

# **MAKING IT A SUCCESS:**

Practical Strategies for Home and School for an Autism Spectrum Disorder

## **2010 – Year of Making a BIG Difference**

I wish everyone the best for 2010, may it be the best year for spreading understanding and skills to make teaching and living with an Autism Spectrum Disorder a success!

### **In this Newsletter and NEW in 2010:**

1. **SETTING UP STUDENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL SKILLS:** One of the most common questions I get when visiting schools is HOW to set up Social Skills Programmes. For families this is often one of their biggest worries, will their child have friends, be accepted by peers etc. This Newsletter has lots of strategies to help.
2. **SHARE YOUR STRATEGIES:** Share your success stories and we will put them on my website to share with others.
3. **NEW RESOURCES:** A range of new resources to support Social Skills and great book "No More Meltdowns!"
4. **NEW WORKSHOPS:** Join us for a range of workshops. Including Dr. Wendy Lawson, Dr. Richard Eisenmajer and Dr. Tony Attwood.

For more information on workshops go to my website [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)

You can reserve a place at the workshop and pay closer to the date.  
Just email my secretary through the website and let her know which session.

**Sue Larkey**

**Autism Consultant**



**Training Days**

See page 12 for details

### **NEW CATALOGUE**



Request a FREE  
Colour Catalogue  
[www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)

## **I need your help! What strategies have you tried?**

Read my books! Attended my workshops! What have you tried?  
I would love people to send me strategies they have tried to inspire others to give them a go. We will then put them on the website to help other people.  
I always say "to know someone with an ASD is not to know ASD."  
I have a new saying for 2010:

***"In my experience many strategies only work for 1 in 10 kids.  
But for that 1 kid it makes THE WORLD of difference.  
So keep trying new strategies until you find the one!"***

Let us know the one that worked for you and how you used the strategy, as this could make a HUGE difference to another child. The ideas will be posted on the website to share. If you are looking for some new strategies or want to share just go to [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com). ***I am inviting all of you to share!***  
Guidelines on how to help by sharing your strategies are on my website.

This is a great chance for those of you that attended sessions last year to get out the list of 10 ideas you wrote on the notes page and review what you tried, and maybe try something you haven't yet.

Remember ***"to know and not to do, is not yet to know!"***

In the next 3 pages I am discussing Social Skills and this is an area where you will need to use a range of strategies. This may include; Routines, Visuals, Video/DVD, Social Stories, Board games, Role Play, Photo Books and more.

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# CREATING A SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAMME

For many students with an ASD their biggest challenges are their interaction, friendships and understanding emotions. Social Skills is an ongoing process, each age group has new learning's. Think about a young child – their social skills may be turning taking and sharing, by secondary it is catching public transport, sexuality and more. Each stage needs different supports and information.

## **SOCIAL SKILLS INCLUDES:**

**Interaction with other people:** Greetings, Comments, Manners, Social Rules

**Emotions:** Understanding own emotions through to understanding others

**Friendship:** Taking turns, sharing, playing through to making friends and being a friend

*There are some great resources available to support social skills and I have put together some of my favourites. See page 9 for more information.*

## **EASY WAYS TO INCLUDE SOCIAL SKILLS IN YOUR EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES**



### **Social Skills Enriched Environments**

Trying to fit social skills activities into an already busy day is always a challenge. The easiest way is to do this is select a goal, for example “waiting” and teach across a range of daily events rather than trying to create time for specific lessons. (See below grid for ideas, these are just a few to get you started).

I would recommend select one goal and do it for a week. For example “waiting” The tricky part is “waiting” can look different in each ‘daily event’ so you may need to ‘teach’ a variety of different types of ‘waiting’.

Daily Event	Social Skill <b>Waiting! (see pg 4 more info)</b>	Social Skill: How to react when someone says “NO”
<b>Lining Up</b>	Waiting for the teacher in line	“No, you can’t be my partner” Reaction: “okay”, ask someone else
<b>Pack Away Time</b>	Waiting for a turn to put activity on shelf etc	“No you can’t help them pack away” Reaction “okay”, find someone else to help
<b>Mat Time</b>	Waiting for the teacher to give instructions	“No you can’t sit next to them” Reaction: move somewhere else
<b>Desk Time</b>	Waiting for teacher to help you	“No you can’t be my partner” Reaction: Ask the teacher to find you a partner
<b>Playground</b>	Waiting for a turn at an activity	“No you can’t play” Reaction: “okay”, ask someone else
<b>Home</b>	Waiting for parent to be ready to get something you want	“No you can’t have chips” Reaction: “okay Mum”

**Ideas for goals:** Personal Space, Eye Contact, Waiting Quietly, Complimenting another child, Ask questions, Responding to Questions, Sharing, Waiting, Asking to join in a game , Conversations, etc. “The Social Skills Picture Books” are full of ready-made photo scenarios for you to use, over 160 pages (See below and page 9).

**Social Skills Picture Books**  
By Dr Jed Baker  
More info pg 9

**THE SOCIAL SKILLS PICTURE BOOKS** – 2 Fantastic Books over 100 skills to teach

**For Early Years & Primary:** Teaching Play, Emotion and Communication’

**Part 1** – The Nature of Autism, Teaching Social Skills, About Social Skills Picture Book, Making Your Own Social Skills Picture Books.

**Part 2** – Communication Related Skills (Listening, Conversation, Interrupting and more), Play Related Skills and Emotion Related Skills.

**CD:** Has all the photos from the book to create your own support materials.

**For Secondary and Beyond:** ‘The Social Skills Picture Book: For High School and Beyond’

**Part 1:** The Autism Spectrum, About Social Skills Picture Books, Generalisation of skills.

**Part 2:** Nonverbal Cues, Conversations, Building and Maintaining Friendships, and Dealing with School and Work.

# 9 TIPS TO FACILITATE SOCIAL SKILLS ACTIVITIES

*These are particularly helpful when using 'The Socially Speaking Board Game'. See page 9*

1. Adapt activities to REAL people and places they know. Imagine you are talking to teacher, friend, name a specific student – include real names of people they know.
2. Give the student a formula to follow (this is where The Social Skills Picture Books are wonderful as they have ready-made photos to show the students situations and what to do!).
3. Repeat with slightly different variations (The Socially Speaking Board Game is a wonderful way to do this. The variations maybe place, person etc).
4. Make quick, fun and repetitive.
5. Tell what to do, not what NOT to do. Instead of NO JAMES it is not your turn. James wait, Sarah first.
6. Catch doing "the right thing!" AND reward (see token systems below).
7. Do not assume they will generalise, they need to practice in different environments.
8. Engage PEERS as they can be great role models and encourage students in a range of situations.
9. **PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE.**



*The Socially Speaking Board Game comes with fantastic cards of different scenarios. Instead of using as a board game, you could use the cards as a game for the whole class. With a partner get the students to act out the different scenarios.*

*Here are 3 examples of the board game cards.*

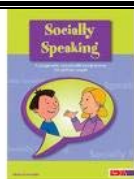
"Ask what they like doing after school"

First ask sitting too close to person  
Ask again, sitting at right distance  
Which is better and why?

You know the teacher asked you to take something to school tomorrow, but you have forgotten what it was. Phone a friend to find out.

A group of your friends is playing a maths game. You would like to join in. What could you say to join them?

Another great activity from the Socially Speaking Board Game is saying "**I have peas for tea**" in a range of different emotions. These include: scared, surprised, excited, angry. This is a great quick activity to do with the whole class. For parents, this is a fun car activity too!



The 'Socially Speaking' book is filled with fantastic worksheets, activities, games. There is three units of work:

**Let's Communicate:** includes eye contact, using voices etc.

**Let's Be Friends:** Emotions, Friendship etc

**Let's Practice:** range of social activities like answering phone etc.

I have used this book in specialist and mainstream classrooms and always found students loved the activities.

More info page 9



Many children with an ASD do not get intrinsic rewards from social situations. Using TOKEN systems to reward the social skill you are focusing on is a great way to encourage new behaviours.

If we are aiming for "putting hand up" every time they put their hand up you move a token across. When they have 5 tokens = reward (computer time, activity they love).

Or you can turn the card the other way and put visual at top of required skill ie: visual of hand up then when have 5 tokens = reward.

Token Cards: More information on website [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com). See page 7 to order.



# WHERE TO BEGIN IN SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAMMES

There are 4 key skills that students need to be taught and reviewed through different ages and stages.

1. Imitate and attend to tasks/people.
2. Wait.
3. Ask for help.
4. Request a turn.

Many students may need visuals or alternative communication systems to support teaching these skills. You can use picture symbols, signing, photos and more.

## 1. IMITATION & ATTENDING TO PEOPLE/TASKS

To play a game or interact in a conversation with another person you need to learn imitation skills. This means being aware of what other people are doing and copy them. For example if everyone is sitting, you need to sit as well. If everyone is using a LOUD voice you would do that. If everyone is playing trains you need to get a train.

### Successful Strategies

- ✓ Introduce the term LOOK and encourage students to look at activities.
- ✓ Catch them looking and reinforce with the term “Good Looking”.
- ✓ Start with activities highly motivating to encourage them to give attention.
- ✓ Encourage them to notice what other people are doing/saying (actually teach, point out).

(People with an autism spectrum disorder have particular difficulty with eye contact. It is recommended you start with looking at objects and using the task as the focus).

## 2. WAIT

Examples of different types of waiting to teach:

To wait for a turn in a game or conversation.

To wait for a turn by putting your hand up.

To wait for a turn in a line (canteen, games).

To wait for a turn by looking in another person’s direction.



### Successful Strategies

- ✓ When waiting for a turn count: 1,2,3,4,5...*now it is James turn.*
- ✓ Give the student something to hold whilst they are waiting. Note: this may be something they like eg. toy car sensory toy, timer etc.
- ✓ Above is an example of a **WAIT** symbol. Copy, cut out and laminate for student to hold. Copy on RED, as waiting actually means STOP!

## 3. HELP

Here are a few ways ‘help’ is included in social skills:

Can they ask for “help”, or do they walk away, drag people, do everything themselves?

**Help** “I don’t understand the game” or “I don’t understand what to do or play”.

**Help** Putting hand up rather than calling out or sitting doing nothing.

**Help** “Can I play with you”, “Can you help me build with the blocks”.

## 4. Requesting a turn

This may be tapping the adult, putting hand up or asking using a visual communication system.

- ✓ You may need to model this (ie. Put your hand up as a reminder).
- ✓ When the student requests, reinforce by responding quickly.
- ✓ For some students just a brief glance at first may be their way of requesting. Say “You want a ..... (turn)” and give to them.
- ✓ Use photos/names of students to indicate whose turn. Have a visual to indicate turn (*see Practical Communication Programmes for examples of turn taking visuals*).



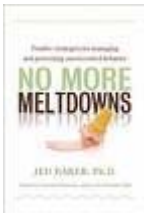
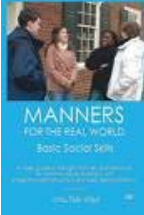
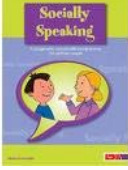

**Cooking** is a great way to teach social skills. The above is adapted from the “Cookbook Manual”. Cooking is a great place to start for social skills at home and school. Just think of all the imitation, attending to task, turn taking, waiting, asking for help and requesting that can be incorporated easily in a cooking activity. Many schools use cooking activities as their social skills programme, there is never a lack of enthusiastic students to come to a cooking activity!

**Download a free recipe from my website [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)**

# SOCIAL SKILLS RESOURCES

GREAT NEW RANGE to SUPPORT STUDENTS with an ASD

Social skills (or difficulties with!) is one of the defining criteria in the diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder. All children with an ASD require strategies to help them in the area of social skills. I have sourced this fantastic new range of social skills books, which together offer fantastic, practical strategies to support children with an ASD in this key skill area and these will be valuable resources for home and school.

  <p>2 Fantastic Books Just \$70 each</p> <p>By Dr Jed Baker</p>	<p><b><u>THE SOCIAL SKILLS PICTURE BOOKS</u> – \$70 each.</b> Full of photos that support social skills and show the 'right way' and 'wrong way'. Over 160 A4 pages of photos, scripts and practical tips.</p> <p><b>Social Skills Picture Book: Teaching play, emotion &amp; communication to children with autism</b>  <b>Social Skills Picture Book: For High School and Beyond</b></p> <p><i>The Social Skills Picture Books</i> immediately zoomed to the top of the chart in books on autism and Asperger's because it provides a teaching tool that "engages the attention and motivation of students who need help learning appropriate social skills." It demonstrates through pictures over 100 social skills, such as conversation, play, emotion management and empathy.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><i>The Social Skills Picture Book also can be purchased together with a CD for \$125. The CD is the photo collection from the book so you can make your own social stories, activities and more</i>  <b>CD only: \$65</b> (really only helpful if already have book) (Code C04)</p> </div>
	<p><b><u>NO MORE MELTDOWNS</u> – \$35</b> (Code B26)</p> <p><b><u>Positive Strategies for Managing and Preventing Out-of-Control Behaviour</u></b>  <b>By Dr Jed Baker</b></p> <p>This is a wonderful book - I wish I had read this years ago! 150 pages of wonderful information and strategies for home and school. The book is divided into 3 areas: The Problem, The Solution &amp; Plans. It is interwoven with stories of how the strategies have been used with different children. Chapters include: Meltdowns: When rewards and punishments are not enough!, What are Meltdowns made of? Creating a prevention plan.</p>
 <p>Just what families &amp; schools need to teach social skills</p>	<p><b><u>MANNERS FOR THE REAL WORLD DVD</u> – \$60</b> (Code D07)</p> <p><b>44 minutes</b></p> <p>This manners video to show students from primary through secondary how to act during some of the most common interactions between people. It features clear, straightforward demonstrations of appropriate and inappropriate behavior. The program covers: personal hygiene, conversations, introductions, telephone and Internet use, table manners, behavior for ladies and gentlemen, manners in public, serving as a host and being a guest. While any student will find it entertaining and helpful, the video should be especially effective for young people who don't easily pick up social skills by themselves, but need clear specific examples!</p>
 <p>Book</p>	<p><b><u>SOCIALLY SPEAKING</u> – \$85</b> (Code B27)</p> <p><b>By Alison Schroeder</b></p> <p>Socially Speaking will help you to introduce and practice skills your pupils need to develop and maintain relationships and to lead independent lives outside the school context. Socially Speaking is a unique social skills programme that lasts a whole school year and is divided into three units: let's communicate, let's be friends, and let's practice. As pupils progress through the carefully structured programme, their self-esteem will increase, their listening skills and expressive language abilities will improve. Contains teacher's notes, photocopiable A4 illustrated worksheets, and assessment and evaluation forms.</p>
 <p>Board game Ages: 7 - Adult</p>	<p><b><u>SOCIALLY SPEAKING BOARD GAME</u> – \$90</b> (Code O05)</p> <p><b>By Alison Schroeder – author of the Socially Speaking Book</b></p> <p>This brilliant board game teaches and reinforces social skills in a fun way. Designed to complement the Socially Speaking book, the game focuses on social interaction in three key areas: home, school, and the wider community. Children are able practice vital skills such as greetings, turn-taking, eye contact, listening, compliments, emotions, telephoning others, showing interest in what others are saying, sitting appropriately and still, asking and answering questions, using your voice effectively, developing and maintaining friendships, and more. 2-6 Players. Contains game board, 100 question cards, playing pieces and teacher's notes.</p>



# No More Meltdowns!

Managing Meltdowns is very important. I believe the key is getting in early and putting in place strategies before the behaviour escalates. For those of you with new students this year the information below may help you look for the signs. You will need a range of strategies to prevent the meltdown escalating. For some students strategies that may help include: ignoring, distracting, redirecting, send on an errand, and more. If you are thinking 'but isn't that rewarding the behavior!' then you may find the new book by Dr Jed Baker "No More Meltdowns" your best read for 2010.

## Three Stages of a Meltdown

### **1. Build up: It may look like:**

- Walking in a different pattern
- Body Posture (head down, head on desk, tense)
- Become much more literal
- Change in voice tone
- Increase in wringing of hands/hypersensitivity to touch/picking at skin
- Become slower to respond or increase in vagueness
- Other students may become highly distractible
- Become more controlling, asking more questions and more rigid
- More stock standard answers (I don't know, I forgot, I'm tired)

**2. Survival Mode:** In survival mode they will use skills to try and keep a meltdown from beginning. Their coping mechanism is coming into play. **It may look like**

- More controlling of their environment
- Seek sensory input: repetitive actions, flip back on chairs, pacing, jumping on trampoline
- Sleepy, stay completely still and become rigid
- Unaware of others
- Run away, climb, escape, hide (under table, outside, etc)

### **3. Meltdown**

In a meltdown the student is in panic mode and has no control. The student may not be able to respond and will use stock standard actions to make people move away and leave them alone (swearing, pushing, and hitting). A behaviour management programme will usually be ineffective as the student has reached meltdown. The student will need to finish the meltdown before adults can take any action.

*Excerpt from Teacher Assistant Big Red Book of Ideas.*

## Ideas to try when in "Build up" and "Survival Mode"

\*\*\*Remember once the student is in meltdown it is too late to use most strategies.

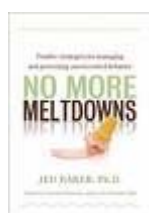
- Limit instructions
- Send student on an errand
- Walk don't talk (take the student for a walk but don't ask questions or comment on behaviour)
- Redirect to quiet time: Petition desk, Reading corner, Sit at teachers desk, Headphones
- Give them a sensory toy to hold
- Repetitive physical activity: Jump on a trampoline, run around the quadrangle/oval, gym circuit
- May need a toilet break or drink break.

*A student learning to notice the signs and manage their own emotions is a VITAL part of managing meltdowns. Dr Tony Attwood books are clinically proven to help!*



**EXPLORING FEELINGS**

**\$40**



**JUST \$35**

### **NO MORE MELTDOWNS**

**Positive Strategies for Managing and Preventing Out-of-Control Behaviour**  
By Dr Jed Baker

This is a wonderful book – I wish I had read this years ago! 150 pages of wonderful information and strategies for home and school.

The book is divided into 3 areas: The Problem, The Solution & Plans. It is interwoven with stories of how the strategies have been used with different children. Chapters include: Meltdowns: When rewards and punishments are not enough!, What are Meltdowns made of? Creating a prevention plan.

# 11 GREAT REASONS TO VISIT MY WEBSITE

1. Download some great new free Tip Sheets.
2. Request a Catalogue and download an order form.
3. Sign up to my E-Zine for regular emails of strategies and top tips.
4. View up to date workshop information and download registration forms.
5. Shop Online.
6. Browse products and see what else is available.
7. Download free recipes and play schedules.
8. View links to TV Shows, YouTube clips and other great stories.
9. Email me a question.
10. Book reviews, feedback from workshops and MORE.
11. **Coming soon:** Share your success stories or read other peoples.

New FREE Tips



## Join us for Inspiring, Entertaining & Informative Workshops in 2010

*Please let anyone who may benefit from the following workshops know. There is nothing worse than hearing after a workshop. Unfortunately I will only be visiting most places once this year and some places it will be two years between visits.*

### **Triple Bill: Dr Richard Eisenmajer, Dr Wendy Lawson & Sue Larkey**

**A Psychologist, a Person with ASD and an Educator!!**



**Melbourne – Cranbourne Mon 1 March**  
**Melbourne – Moonee Valley Tue 2 March**

These are going to be fantastic days that discuss education from three different perspectives!



