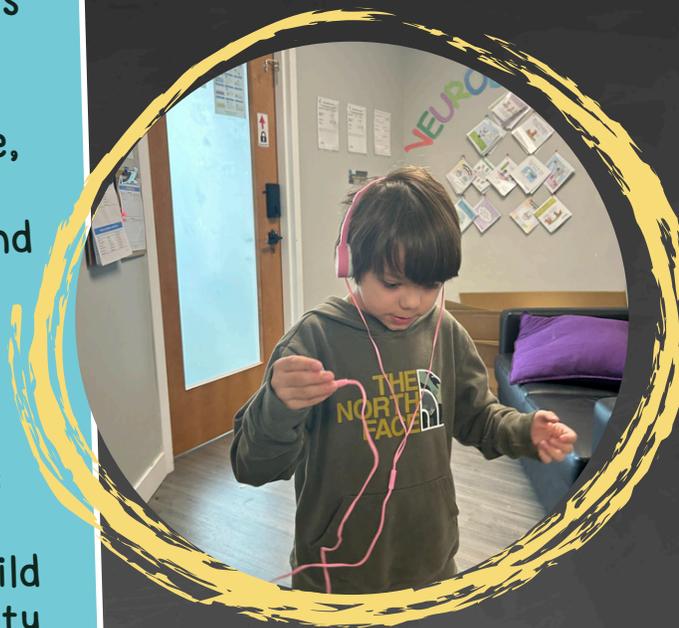
Coregulation

Coregulation refers to the process by which one person supports another in balancing their emotional and physiological state. It is the way one individual's self-regulation guides another's in a social interaction (Kostøl & Kovač, 2022; Your Therapy Source, 2023). The main way to support another person in balancing their own emotional and physiological states is by regulating ourselves.

In recent years, lots of research has been done on coregulation, especially within the parent-child relationship, supporting a relationship between adult responses to child behaviour on a child's self-regulation ability (Lobo & Lunkenheimer, 2020; Paley & Hajal, 2022). Research also supports coregulation as an important tool in the classroom to support child regulation, and subsequently, their cognitive presence (Zheng et al., 2013). It is important both in your child's early development and even into teenagerhood. You might even find that coregulation can be supportive in adult-adult interactions!

There's definitely a strong basis for coregulation in the research, and it's a technique that we've found to be extremely supportive to our learners at Vista over the years. Keep scrolling to find out some of our reliable self-regulation strategies.

DID YOU
KNOW



Kostøl, E. M. F., & Kovač, V. B. (2023). Co-regulation in dyadic parent-child relationships: a video analysis of well-functioning interactions. *Early Child Development and Care*, 194(1), 72-86. doi:10.1080/03004430.2023.2282357

Lobo, F. M., & Lunkenheimer, E. (2020, April 20). Understanding the parent-child coregulation patterns shaping child self-regulation. *Developmental Psychology*, 56(6), 1121-1134. doi:10.1037/dev0000926

Paley, B., & Hajal, N. J. (2022). Conceptualizing emotion regulation and coregulation as family-level phenomena. *Clinical Child Family Psychology Review*, 25(1), 19-43. doi: 10.1007/s10567-022-00378-4.

Wood, V. (2022, July 13). *Co-regulation*. The OT Toolbox. <https://www.theottoolbox.com/co-regulation/>

Self-Regulation Strategies

breathe



- 1) Deep Breathing
 - Sometimes all it takes is a few deep breaths to clear our mind!
- 2) Tense and Release
 - Try tensing up your whole body and then slowly relaxing your muscles.
- 3) 54321 Grounding Technique
 - A mindfulness technique where you identify 5 things you can see, 4 you can touch, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell, and 1 you can taste.
- 4) Listening to Music
 - Whether it's classical music, nature sounds, or just a song that you have an emotional tie to!
- 5) Doing Physical Activity
 - Going for a walk, playing a sport you love, or doing some relaxing yoga could be a great way to support your regulation.
- 6) Arts & Crafts
 - Maybe you like paint-by-numbers, origami, or doodling!
- 7) Emotion Identification Visuals
 - Practicing identifying our emotions and how they make our bodies feel while we're regulated can make this easier to do when we're in a tougher moment.



Self-Regulation Strategies

8) Reliably Supportive Toys/Objects

- Lots of our learners and BIs alike will regulate by keeping a preferred fidget with them throughout the session. Other items such as stuffies, sunglasses, or a weighted shoulder pad can also go a long way. Whatever works for you!

9) Deep Pressure & Heavy Work

- A lot of the Occupational Therapists who work with Vista learners have shared how helpful these activities can be for regulation.
- Deep pressure activities could include weighted supplies, pillow squishes, body squeezes, silly putty, gym, and more.
- Heavy work activities could be pulling a cart, jumping, animal walks, biking, tug-o-war, and more.

10) Going Outside

- Getting some fresh air and being in nature is sometimes the most regulating thing!

While these are common techniques we use at Vista, there are tons of self-regulation techniques that exist and it's all about finding the ones that work best for you and your kiddo. We encourage everyone to figure out some of the reliable ways that you can regulate - both for your kiddo but also for your own benefit. Happy regulating!



Your Therapy Source. (2023, November 3). *Co-regulation - Definition and strategies*. Your Therapy Source. Retrieved Aug. 18, 2025, from <https://www.yourtherapysource.com/blog/2023/11/03/co-regulation/>

Zheng, B., Ganotice, F. A., Lin, C. H., & Tipoe, G. L. (2023). From self-regulation to co-regulation: refining learning presence in a community of inquiry in interprofessional education. *Medical Education Online*, 28(1). doi:10.1080/10872981.2023.2217549

