K12 Supporting Students with Autism
STUDENT CASE RECOMMENDATION FORM

Project ECHO Idaho (ECHO) case presenters are responsible for ensuring that no personally identifiable information (PII) nor protected health information (PHI) is shared during an ECHO session, in compliance with HIPAA privacy laws, to ensure patient privacy and confidentiality. Panelists and participants involved in reviewing the case may provide recommendations, suggestions, or considerations based on the information presented during an ECHO session. The professional practitioner presenting the case is free to accept or reject the advice and remains in control of the patient's care. ECHO case presentations are informal consultations that do not create or otherwise establish a provider-patient relationship between any ECHO clinician and any patient whose case is being presented in an ECHO session.

ECHO Session Date: 10/16/2025

Thank you for presenting your student at ECHO Idaho – K12 Supporting Students with Autism session. Please keep in mind that your School District policies and Health Services procedures, medication administration protocols, process guidelines, remain the guiding principles to your practice.

After review of the case presentation and discussion of this student's case among the ECHO Community of Practice, the following suggestions have been made:

Student Grade Level:

Summary:

The student, a 6th–8th grader with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Moderate Speech Impairment, Asthma, and ADHD, spends the full day in general education classes without paraprofessional support. He has made strong progress, graduating from math, OT, and behavioral services, and enjoys Pokémon and his phone. Current concerns include difficulty with peers and teachers, emotional immaturity, frequent claims of being "bullied" or "triggered," and avoidance of academic work. Peers and staff often find his behaviors disruptive. His parents, who are divorced and struggle to collaborate, discontinued his ADHD medication and declined community counseling services. The school aims to maintain his general education placement and minimize disruptions, seeking guidance on engaging parents and supporting the student's self-awareness and social interactions given limited resources.

Recommendations:

- **Medication:**
  - Consider guanfacine as an alternative to stimulant medication due to mood side effects. It can help address impulsivity and improve sleep, which may positively affect behavior.
- **Sleep:**
  - Assess and prioritize sleep hygiene, as adequate rest can significantly improve daily function and behavior regulation.
- **Therapies:**
  - Occupational Therapy: Support self-regulation and social skills through OT or Applied Behavior Analysis.
  - Speech-Language Pathology: Even though the student graduated from school-based speech services, private speech therapy could address pragmatic language, perspective taking, and self-advocacy skills, which may not qualify under school-based criteria.
- **School Supports:**
  - Conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment to understand the purpose of attention-seeking behaviors (e.g., bumping peers).
  - Identify a trusted adult in the school to act as a co-regulator and provide emotional and sensory support.
  - Encourage special interest connections—linking the student to clubs or affinity groups to build social relationships in a positive context.

- **Sensory & Regulation Needs:**
  - His stress may be masked or manifested instead through impulsive or attention-seeking behaviors (like bumping into peers).
  - While the student appears calm or unaffected outwardly, there may be significant internal distress as the busy, sensory-heavy school environment likely creates hidden stress that the student cannot express in typical ways.
  - Identify a trusted adult "co-regulator" implies concern that the student lacks emotional outlets.
  - Evaluate sensory processing challenges; provide opportunities for movement or outdoor breaks that may reduce stress and impulsive behavior.
- **Parent Engagement:**
  - Explore parent observation of the student's school behavior through visits or video recordings to increase understanding and buy-in.
  - Reframe therapy participation as shared time that strengthens the parent–child relationship rather than detracts from it.
  - Consider parent coaching or connecting with other parents for peer mentorship and support.
  - Investigate respite options to reduce parental stress and improve willingness to engage with services.
- **Collaboration:** Maintain a multidisciplinary, strengths-based approach among educators, therapists, and parents to reinforce consistency across home and school.