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*Strategies for Common
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Understanding Dysgraphia

Girls with ASD

FREE

Worksheets
Available NOW



Understanding Dysgraphia & Handwriting Difficulties

Dysgraphia affects one's ability to write and their fine motor skills. It is known to be associated with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (specifically Asperger Syndrome) and ADHD.

Some key facts about children with Dysgraphia:

- Can usually write on some level, but often lack motor coordination.
- May find other fine motor tasks such as tying shoes difficult, though it often does not affect **all** fine motor skills.
- Can often lack basic spelling skills (eg, having difficulties with the letters p, q, b and d).
- Often will write the wrong word when trying to formulate thoughts (on paper).
- Generally emerges when the child is first introduced to writing. The child may make inappropriately sized and spaced letters or write wrong or misspelled words despite thorough instruction.

The key different is once people without dysgraphia have learnt to write we can write without having to concentrate and focus. However, for these students it takes a HUGE amount of energy and effort to write. Can you imagine how frustrating it must be? - knowing what you want to write, how it should look but not having the skills to put it on paper as fast as your brain works! Often children with ASD get so tired and frustrated when doing writing tasks, they prefer computers because less fine motor skills are required. However, there are times when using the computer are not appropriate or possible ie: exams.

Ways to help children with dysgraphia is to implement a Fine Motor Program and pencil grips.



Quick Tip!

Putting a piece of paper under a student with dysgraphia's arm can help engage their core and improve fine motor skills.

See book below for more quick tips!

Why Use Pencil Grips to Help with Writing

Children need to hold a pencil in a way that provides both stability and mobility. Speed, legibility and endurance of handwriting are influenced by the way a child holds their pencil. Pencil grips help the child maintain a position of stability to allow for efficient mobility and improved handwriting.

The BIG advantage of our pencil grips is children like the feel of them as they are large, soft and moulded to fit your fingers – unlike the hard triangle types and the smaller types.

Guide to Which Pencil Grip to Use;

- The Crossover Grip ensures children learn the correct finger positions or to stop crossing over fingers or thumb wrapping. Great for first grip or to correct children crossing over.
- The Standard Pencil Grip helps position fingers and maintain an open web space making it easier for students to control the pencil.
- The Pinch Grip balances the structure of the Crossover Grip with the freedom of the Standard Pencil Grip and is a great way to ensure students maintain the correct grip before transitioning to standard pencil grip or for students who need a bit more support.

The Grips can be used as a three step process starting with the Crossover Grip, then the Pinch Grip and finally the Standard Grip.

All grips are suitable for both left and right handers. Just place your thumb on the R or L as indicated on the grip and the other fingers will slot naturally in to place.

Pencil Grips

(From left)

Crossover	CODE O03(CO)	\$3.50
Pinch Grip	CODE O03(PG)	\$3.50
Standard	CODE O03	\$3.50



Chew Stixx Pencil Toppers

Textured	CODE ST25	\$12
Shapes	CODE ST26	\$12

Comes in packs of 2.



Pencil Toppers are ideal for anyone who chews when writing. Some children (and adults) chew when they are thinking or processing.

Great Resource - The Motor Skill Flip-Book by Sally McNamara

This programme is fantastic as it solves motor issues with quick fun activities. You can give this book to parents/carers or support staff to follow. It has GREAT time-savers that use a whole body approach to motor skills. I love the way it is divided into the whole body activities and covers five key motor skill areas – 'core strength', 'shoulder stability', 'gross motor coordination', 'fine motor coordination' and 'pencil control'. I also love that each of the 100 activities can be mixed and matched quickly and easily for the child to follow during each session. **CODE B137 \$54.95 (plus P & H)**



Girls with ASD

Girls with ASD are often undiagnosed as the criteria was created by mainly examining boys, and the problem with this is that girls can be very different. I think we all know 'neuro-typical' boys and girls are very different in their social, communication and behaviour so it is no surprise that girls and boys with ASD are different too. Although there are many characteristics that are very similar between boys and girls with ASD, I thought I would list the main differences.

9 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 children that are much younger. 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 – meaning they have the ability to read but their comprehension skills do 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 again changing a few characters. Many have a special interest in literature.
6. Like the boys they get anxious, however, their anxiety is rarely physical or disruptive. In fact many have great coping mechanisms at school however the family see a very different child at home where the anxiety can explode.
7. Often their difficulties with social skills are called 'shy,' 'quiet' or 'solitary'.
8. They often like to organise and arrange objects. I watched one little girl spend hours appearing to play 'My Little Ponies,' however, on closer examination she was just arranging and re-arranging the horses over and over.
9. The main difference is there are significantly more undiagnosed girls/women than boys/men. Currently, only 1 girl is diagnosed to every 7 boys. In the future it is thought that by many psychologists the ratio could be more like 5 to 7 as we become more aware of this group.

If you want to understand more about girls with ASD I HIGHLY RECOMMEND you 'like' [Yellow Ladybugs](#) on Facebook

Recommendation for Girls

There are some wonderful books to explain how ASD presents itself differently in girls; how they can be diagnosed, how they can be helped and how they can help themselves. The two books below are both wonderful reads and I would encourage anyone who knows a girl with ASD to consider reading these books. Many girls and women I know with ASD love reading so by providing information to them in books it can empower them and help them to understand they are not alone.

