

Sue Larkey ✓
TOP TIPS

Key Tips for Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)



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 **Sue Larkey**
LEARNING MEDIA





10 Essential Tips for Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

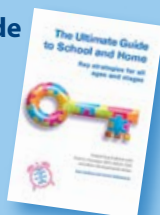
1. Students with ASD don't have to look at you all the time.
Reason: They find looking and listening at the same time hard to do.
2. Give them time to answer any of your questions.
Reason: They have slower processing time. Sometimes it can take them up to a minute to formulate the answer in the correct sequence.
3. If they feel pressured they will answer with stock standard answers.
Reason: They know it will get them out of trouble quickly. This may include: "I don't know", "yes", "maybe" and often this isn't their true answer!
4. They often don't "generalise" information between people and places.
Reason: Homework for teacher 'x' is in the yellow basket but for teacher 'y' it's to be placed in the green basket.
5. They find organisation of their school equipment very difficult.
Reason: They are best with one folder with everything inside. Limit the number of pencils, pens etc.
6. Limit their choices and be very specific with choices.
Reason: They find choices overwhelming and are often concerned with making wrong choice due to their difficulty with problem solving.
7. Be as clear, concise and concrete as possible.
Reason: People with ASD have difficulty with abstract thinking.
8. Avoid verbal overload.
Reason: They are visual learners and verbal information takes them longer to process and retain.
9. Avoid verbal arguments by redirecting them to what they should be doing. E.g. "Start your work".
Reason: They often enjoy verbal arguments.
10. Simple changes in the environment can make a big difference to a child's engagement and learning outcomes.
Reason: People with ASD have sensory processing difficulties and this can cause behaviour



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

The Ultimate Guide to School and Home

By Sue Larkey and Anna Tullemans



The Essential Guide to Secondary School

By Sue Larkey and Anna Tullemans



Teacher Assistants Big Red Book of Ideas

By Sue Larkey and Anna Tullemans





Preparing the Classroom for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

1. Find out about ASD.

2. Find out about the individual student:

- Fill in an Individual Student Profile (see "Making it a Success")
- Fill in Summary Profile of Student (see Tip Sheet).

3. School Infrastructure.

- Classroom support for teacher (training, etc).
- Assistance to set up structured environment.
- Curriculum planning (IEPs, etc).
- Whole school staff.
- Professional development for teacher and assistant.

4. Prepare the other students.

This is very dependent on the other students. The focus should be very positive and focus on similarities and differences between all of us. It may be helpful to discuss how individual student with ASD presents and ways the other students can help (in the same way they help other students).

5. IEPS

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. Open and honest communication. | g. Set feedback in place. |
| b. Setting ground rules | h. Develop expertise. |
| c. Identify strengths and weaknesses. | i. Adjust objectives. |
| d. Set realistic short and long term goals. | j. Share frustrations. |
| e. Work as a team. | k. Brainstorm, explore, create solutions. |
| f. Set support in place to ensure implementation. | l. Celebrate successes. |



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

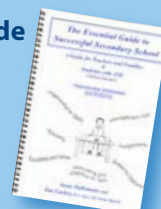
Making it a Success

By Sue Larkey



The Essential Guide to Secondary School

By Sue Larkey and Anna Tullemans



Teacher Assistants Big Red Book of Ideas

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Girls with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Girls with ASD are often undiagnosed, because original diagnostic criteria have a boy bias. The criteria were created by actually examining mainly boys, and the girls can be very different. I think we all know 'neuro-typical' boys and girls are very different in their social, communication and behaviour. There are many characteristics that are very similar to boys with ASD but I thought I would list the main differences to girls with ASD.

Ten Ways Girls with ASD differ to Boys with ASD

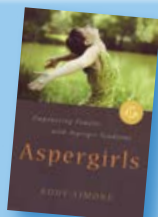
1. Their special interests are usually animals, music, art, literature.
2. They often have a very good imagination which includes imaginary friends, games, being animals or taking on persona of other girls.
3. They often see speech therapists for their speech and may be diagnosed with specific language disorders however there is something different about this girl no one can quite put their finger on.
4. They often play with older children or much younger children. This play is sometimes unusual for example 'Mums and Dads' but she will want to play the same role and game every time. She usually wants to be the pet or baby, whereas most girls want to be the Mum or Dad.
5. They often have hyperlexia – the ability to read but comprehension does not always match their reading skills. They are often the class book worm or write stories but they write the same story over and over changing a few characters. Many have a special interest in literature.
6. They have unusual sensory processing, like the boys, however bigger fluctuations often going from one extreme to the other.
7. They get anxious like boys, however their anxiety is rarely physical or disruptive. In fact many have great copying mechanisms at school however the family see a very different child at home where the anxiety can explode.
8. Often their difficulties with social skills are called 'shy', 'quiet', 'solitary'.
9. They often like to organize and arrange objects. I watched one little girl spend hours seemingly playing "My Little Ponies" however on closer examination she was just arranging and re-arranging the horses over and over.
10. The main difference is there are MANY more undiagnosed girls/women than boys/men. Currently we only diagnose 1 girl to 7 boys. In the future it is thought by many psychologists the ratio could be more like 5 to 7 as we become more aware of this group.



