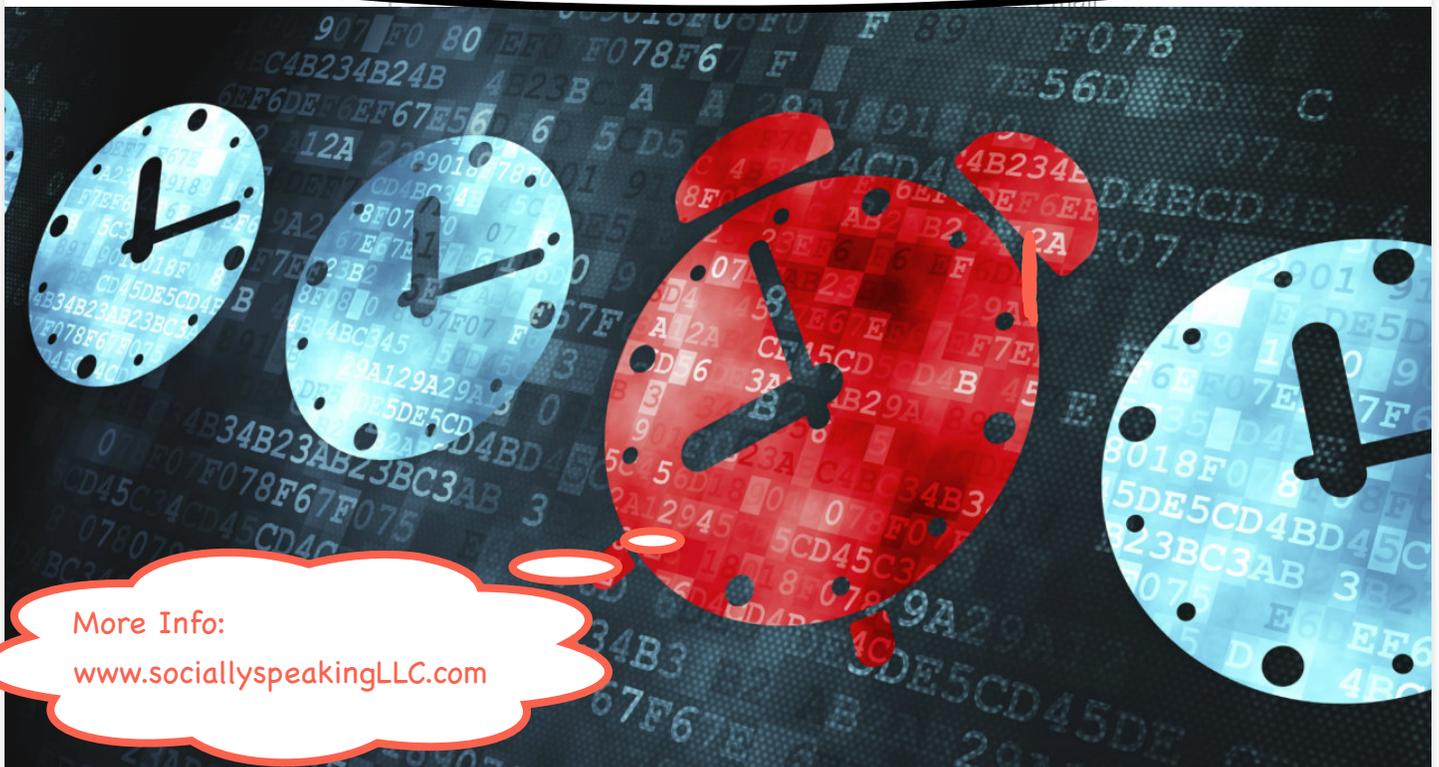




## How to Teach the Concept of Time to Young Children with Autism

**Friendship Circle of MI Blog 10/31/14**  
**Link: <http://bit.ly/1t3K2zL>**



Fall is in full swing and that means a change in season for many of us. It also means changing of the clock and seeing it get dark earlier. It's a **time of transition**, something that can be difficult for young children with Autism, leading to challenging behaviors and inconsistent comprehension of time. This can negatively impact on their ability to comprehend time, and understand the need to act in a way that shows an understanding of *We*, not just *Me*.

