



**Asperger's syndrome**  
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## **INFORMATION SHEET**

**Age Group: Children/Adolescents and Young Adults**

**Sheet Title: Teachers Aids**

### DIFFICULTY WITH LANGUAGE

- Tendency to make irrelevant comments
- Tendency to interrupt
- Tendency to talk on one topic and to talk over the speech of others
- Difficulty understanding complex language
- Difficulty following directions
- Difficulty understanding the intent of words with multiple meanings

### CLASSROOM STRATEGY

- Use *Comic Strip Conversations* to teach skills related to specific problems
- Teach appropriate opening comments
- Teach the student to seek assistance when confused
- Teach conversational skills in small group settings
- Use audio-taped and video-taped conversations
- Explain metaphors and words with double meanings
- Encourage the student to ask for an instruction to be repeated, simplified or written down if he/she does not understand
- Pause between instructions and check for understanding
- Limit oral questions to a number the student can manage
- Watch videos to identify non-verbal expressions and their meanings



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## RESTRICTED RANGE OF INTERESTS

### *CLASSROOM STRATEGY*

- Limit discussions and questions that persevere too long
- Set firm expectations for the classroom, but also provide opportunities for the student to pursue his/her own interests
- Incorporate and expand on interest in activities

## IMPAIRMENT IN SOCIAL INTERACTION

- Has difficulty understanding the rules of social interaction
- May be naive
- Interprets literally what is said
- Has difficulty reading the emotions of others
- Lacks tact
- Has problems with social distance
- Has difficulty understanding "unwritten rules" and once learned, may apply them rigidly
- Lacks awareness of personal space

### *CLASSROOM STRATEGY*

- Provide clear expectations and rules for behaviour
- Teach (explicitly) the rules of social conduct
- Teach the student how to interact through social stories and role-playing
- Educate peers about how to respond to this disability in social interaction
- Use other children as cues to indicate what to do
- Encourage co-operative games
- Provide supervision and support for the student at breaks as required
- Use a buddy system to assist the student during non-structured times



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- Teach the student how to start, maintain and end play
- Teach flexibility, co-operation and sharing
- Teach the students how to monitor their own behaviour
- Structure social groups to provide opportunities for direct instruction on specific skills and to practise actual events
- Teach relaxation techniques and have a quiet place to go to relax
- Model and practise appropriate personal space

### POOR CONCENTRATION

- Is often off task
- Is distractible
- May be disorganised
- Has difficulty sustaining attention

### *CLASSROOM STRATEGY*

- Provide frequent teacher feedback and re-direction
- Break down assignments
- Use visual organisers, semantic mapping and outlining
- Provide timed work sessions
- Reduce homework assignments
- Seat at the front of the classroom
- Use non-verbal cues to get attention

### INSISTENCE ON SAMENESS

### *CLASSROOM STRATEGY*

- Prepare the student for potential change as far in advance as possible
- Use pictures, schedules and social stories to indicate impending changes



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## POOR MOTOR CO-ORDINATION

### *CLASSROOM STRATEGY*

- Involve the student in fitness activities; he/she may prefer fitness activities to competitive sports
- Take slower writing speed into account when giving assignments
- Provide extra time for tests
- Consider the use of a computer for written assignments, as students may be more skilled at using a keyboard

## ACADEMIC DIFFICULTIES

- Usually average to above-average intelligence
- Good recall of factual information
- Areas of difficulty include problem-solving, comprehension and abstract concepts
- Often strong in word recognition and may learn to read very early, but has difficulty with comprehension
- May do well at maths facts, but not problem solving

### *CLASSROOM STRATEGY*

- Do not assume that the student has understood what he/she has read - check for comprehension, supplement instructions and use visual supports
- Be as concrete as possible in presenting new concepts and abstract material
- Use activity-based learning where possible
- Use graphic organisers such as semantic maps or webs
- Break tasks down into smaller steps or present in another way
- Show visual examples of what is required
- Use visual outlines to help with taking notes and organisation



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- Avoid verbal overload
- Capitalise on strengths (e.g. memory)

## POOR ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

### *CLASSROOM STRATEGY*

- Use personal schedules and calendars
- Maintain lists of assignments
- Help the student to use "to do" lists and checklists
- Place pictures on containers, book bags and work-trays

## EMOTIONAL VULNERABILITY

- Difficulty coping with the social and emotional demands of school
- Easily stressed because of inflexibility
- Prone to anxiety
- Often have low self-esteem
- May have difficulty tolerating making mistakes
- May be targeted by bullies
- May be prone to depression
- May have rage reactions and temper outbursts

### *CLASSROOM STRATEGY*

- Provide positive praise and tell the student what he/she does right or well
- Teach the student to ask for help
- Teach techniques for coping with difficult situations and for dealing with stress
- Teach relaxation strategies
- Use rehearsal strategies
- Provide experiences in which the person can make choices



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- Help the student to understand his/her behaviour and the reactions of others
- Educate the other students
- Use peer supports such as a buddy system and peer support network

### SENSORY SENSITIVITIES

- Most common sensitivities involve sound and touch, but may also include taste, light intensity, colours and aromas
- Types of noise that may be perceived as extremely intense are:
  - Sudden, unexpected noises such as a telephone ringing or a fire alarm
  - High-pitched, continuous noise
  - Confusing, complex or multiple sounds, such as in school hallways

### CLASSROOM STRATEGY

- Be aware that normal levels of auditory and visual input can be perceived by the student as too much or too little
- Keep the level of stimulation within the student's ability to cope
- Avoid sounds that are distressing, when possible
- Use music to camouflage certain sounds
- Minimise background noise
- Use ear-plugs if noise or reaction is very extreme
- Teach and model relaxation strategies and the use of diversions to reduce anxiety
- Provide opportunities and space for quiet time
- Arrange for independent work space that is free of sensory stimuli that bother the student



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## LINKS

[www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk](http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk)

0207 903 3650

The Autism Education Trust (AET) helps children and young people with autism to receive an education, enabling them to reach their potential. They provide professional development resources and opportunities that support education services and staff in securing positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with autism. The AET are associated with the National Autistic Society and endorsed by the Department of Education.

[www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk](http://www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk)