



PYRAMID EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANTS

*The source for services designed to enhance the lives of individuals
with autism and related developmental disabilities*

Training ✎ Consultation ✎ Certification

Picture Exchange Communication System® (PECS®) & Pyramid Approach to Education®

SERVICE DIRECTORY

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Who Is Pyramid?

Pyramid Educational Consultants was established in 1992 by Andy Bondy, PhD, and Lori Frost, MS, CCC-SLP. They, and the entire staff of Pyramid, offer consultative services in home settings as well as public and private organizations that combine the broad spectrum of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and a unique approach to functional communication. Pyramid is well known for providing highly successful training programs and staff development within many public school settings. Pyramid consultants include speech-language pathologists, psychologists, Board Certified Behavior Analysts and special education teachers. Pyramid is the source for the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) - the dynamic alternative/augmentative system that focuses on initiation of communication rather than teacher controlled responses. The PECS Training Manual, written by Ms. Frost and Dr. Bondy, has helped thousands implement this widely acclaimed system.

Pyramid is the source for the Pyramid Approach to Education- a step-by-step approach to developing environments that blend motivational systems with functional activities and creative communication strategies. The Pyramid Approach is the basis for staff and family training. It is used by many public and private schools around the world. Pyramid is the source for workshops on PECS and the Pyramid Approach to Education. Workshops may be designed to introduce PECS or the Pyramid Approach to professionals and/or family members. Pyramid is the source for staff development, program design or family training. Pyramid offers a wide range of services provided by a number of talented professionals who are highly trained in their fields.

The Pyramid Mission

The mission of Pyramid Educational Consultants is to provide exceptional behavior analytic and communication consultation and training to support educators, professionals, families, and caretakers in teaching and caring for individuals with learning difficulties. Functional and practical interventions using the full spectrum of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) are used to teach individuals how to communicate, function independently, and be successful in their schools, homes, places of employment, and the community.

The Pyramid Group of Companies

Pyramid Educational Consultants USA
Pyramid Educational Consultants UK
Pyramid Educational Consultants Australia
Pyramid Educational Consultants of Canada
Pyramid Educational Consultants France
Pyramid Educational Consultants of Greece
Pyramid Educational Consultants of Japan
Pyramid Educational Consultants of Spain
Pyramid Educational Consultants of Germany
Pyramid Educational Consultants of Poland
Pyramid Educational Consultants of Romania
Pyramid Educational Consultants of Brazil
Pyramid Educational Consultants of Korea
Pyramid Educational Consultants of Portugal
Pyramid Educational Consultants of China

Pyramid Approach to Education®

The Pyramid Approach to Education is a unique model of teaching that establishes effective learning environments for individuals with developmental disabilities and/or severe learning impairments. Designed by Dr. Andy Bondy, and based on the principles of broad spectrum Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), this model offers sound principles for those who teach in classroom, home or community settings.

The Pyramid Approach is based on two different types of learning elements: structural and instructional. The structural elements form the base of the Pyramid, creating an environment conducive to learning. The base elements include:

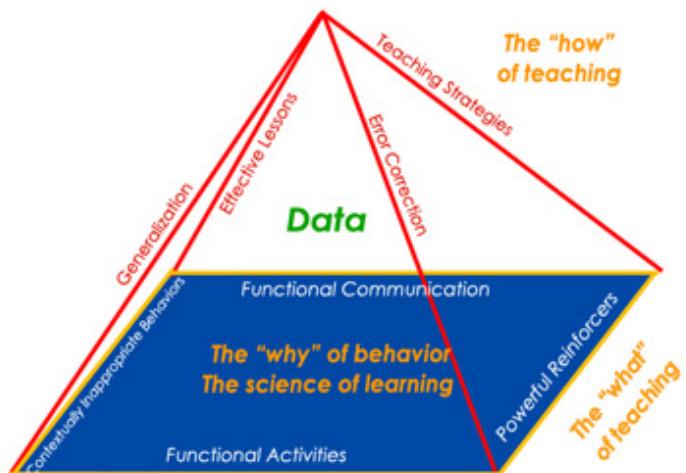
1. Functional Activities
2. Reinforcement Systems
3. Functional Communication
4. Identification and Replacement of Contextually Inappropriate Behaviors (CIBs)

The instructional elements form the top of the Pyramid and include information relevant to the creation of effective lessons. The top elements include:

1. Generalization
2. Lesson Formats
3. Teaching/Prompting Strategies
4. Error Correction

All elements involve data-based decision making. When all of the elements are combined, the approach results in success in a range of settings. The Pyramid emphasizes how to teach, rather than simply what to teach, and allows each learner's program to be individually tailored to meet learning goals.