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Aspergirls

By Rudy Simone



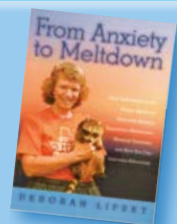
The Complete Guide to Aspergers Syndrome

By Tony Attwood



From Anxiety to Meltdown

By Deborah Lipsky





Promoting Understanding in the Classroom

Just as children today learn about racism, cultural differences, and allergies etc teaching understanding of ASD and ADHD is just another diversity topic and part of the educational landscape. If you are going to share the individual child's diagnosis you must get parent permission to do this, and also check if they want their child to be part of the discussion.

Ideas to try:

- Focus on the student's strengths.
- Focus on accepting that everyone is different and that we need to accept these differences.
- Explain why the child has difficulties in certain situations or act in certain ways; for example flapping hands, making noises, asking questions repetitively, fidgeting, calling out, etc.
- Allow the children to ask questions (often once they have had this chance to ask, the everyday questions, such as "why do they do that, get that?" will stop).
- If the student has support staff in the classroom, or is withdrawn from class, or has partial attendance, it is very important to let the children know why this happens, as they naturally wonder where the student is or why someone is working with them.

Important Note:

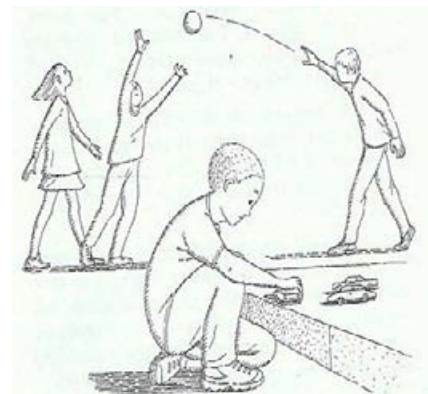
If the child's behaviours interfere with other students learning outcomes then they need to be informed on successful strategies in dealing with the child with the diagnosis. This may include teaching to ignore, move away, tell an adult etc.

Over the page are some wonderful resources to explain ASD and ADHD. These can be used for children with ASD, ADHD, other children and family. They are great starting points for discussion with class or family.

"Not being able to tune in naturally to other people can make it difficult for me to take turns, or to play cooperatively. If I feel confused about what people are doing, or what I am expected to do, I might be afraid to join in with games even if I do want to be friendly..."

I might only want to play if I decide on the game, and choose the rules. This isn't me being bossy. It's because I feel safer and less confused if I make the rules.

You can help me by gently reminding me about taking turns and taking a bit of extra time to explain the rules of the games you are playing. Except from 'Can I tell you about Asperger's Syndrome?'



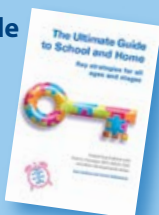
I sometimes find it difficult to play games with other children



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES (continued overleaf)

The Ultimate Guide to School and Home

By Sue Larkey and Anna Tullemans



Teacher Assistants Big Blue Book of Ideas

By Sue Larkey and Anna Tullemans

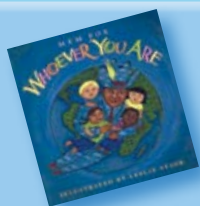


Inside Aspergers Looking Out

By Kathy Hoopman



MORE RECOMMENDED RESOURCES (continued from previous page)



Whoever You Are By Mem Fox

This is a wonderful story which celebrates the differences between children everywhere. The story encourages children to realise that no matter what people may be like on the outside, inside they are just like them. The children will want you to read this over and over.



My Friend with Autism By Beverley Bishop

With vivid illustrations and a charming storyline this book will foster tolerance and understanding among peers. A peer narrator explains that his friend with autism is good at some things and not so good at others - just like everyone else.



Can I Tell You About Asperger Syndrome: A Guide for Friends and Family

By Jude Welton

Meet Adam – a young boy with AS. Adam invites young readers to learn about AS from his perspective. He helps children understand the difficulties faced by a child with AS – he tells them what AS is, what it feels like to have AS and how they can help children with AS by understanding their differences and appreciating their many talents.



Can I Tell You About Autism: A Guide for Friends, Family and Professionals

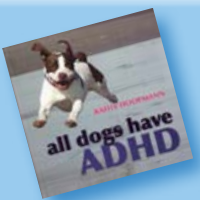
By Jude Welton

Meet Tom – a young boy with autism. Tom invites readers to learn about autism from his perspective, helping them to understand what it is and explaining the challenges he faces with issues such as social communication, sensory overload and changes in his routine.



All Cats Have Asperger Syndrome By Kathy Hoopmann

Takes a playful look at Asperger Syndrome (AS), drawing inspiration from the feline world in a way that will strike a chord with all those who are familiar with AS. This engaging book is an ideal, gentle introduction to the world of Asperger Syndrome



All Dogs Have ADHD By Kathy Hoopmann

Takes an inspiring and affectionate look at Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), using images and ideas from the canine world.



Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome: A useful guide to adolescents By Luke Jackson

Luke Jackson is 13 years old and has Asperger Syndrome. Drawing from his experiences and gaining information from his teenage brother and sisters, he wrote this enlightening, honest and witty book in attempt to address difficult topics such as bullying, friendships, when and how to tell others about AS, school problems, dating and relationships and more.



Summary Profile of Student

An important part of setting students up for success is sharing information and strategies. Many students have HUGE files of information, so we highly recommend you do a one page summary as a quick reference for all staff. Getting parents and current staff to fill in this quick reference together can be extremely helpful as often you see different behaviours and strategies that work. Understanding triggers for meltdowns is very important. By being aware of what causes behaviour you can create a more ASD friendly environment. Remember each student has very different needs.

Student Name: _____

Strengths:

a) _____

b) _____

Challenges:

a) _____

b) _____

Things that may trigger a meltdown:

a) _____

b) _____

Behaviours exhibited before meltdown:

a) _____

b) _____

Best way to approach student when meltdown occurs:

a) _____

b) _____

Important Sensory Notes (e.g. highly sensitive to light touch, noise etc):

a) _____

b) _____

Students the child works well with in group or partner activities:

a) _____

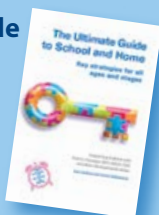
b) _____



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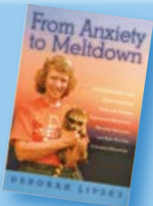
Top 10 Books to Help Make a Difference

Sue Larkey
TOP TIPS



There are so many resources now available to help teach children on the autism spectrum and it can be difficult to know which ones will be the most helpful – and this is a question I am most often asked. So here is my TOP 10 RECOMMENDED BOOKS and WHY!

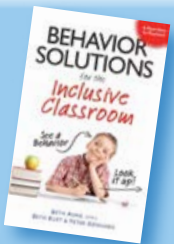
For those of you looking for support in understanding autism spectrum and the children you work with, as well as strategies for behaviour support, the top two books I recommend are:



From Anxiety to Meltdown By Deborah Lipsky

Anxiety is the root cause of many of the difficulties experienced by people on the autism spectrum, and is often caused by things such as a change in routine, or sensory overload. Deborah Lipsky takes a practical look at what happens when things spiral out of control, exploring what leads to meltdowns and tantrums, and what can be done to help.

This is the BEST book I have ever read and I rate it a MUST HAVE.



Behavior Solutions for the Inclusive Classroom By Aune, Burt & Gennaro

This book is a must-have for every special needs and inclusive classroom. The easy to use format allows teachers to quickly look up an in-the-moment solution and learn about what the child is communicating, and why. This book illuminates possible causes of those mysterious behaviours, and more importantly, provides solutions!

I call this SEE A BEHAVIOUR, LOOK IT UP. This is a great reference book to have on hand. ALL behaviours are replaced by another and this book gives you great ideas for replacements and skills to develop.

TOP BOOKS TO SUPPORT LEARNING

The Ultimate Guide to School and Home

By Sue Larkey & Anna Tullemans



Teacher Assistants Big Red Book of Ideas

By Sue Larkey & Anna Tullemans



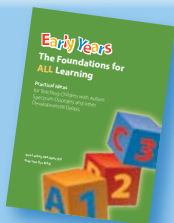
Making it a Success

By Sue Larkey



The Early Years

By Sue Larkey & Gay von Ess



Practical Maths Programmes

By Sue Larkey & Jo Adkins



TOP BOOK FOR SOCIAL SKILLS

Developing Social Skills

By Sue Larkey & Gay von Ess



TOP BOOKS FOR HELPING CHILDREN

The Red Beast

By K I Al-Ghani



The Kids' Guide to Staying Awesome and In Control

By Lauren Brukner



Find out more about these resources, download free tip sheets, request a catalogue, and order teaching resources – all online at www.suelarkey.com

Education Events PTY Limited | PO Box 20 | Artarmon | NSW 1570 | Tel 0433 660 379 | Fax 1300 656 408
Email suelarkey@optusnet.com.au

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- Download free tip sheets
- Request a catalogue and download an order form
- View the range of upcoming workshops and speakers
- Register for workshops online or download registration forms
- Shop online and browse our full range of great products
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- Live Chat – online seminars from the comfort of your own home.

Australia:

Education Events PTY Limited
PO Box 20, Artarmon, NSW 1570
Phone: 0433 660 379 Fax: 1300 656 408
Email: dearne@suelarkey.com
www.suelarkey.com

New Zealand:

Education Events Limited
167a Avenue Rd, Greenmeadows,
Napier 4112
Phone: 06 845 2605 Fax: 06 845 2607
Email: jo@suelarkey.co.nz
www.suelarkey.co.nz



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