



Asperger's syndrome
F O U N D A T I O N

INFORMATION SHEET

ASPERGER'S SYNDROME

Sheet Title: An Introduction to Asperger's Syndrome

Asperger's Syndrome is characterised by difficulty with six main areas:

1. **Social interaction**
2. **Social Communication**
3. **Imagination** (e.g. trying to imagine what others are thinking)
4. **Sensory Sensitivity** (e.g. to bright light, noise, textures, tastes, touch and smells)
5. **Motor skills**
6. **Organisational ability**

Lorna Wing (Burgoine and Wing, 1983) described the main clinical features of AS as:

- Lack of empathy
- Naive, inappropriate, one-sided interaction
- Little or no ability to form friendships
- Pedantic, repetitive speech
- Poor nonverbal communication
- Intense absorption in certain subjects
- Clumsy and ill-coordinated movements and odd postures.

These are positive traits commonly associated with AS:

- Honesty
- Reliability
- Dedication
- Determination.



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Tony Attwood has described Asperger's Syndrome as, *"a different way of approaching life, one that is dominated by the pursuit of knowledge and truth"*.

He also says that great advances in science and art have been attributable to people with Asperger's Syndrome.

THE EFFECTS OF LIVING WITH ASPERGER'S SYNDROME

Collectively, the characteristics of Asperger's Syndrome contribute to the extreme isolation experienced by those with this condition. Often misunderstood and rejected, they have very low self-esteem which is usually expressed by anger and blame at the world around them.

Asperger's Syndrome is often not recognised or diagnosed. It is common for children to attend mainstream schools, where they find the day-to-day life complex and difficult to deal with. They find it hard to make friends because they are seen as different by their teachers and peers, and as a result, they often experience loneliness and bullying.

Children and young people with Asperger's Syndrome may also show signs of Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), Dyspraxia and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) as well as difficulties with impulse control and anger management.