Fall is one of the best times to work on what it means to be a *We* while teaching the concepts of time! The combination of

we, while teaching the concepts of time. The combination of fluctuating weather and shorter days enables parents/providers to get creative with lessons and teachable moments. We can use real time play activities outdoors and indoor tech-based activities to facilitate these three specific skills needed for overall behavior management and social communication development:

**1. Causality Comprehension: “If...Then” Contingent**

**2. Time sequenced movements: physical and verbal/conversational**

**3. Sequencing a narrative/story and/or procedure: before/during/after or first/middle/last**

There’s never been a better time to foster these skills using “whole body” learning experiences integrating toys and tech.

## Teaching the Concept of Time

Here are 7 suggested activities to teach the concept of time passing, using household items and taking digital photos for later recall and discussion:

1. **Raking leaves** together outside and jumping in the pile, safely and under supervision!
2. Going on an outdoor scavenger hunt with a pre-made list and bucket. Don’t forget to take group and solo pictures to create a story booklet later!
3. Creating a leaf rubbing, colorful leaf collage, or other related arts and crafts projects and showing it off to the rest of the family, near and far using Email or FaceTime/Skype.
4. **Baking cookies or muffins**, which are bite sized delights that lend themselves to all kinds of repetitious language activities involving *Me/We!*

5. Taking a trip to the library and picking out [story books](#) that have a clearly delineated beginning/middle/end, and reviewing the sequence and target vocabulary.
6. Watching a video together and stopping it at regular intervals to review and discuss the order of events and the “why?” of the outcomes.
7. Using [specific smartphone apps](#) to practice target vocabulary re: time, and give the child the singular experience of doing something structured yet fun, that has a built in “timer” that intuitively teaches Causality, time sequenced movement, and sequencing all rolled into one!

**These iPad Apps are on my current radar to teach time:**

### Causality apps:

- [Peekaboo Barn](#)
- [Zoo Sounds](#)
- [Balls by iotic](#)
- [Marcus' Discoveries HD](#)
- [Injini](#)
- [Somantics](#)
- [Knock Knock Family](#)
- [Paint Sparkles Draw](#)
- [Music Sparkles](#)
- [Storybots® Tap & Sing](#)

### Sequencing apps

- [Make a Scene: Farmyard](#)
- [Toca Tea Party](#)
- [Superzaic](#)
- [Toy Repair Workshop](#)
- [Talking Train](#)
- [Strip Designer](#)
- [Drawing with Carl](#)
- [Making Sequences, Advanced Making Sequences, and](#)

## [Advanced Video Sequences by Zorten,](#)

- [iSequences](#)
- [Speech with Milo: Sequencing](#)
- [Sequencing Post Office](#)
- [Video Sequencing by PandaPal](#)
- [Trixie and Jinx Book](#)
- [Art Maker](#)

Young children with Autism need to outgrow situation specific, splintered learning, so that they can be better oriented to time and place. It begins with comprehending the concept of time passing, which is the key to understanding Causality. Causality involves predictions of outcomes. Predictions that one makes based on an emotional action or physical action another makes, in his/her environment.

The only way to see this action is to “live in the moment” and learn about the passage of time. This impacts a child’s attempts to later learn the rules i.e. the schedule of the day, make inferences about it, and fit in with the group and group etiquette, even when it’s necessary to adjust and deviate from “the script”.

Isn’t that what transitioning from *Me* to *We* is all about?



Written on 2014/10/31 by:

**Penina Rybak**

Penina is an Autism Specialist and Educational Technology Consultant, who created the soon to be published Socially Speaking™ Social Skills Curriculum and already deployed Socially Speaking™ Social Skills Assessment Protocol iPad App. Visit her website for more information:

<http://sociallyspeakingLLC.com>

[View all 15 of Penina Rybak's posts](#)



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