



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- If the student has support staff in the classroom, or is withdrawn from class, or has partial attendance, it is very important to let the children know why this happens, as they naturally wonder where the student is or why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:

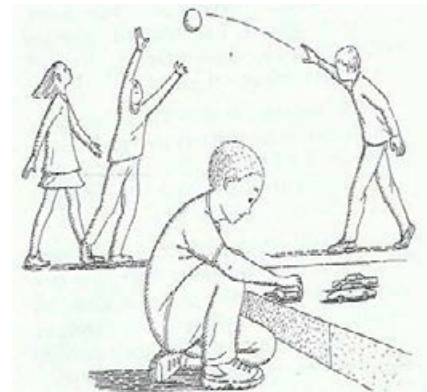
If the child's behaviours interfere with other students learning outcomes then they need to be informed on successful strategies in dealing with the child with the diagnosis. This may include teaching to ignore, move away, tell an adult etc.

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?'



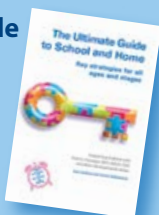
I sometimes find it difficult to play games with other children



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

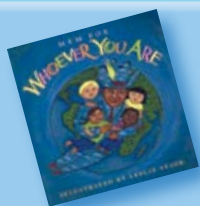


Inside Aspergers Looking Out

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.