The Pyramid Approach to Education



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Picture Exchange Communication System® (PECS®)

Developed by Andy Bondy, PhD & Lori Frost, MS, CCC-SLP

PECS was developed in 1985 as a unique augmentative/alternative communication intervention package for individuals with autism spectrum disorder and related developmental disabilities. First used at the Delaware Autistic Program, PECS has received worldwide recognition for focusing on the initiation component of communication. PECS does not require complex or expensive materials. It was created with families, educators and resident care providers in mind, and so it is readily used in a range of settings.

PECS begins by teaching an individual to give a picture of a desired item to a “communicative partner”, who immediately honors the exchange as a request. The system goes on to teach discrimination of pictures and how to put them together in sentences. In the more advanced phases, individuals are taught to answer questions and to comment.

The PECS teaching protocol is based on B.F. Skinner’s book, *Verbal Behavior*, such that functional verbal operants are systematically taught using prompting and reinforcement strategies that will lead to independent communication. Verbal prompts are not used, thus building immediate initiation and avoiding prompt dependency.

PECS has been successful with individuals of all ages demonstrating a variety of communicative, cognitive and physical difficulties. Some learners using PECS also develop speech. Others may transition to a speech generating device. The body of research supporting the effectiveness of PECS continues to expand, with research from countries around the world.

Six Phases of PECS

PHASE I

How to Communicate: Individuals learn to exchange single pictures for items or activities they really want.

PHASE II

Distance and Persistence: Still using single pictures, individuals learn to generalize this new skill by using it in different places, with different people and across distances. They are also taught to be more persistent communicators.

PHASE III

Picture Discrimination: Individuals learn to select from two or more pictures to ask for their favorite things. These are placed in a PECS Communication Book- a ring binder with Velcro® strips where pictures are stored and easily removed for communication.

PHASE IV

Sentence Structure: Individuals learn to construct simple sentences on a detachable Sentence Strip™ using an “I want” picture followed by a picture of the item being requested.

Attributes and Language Expansion

Individuals learn to expand their sentences by adding adjectives, verbs and prepositions.

PHASE V

Responsive Requesting: Individuals learn to use PECS to answer the question, “What do you want?”.

PHASE VI

Commenting: Individuals are taught to comment in response to questions such as, “What do you see?”, “What is it?” They learn to make up sentences with “I see”, “I hear”, “I feel”, “It is a”, etc.

Services Series

Pyramid Educational Consultants offers an extensive series of services within the field of autism, related developmental disabilities, and communication systems. Below is a brief description of each series offered by Pyramid Educational Consultants.

PECS Series

The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) series consists of trainings and consultation specifically related to the understanding and use of PECS. These include an overview, basic and advanced training workshops, and consultation options. This series also incorporates PECS Implementer Certification™.

Pyramid Approach Series

The Pyramid Approach Series includes a variety of workshops and consultation services designed to assist teachers, therapists, paraprofessionals, and family members to optimize learning and performance of learners who face developmental challenges. These include how to implement the Pyramid Approach to Education model within schools, communities, and within the home. The Pyramid Approach provides a framework that focuses on meeting individuals' specific learning needs by combining a unique blend of broad spectrum applied behavior analytic, evidence-based strategies, with a special emphasis on methods from promoting functional communication, academic, and social skills.

Special Talk Series

The Special Talk Series involves presentations that last from one hour to a full day presentation. A variety of topics address many current issues in autism and developmental disabilities. These topics include the language of emotions, how speech-language pathologists can learn about the principles and strategies behind Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), myths and misconceptions about PECS, how administrators can best provide services, expanding picture discrimination strategies and how to transition PECS users to other communication modalities.



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Delivery Methods

Public Trainings

Pyramid Educational Consultants offers a series of scheduled workshops worldwide. To find a Pyramid or PECS Training near you, visit our website at www.pecs.com.

On-Site Trainings & Consultation

Training Workshops and Consultation Services can be conducted onsite and are ideal for organizations and families who:

- want to train a group or team at your location
- want to have a systematic training/consultation program implemented across the year
- want to avoid costly travel expenses and time associated with off-site trainings
- would like to design specific training dates and hours
- need focus on specific or unique issues
- are looking for key note speakers with knowledge and expertise in an array of topics

Remote Services and Distance Learning

Both training workshops and consultation services are available via Remote Service. The remote service is a live connection between our skilled consultants and your location. Both parties are able to see, hear, and present materials, just as if they were in the same room.

