

LathamCenters

COMMUNICATING

EFFECTIVELY WITH PEOPLE WITH PRADER-WILLI SYNDROME



PRESENTED BY
PATRICE CARROLL, DIRECTOR OF PWS SERVICES
BRITTNI KLIMENT, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



GOALS OF THIS WORKSHOP

This workshop provides practical strategies for staff working with individuals with Prader-Willi Syndrome. We'll explore communication barriers and effective approaches to enhance understanding and connection.



LathamCenters



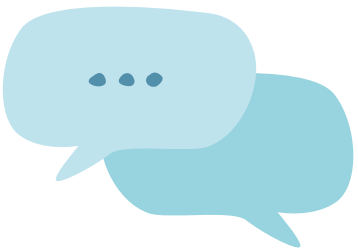
UNDERSTANDING PRADER-WILLI SYNDROME (PWS)

LathamCenters



GENETIC FOUNDATION

Rare disorder affecting chromosome 15,
impacting cognitive and social abilities



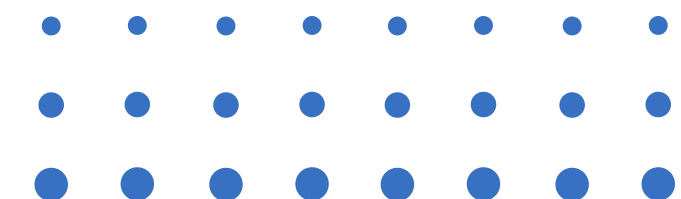
COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Speech delays, language development issues,
and social interaction difficulties.

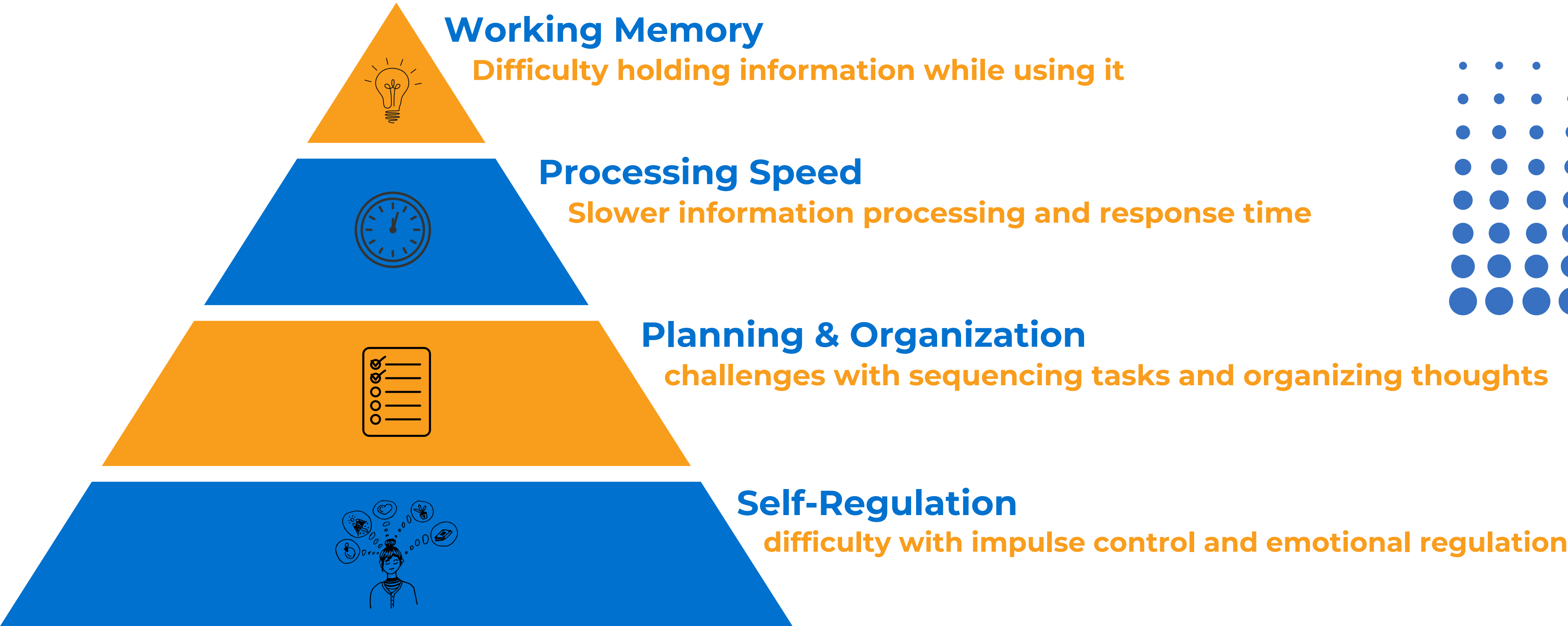


COGNITIVE PROCESSING

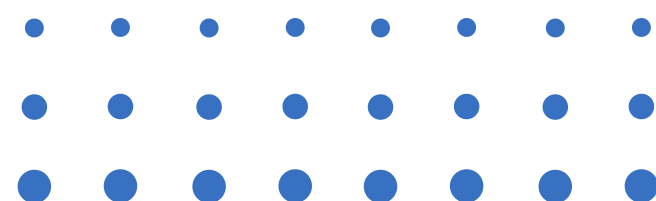
Executive functioning challenges create
unique communication patterns.



EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING DISORDER IN PWS



SLOW PROCESSING SPEED A DEEPER LOOK



INFORMATION INPUT

Person receives verbal or visual information

EXTENDED PROCESSING TIME

Brain takes longer to interpret meaning and context

FORMULATION RESPONSE

Additional time needed to organize thoughts

DELAYED RESPONSE

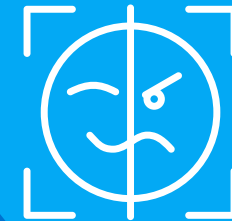
Response comes after a longer than expected pause

THEORY OF MIND AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

LathamCenters

Perspective Taking

Difficulty understanding others have different thoughts/feelings



Emotional Regulation

Challenges identifying others' emotional states

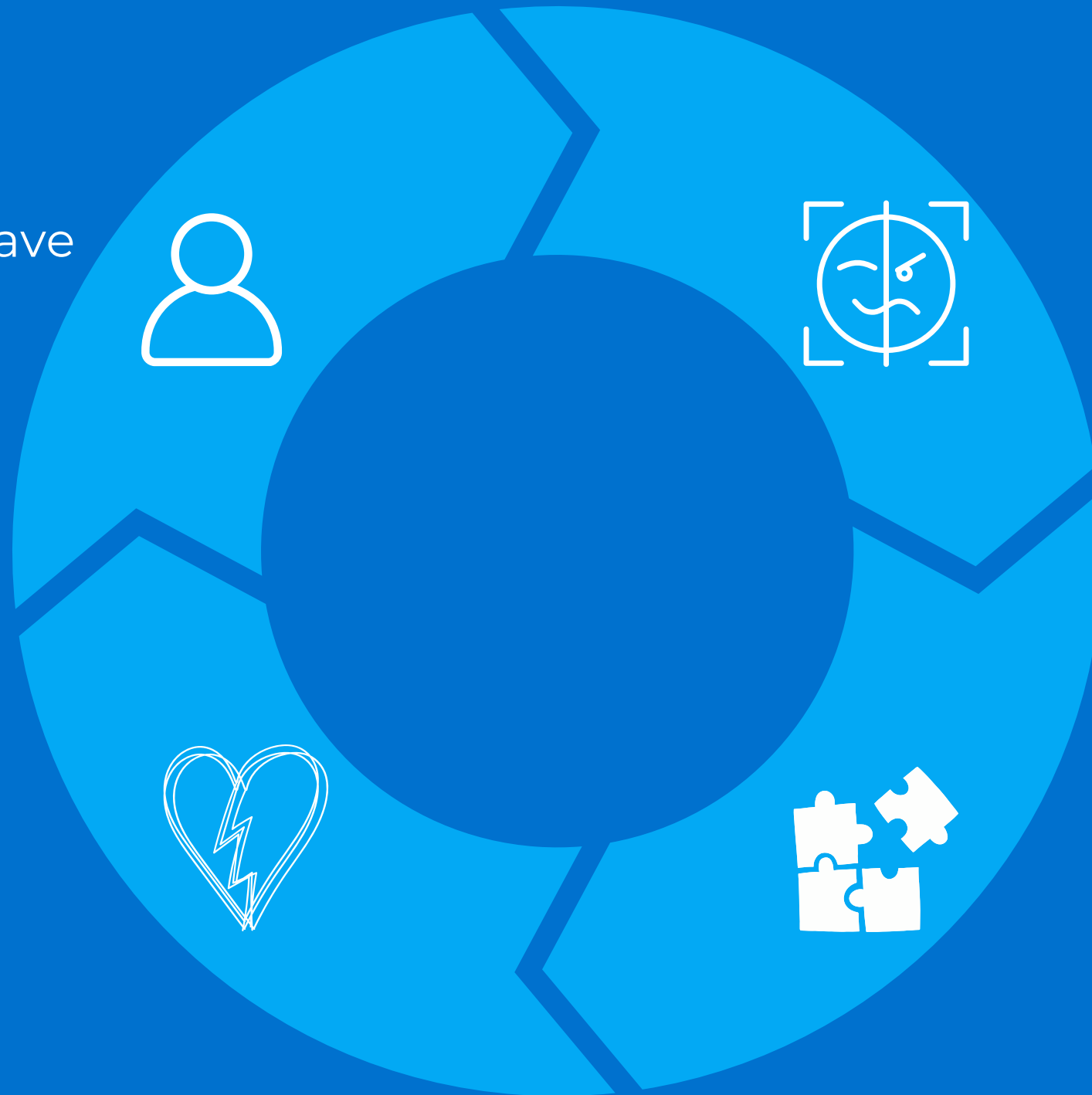
Relationship Impact

Difficulty forming/maintaining social connections



Social Puzzles

Struggles with implied meanings and social nuance



CHALLENGES WITH FACIAL AND SOCIAL CUES

VOICE TONE INTERPRETATION

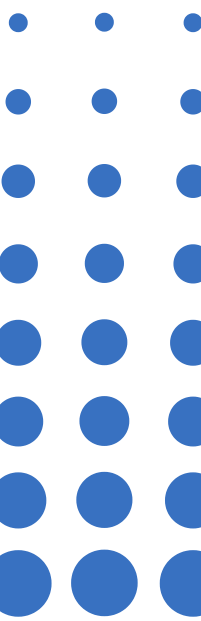
Sarcasm, humor, and emotional inflections may be missed or misinterpreted. Literal interpretation is common.