**Dr Wendy Lawson** is an adult with an autism spectrum disorder. Wendy prefers the word 'diffability' to disorder and her research seeks to explore what being differently abled means in the world of neuro-diversity. Sharing her knowledge, understanding and experience of autistic spectrum disorders has been Wendy's occupation over the past 12 years.

**Melbourne – Cranbourne Mon 1 March and Moonee Valley Tue 2 March**  
**Adelaide – Morphett Vale Mon 22 March and Paradise Tues 23 March**



**Dr Tony Attwood** is definitely one of the world's best speakers on Asperger's Syndrome. Tony is an outstanding communicator and brings the quality of compassion and technical background as a clinical psychologist. He is the author of bestselling books on ASD. The workshops last year had EXCELLENT evaluations and all workshops were SOLD OUT. So please register ASAP.

**Hobart Wed 21 April      Campbelltown Thur 22 April      Melbourne Fri 30 July      Canberra Thur 16 Sept**



**Dr Richard Eisenmajer:** Using anecdotes and case studies from his clinical practice, well known Melbourne psychologist explains the main features of Autism Spectrum Disorder. He provides insights into how people with ASD experience the world around them and reasons why they either excel or struggle with everyday activities.

**Melbourne – Cranbourne Mon 1 March and Moonee Valley Tue 2 March**



### Author, Consultant

Sue Larkey is uniquely positioned within the education system having both taught as a Primary School Teacher and Special Education Teacher. Sue has taught students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the mainstream and at a Specialist Autism School. She combines this practical experience with extensive research, having completed a Masters in Special Education and currently undertaking a Doctorate in Education.



## UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

### PRACTICAL, FAST MOVING, FUN, MOTIVATIONAL

TO REGISTER: Download FULL Registration forms at [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)

### FULL DAY INTENSIVE

For more  
information on  
sessions visit:  
[www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)

#### NEW SOUTH WALES

- |                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| ○ COFFS HARBOUR                  | Mon 15 Feb     |
| ○ PT MACQUAIRE                   | Tues 16 Feb    |
| ○ ORANGE                         | Mon 15 March   |
| ○ CAMPBELLTOWN                   | Tues 16 March  |
| ○ PENRITH                        | Tues 30 March  |
| ○ CAMPBELLTOWN - DR TONY ATTWOOD | Thurs 22 April |

#### VICTORIA

- |                               |              |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| ○ GEELONG                     | Mon 3 May    |
| ○ ST KILDA                    | Tues 4 May   |
| ○ CRANBOURNE (Triple Bill)    | Mon 1 March  |
| ○ MOONEE VALLEY (Triple Bill) | Tues 2 March |

TRIPLE BILL: Sue Larkey, Dr Eisenmajer & Dr Wendy Lawson

#### QUEENSLAND

- |                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| ○ NOOSA                | Mon 22 Feb  |
| ○ BRISBANE - Chermside | Tues 23 Feb |
| ○ CAIRNS               | Mon 11 May  |

#### ACT

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| ○ CANBERRA | Mon 29 March |
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#### SA

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| ○ MORPHETT VALE (Double Bill) | Mon 22 March  |
| ○ PARADISE (Double Bill)      | Tues 23 March |

DOUBLE BILL: Sue Larkey & Wendy Lawson

#### TASMANIA

- |                            |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| ○ HOBART – DR TONY ATTWOOD | Wed 21 April |
|----------------------------|--------------|

#### NORTHERN TERRITORY

- |          |             |
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| ○ DARWIN | Tues 11 May |
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**MORE workshop dates & states [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)**

**Limited  
Places  
Available  
Register  
ASAP**

[www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)

or  
call Dearne  
**0433 660 379**  
to reserve your place  
or have to a  
registration form sent  
to you.



**Dr Tony Attwood**  
Hobart Wed 21 April  
Campbelltown Thur 22 April  
Melbourne Fri 30 July  
Canberra Thur 16 Sept



**Dr Richard Eisenmajer**  
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