PECS and Pyramid Approach Distance Learning is available for individuals or groups who are interested in receiving consultation on PECS and the Pyramid Approach via video, web, and telephone.



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Training & Seminars

Pyramid Educational Consultants offers a wide range of training workshops based on client and learner needs and requirements. You will find a brief summary of all our available training workshops listed below.

PECS® Series

1. PECS® Overview

This overview is appropriate for all members of the educational team who would like to learn about the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), including a summary of all six phases.

2. PECS® Level 1 Training

This intensive two-day training is designed to teach participants the theory behind the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and the protocol for how to successfully implement the six phases of PECS.

3. PECS® Level 2 Training

Complete your PECS Training and elevate your PECS implementation skills with PECS Level 2! This training will show you how to teach PECS with fidelity so your learners don't get stuck on early Phases of PECS. Let us help you create lessons that turn your PECS user into someone who communicates in all situations using longer and longer sentences. A review of the six Phases of PECS and discussions about your current challenges combined with ideas related to materials, teaching strategies and activities to promote communication will refine your PECS implementation skills. With innovative ideas, renewed confidence and enthusiasm you will leave PECS Level 2 ready to move PECS users to more sophisticated levels of communication.

4. Transitioning from PECS® to Speech Generating Devices (SGDs)

This workshop describes procedures for analyzing a learner's current PECS skills to determine candidacy for transitioning to a Speech Generating Device (SGD), choosing a device, and teaching functional use of the device, and why we must teach the basic principles of communication to our learner first to ensure positive outcomes are achieved.

Pyramid Approach Series

1. Pyramid Approach Overview: Creating Effective Teaching Environments

This is an overview of how to set up an effective teaching environment for learners with autism or related developmental disabilities using the Pyramid Approach to Education. This is an informational presentation, not a training workshop.

2. Pyramid Approach Basic Training

The Pyramid Approach emphasizes how to teach, rather than simply what to teach, in order to maximize an individual's learning outcomes. This 2-Day, Pyramid Basic workshop will help professionals and parents alike to understand the critical components that ensure successful teaching and learning. The straightforward teaching methods of the Pyramid Approach can be

used to encourage independence and cooperation, improve behavior, and reinforce learning across home, school and the community.

3. Guide to Managing Challenging Behaviors

This training involves applications of the Pyramid Approach to Education to the management of challenging behaviors. Discussions focus on analyzing and addressing a learner's skills deficits prior to or while simultaneously addressing contextually inappropriate behaviors.

4. Teacher's Guide to Organizing and Managing the Classroom

This dynamic presentation provides educators with many practical examples for setting up and running an effective classroom for learners with autism and other developmental disabilities.

5. Teaching Critical Communication Skills: Help! I can't Wait to ask for a Break...and more!

This training discusses how to teach critical communication skills that lead to greater independence in the home, work, school and community settings for learners who are using any communication modality.

Special Talk Series

1. The Language of Emotions

Many individuals with additional needs, especially those with autism, have difficulty in acquiring language related to expressing emotions and identifying emotions in other people. This talk will present an analysis based upon B.F. Skinner's work and demonstrates how effective lessons can be developed, as well as identifying and discussing some areas of difficulty regarding such lessons.

2. Analyzing and Fine Tuning Communication

This training will introduce participants to B.F. Skinner's analysis of language (Verbal Behavior) and its acquisition, independent of modality. This presentation will highlight key functional language units as well as describe complex cases seen in many language lessons. Issues related to emotions and other hard-to-learn language concepts for individuals with autism will also be addressed.

3. Asperger Syndrome: Critical Features and Effective Strategies

The educational issues and needs of individuals with Asperger Syndrome are discussed within the context of the Pyramid Approach to Education with special attention paid to proactive strategies in the areas of communication, social skills and self-management.

4. What is Autism?

This training focuses on how to design effective educational environments for learners with autism along with other severe disabilities using the Pyramid Approach to Education.

5. Administrative Issues and Autism

Focal points of this workshop include issues related to staff development and retention, program development and quality assurance, family, community, and vocational variables, and proactive administrative responses relative to due process (an appeal process for parents to

resolve issues with school districts about their child's Individualized Education Plan). This workshop is appropriate for all school administrators who are directly or indirectly responsible for supervision and staff leadership in facilities providing instructional programs for learners with special needs.