- Difficulty with non-literal language
- Challenges reading emotional tones
- Missing conversational subtext



FACIAL EXPRESSION RECOGNITION

Individuals with PWS often struggle to differentiate between subtle facial expressions. They may miss important emotional signals.



Communication Characteristics in PWS

Conversation Skills

- Difficulty initiating interactions
- Challenges with topic maintenance
- Struggles with turn-taking

Language Development

- Limited vocabulary range
- Delayed speech milestones
- Simple sentence structures

Non-Verbal Communication

- Inconsistent eye contact
- Atypical body language
- Personal space challenges



COMMUNICATION APPROACHES: WHAT WORKS VS. WHAT DOESN'T

Communication Area	Effective Approaches	Ineffective Approaches
Giving Instructions	Simple, direct sentences with visual supports	Complex, multi-step verbal directions
Processing Time	Patient waiting, allowing 10+ seconds for responses	Rushing, interrupting, or answering for them
Social Interactions	Explicit explanation of social rules and expectations	Relying on subtle hints or implied meanings
Emotional Context	Clearly stating feelings: "I feel frustrated"	Expecting emotion recognition from facial cues alone



effective communication STRATEGIES



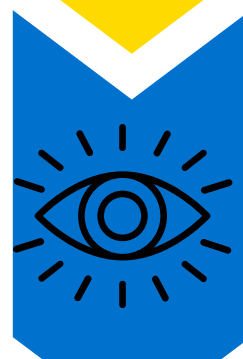
Simplify Language

Use concrete terms and avoid abstract concepts or idioms



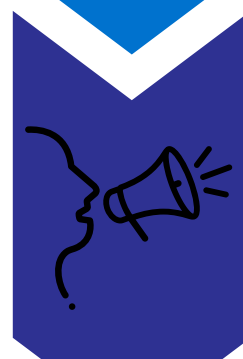
Extend Wait Time

Allow 10-15 seconds for processing before repeating or rephrasing



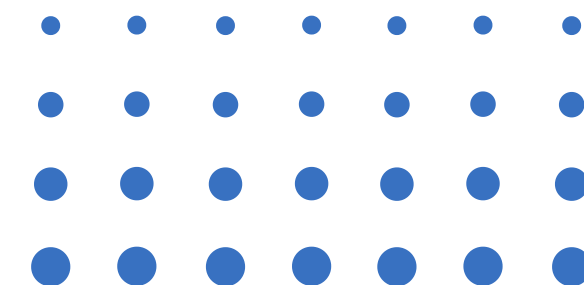
Visual Supports

Supplement verbal information with pictures, schedules, or written instructions

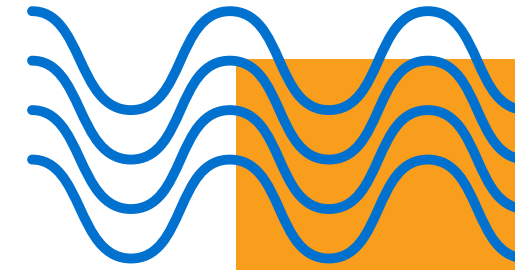


Be Explicit

Directly state expectations, feelings, and social rules without assuming understanding



Action Steps for Implementation



Assess Individual Needs

Identify specific communication strengthes and challenges for each person

Create Support Tools

Develop visual aids, communication cards, and social scripts tailored to common situations.

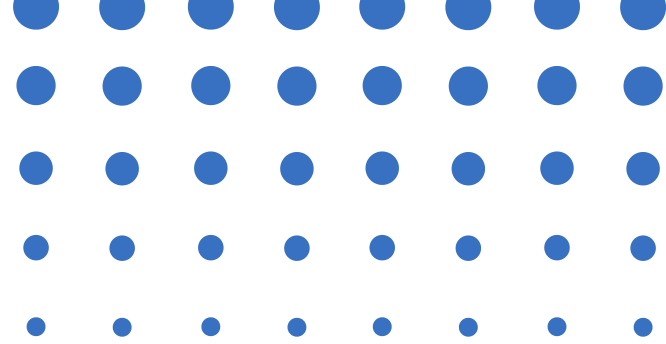
Practice Patience

Build team awareness about extended processing time and the importance of wait time.

Ongoing Training

Schedule regular staff refreshers on PWS communication strategies.





LathamCenters

THANK YOU
QUESTIONS

