

## Teaching Children with Autism Social Skills through NFAR-funded Project



*Chula Vista Elementary School District's Autism Coordinated Education Team*

The Chula Vista Elementary School District Autism Coordinated Education Team (ACE), which serves over 300 students with autism, was recently awarded grant funding by NFAR for the pilot program "Teaching Students with Autism Social Skills through Video Monitoring."

Video monitoring uses Applied Behavioral methods to develop and strengthen communication, social, functional and self-help skills. These techniques are supported by numerous studies, which

## SDSU Masters Program to Implement New Autism Program



SAN DIEGO STATE  
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SDSU Graduate program was recently awarded grant funding by the Office of Special Education to implement a M.A. program that would prepare and help sustain special education teachers of young children with autism.

Unique features of this program include a coaching and mentoring piece aimed at addressing the need for retention of highly

indicate that video monitoring and video self monitoring (VSM) can increase the performance of desired behaviors, especially those related to social and functional skills.

On a small scale, the ACE Team has witnessed the benefits of utilizing VSM techniques first hand with amazing results and is ready to launch an all-out video modeling effort.

With NFAR Grant funding, the ACE Team hopes to document the benefits of video modeling as a viable programmatic intervention as well as to substantiate the incorporation of video modeling as part of their regular social skills groups.

We look forward to seeing their students with autism grow in social awareness and skills!

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## Poway Unified School District Awarded Funds to Trial TeachTown Basics Software



**TEACHTOWN**  
Engage. Learn. Connect.™

Earlier this year, NFAR awarded a Project Grant to the Poway Unified School District, Special Education Department (PUSD) to launch an evaluation of the benefits of using a research-based software program "TeachTown Basics" for teaching students with autism.

Keeping students with autism motivated and involved in group learning environments are ongoing challenges for many special education teachers. However, research examining the effectiveness of computer-assisted instruction for teaching children with autism has shown promising results. TeachTown Basics is a research-based comprehensive software program that utilizes Discrete Trial and Pivotal Response methodologies as well as a combination of structured learning and naturalistic learning activities to optimize each child's treatment program.

A recent study supported by a National Department of Education

skilled personnel as well as the need for coaching novice teachers in the field. SDSU will be collaborating with School Districts: Poway Unified , San Diego Unified , Chula Vista Elementary , La Mesa Spring Valley as well as agencies such as The Institute for Effective Education and Children's Toddler's School.

Congratulations to SDSU Masters Program Educators for the development of this new program aimed at improving the educational environment for children with autism!

[Click here for more information on SDSU](#)

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## NFAR in the News



When the editors of the local bilingual lifestyle magazine Nostika wanted to feature autism in their July issue, they asked Juan Leon, NFAR co-founder and father of

grant showed significant change from pre-test scores to post-test scores (a 53% increase) for children using TeachTown Basics software. The study results also indicated positive changes in behavior, language and social interactions for children with autism. While appropriate language went up, inappropriate language and behaviors decreased by 61%.

PUSD will explore the effectiveness of integrating TeachTown Basics instruction into a classroom curriculum, and determine whether similar positive results can be achieved within an educational setting. They expect to announce their evaluation results later this year.

a son with autism, to help write the article.

Specifically prepared to help educate San Diego's Latino community on autism's growing numbers and warning signs, the story is printed in both English and Spanish language versions.

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[>> Click here to read the article](#)