6. Autism, Now What?

This talk is designed to help parents and professionals understand how services for individuals with autism developed over many years. We will review why behavior analysis is unique as an educational approach as well as look at special terms such as discrete trial, reinforcement, prompting, and others. By reviewing our history, we can better understand our current state of affairs as well as think about future developments. Our goal is to de-mystify the field of behavior analysis so that professionals (including administrators) as well as parents can appreciate the benefits of this broad-spectrum approach to intervention.

7. PECS® Facts or Fiction

With its worldwide use and broad empirical support, PECS has become a generic term for picture-based communication. This talk reviews and dispels many myths associated with PECS while citing the facts.

Consultation

Our expert consultants have extensive experience with all age groups and across many disabilities. We will be happy to work with your organization to assess your training or consultation needs and create a customized service package that provides the staff training and consultation that matches the needs of your organization. Pyramid specializes in consulting within school, home, community and work programs.

PECS® Series

1. PECS® Start-Up™

This service focuses on teaching the beginning phases of PECS to one individual. The individual's PECS instruction begins in Phase I and continues into additional phases as appropriate. Parents and staff learn the theory behind PECS and how to implement the initial phases.

2. PECS®Check-Up™

A consultant will observe parents/staff implementing PECS with a learner currently using the system and will fine-tune implementation practices. This service includes parent and staff training on the next PECS phases as well as direct work with the learner.

3. PECS® Consultation

PECS Consultation is available on-site or via various distance delivery methods. On-site consultation is available for home or school while distance consultation is available via live remote services, video, web and telephone. This service can be scheduled to take place weekly, monthly or yearly at the client's request.

4. PECS® Intensive Program

This program focuses on the implementation of PECS for individuals 2-6 years of age. During the intensive program, learners will work on communication across different activities and settings. Parents will attend the *PECS Basic Training* as well as parent conferences.

Pyramid Approach Series

1. Pyramid Approach Program Evaluation

Our consultant will observe the team's implementation of the Pyramid Approach to Education and will discuss how implementing the components of the Pyramid will strengthen the program as well as enhance learning opportunities for learners.

2. Pyramid Approach Classroom Consultation

Designed to assist team members when setting up or reviewing functional training and programming, this consultation provides systematic feedback regarding all elements of the Pyramid Approach to Education.



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3. Pyramid Approach In-Home Consultation

This service emphasizes what to teach as well as how to teach. Pyramid's home/community approach involves initial and long-term staff training as well as program and transition consultation. The focus is on functional communication training and learning through functional activities.

Certification

Are you looking for the seal of approval that shows that you and/or your staff are implementing PECS and/or the Pyramid Approach to Education according to the standard protocol? Various certification options are available for individuals, groups or classrooms. Available options are listed below.

PECS® Series

1. PECS® Knowledge Certificate

Prerequisite to the PECS Certification Program. After completing PECS Level 1 or PECS Level 2 Training, an examination may be taken in order to demonstrate basic (level 1) or advanced (level 2) knowledge of the PECS teaching protocol and the Pyramid Approach to Education. A certificate is awarded upon successful completion of this examination.

2. PECS® Certification Program™

The PECS Certification Program is designed so individuals can validate their PECS knowledge, skills, and practice in successfully implementing the PECS methodology. By demonstrating competence in PECS, this program provides employers with a quality assurance tool to identify skilled PECS implementers. Research has shown that correct PECS implementation enhances the success for PECS learners. Three (3) levels of PECS Certification are available: PECS Implementer Level 1, PECS Implementer Level 2 and PECS Manager.

3. PECS® Group Implementer Certification Skills Demonstration Day™

The purpose of this day is to provide a group of candidates from the same organization an opportunity to complete the PECS Implementer Certification process in a timelier manner by demonstrating their PECS implementation skills live rather than via video submissions. Additional tasks will need to be completed outside the Skills Demonstration Day.

Pyramid Approach Series

1. Pyramid Certified Classrooms™

The Pyramid Classroom Certification process combines comprehensive training, assistance in setting up a classroom and consultative guidance to support the implementation of the Pyramid Approach to Education across varied learning environments. The training consists of the *Pyramid Approach Basic Training*, *PECS Level 1 Training* and *Teaching Critical Communication Skills* workshops and a specific number of consultation days spread across the year. Certification is achieved once all aspects of the Pyramid Approach are in place within the educational setting.



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