One of my favourite books is *Aspergirls* by Rudy Simone. Here are my favourite excerpts, which give amazing insights and information.

"Aspergirls do not thrive under scrutiny, if it has just the slightest bit of hostility in it. Whether from our peers or teachers, if we are looked at with an unfriendly, intimidating, or threatening eye, we fold. Alone we are talented, graceful, witty, and smart, but under such circumstances we curl up like hedgehogs." - I know many girls who do this one!

"I always felt different from my family; they seemed unpredictable and frightening. I was known to be gifted intellectually but I was so profoundly affected by AS that as puberty kicked in, I went through bouts of mutism which could last hours or even a whole day." - Rudy Simone oscillated from performing for attention to shutting down completely – a swing of moods which she says is typical for "Aspergirls".

My other favourite book relating to girls with ASD is Danuta Bulhak-Pateros's fabulous picture book called *I am an Aspie Girl*. She wrote this book so girls could have a resource they could relate to. Danuta feels it is important not only to have a thorough understanding of ASD but also to adopt a positive attitude about the condition. She believes a genuine appreciation of the wonderful gifts that come with a different way of thinking will help the girls value themselves. The book aims to help girls understand themselves to discover their unique way of thinking and strengths. I love the way the book asks great questions:

- "Do you find playing in a group tricky?"
- "Do you sometimes find it hard to understand how you are feeling?"
- "Do you worry about making mistakes?"

Watch the FREE Dr. Tony Attwood webinar available the 30th April to the 13th of May, where he discusses the profile and characteristics of girls with ASD.

[More information at https://elearning.suelarkey.com.au/](https://elearning.suelarkey.com.au/)

Fantastic Books for Understanding Girls

Aspergirls: By Rudy Simone

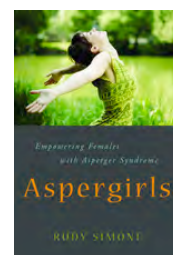
This book will be essential reading for females of any age diagnosed with ASD, and those who think they might be on the spectrum. It will also be of interest to partners and loved ones of Aspergirls, and anybody interested either professionally or academically in Asperger's Syndrome.

CODE B64 \$37.95 (plus P & H)

I am an Aspie Girl: By Danuta Bulhak-Paterson, Foreword by Tony Attwood

Lizzie is an Aspie Girl – she has Asperger Syndrome, which means that her brain works differently to her friends and even to boys with Asperger Syndrome. In this book, Lizzie explains what it is like to be an Aspie Girl, including how she has a special talent for blending in with her friends, how she gets really tired after being at school all day, how she worries about making mistakes, and how she finds it hard to understand how she is feeling.

CODE B144 \$25.95 (plus P & H)



The Early Years

When working with any child with ASD it is critically important that the programme implemented is realistic, both for the child and for the family. By realistic I mean setting everyone up for (achievable) success and that everyone across all environments has the time to implement it. I believe the best way to create a realistic programme is to only address one or two ideas at any one time.

I recommend in the early years you always have the goals you are working on in a prominent place (e.g. fridge or preschool office) so ALL people engaging with the child know the week's two goals. Over the years I have found by displaying the goals ensures consistency and everyone creating opportunities to reinforce the goal.

As children with autism spectrum disorders are highly individual not all strategies may work with every child. If you find this to be the case, remember that it is worth revisiting an old strategy in the future as it may work then. Most children respond best to a range of strategies.

Below I have chosen two very important skills, 'Pointing' and 'Asking for Help,' to teach children as examples of two goals you could work on at the same time.

Pointing: Appropriately Using Gesture to Communicate

Why Do We Teach this Skill?

- Pointing is an important non-verbal means of communication.
- Pointing is a skill that neuro-typical children learn spontaneously. Children with ASD need to be formally taught this skill, as instead of pointing they 'drag' or 'lead' adults to what they want. Even very young children with ASD can be very strong and as they grow older and stronger the adult may be injured if dragging behaviour is allowed to persist.

How to Promote this Skill:

- Model appropriate pointing whenever possible as you communicate with your child e.g. when giving your child a drink, point to the drink and say "Drink" before you give it to him.
- In order for pointing to be an effective form of communication the child needs to be taught to look at the other person.
- Wait. Remember to give your child time to process and then point.

- When your child is ready to make a choice rather than letting him grab the preferred item, anticipate his action and mould his hand gently into a point.
- Ensure that all key adults use pointing with the child – consistency is vital in the acquisition of this skill.
- Some children need many fine motor experiences to help them develop independent pointing. In addition to helping your child learn how to point (gently put your hand over his and form his index finger into a point), you may need to give your child many experiences with actions to songs and finger plays as well as a range of other fine motor activities.

Pointing is a vital skill and consistency is the key.

Help: Learning to Ask for Assistance from Other People

Why Do We Teach this Skill?

- Once the child is able to ask for assistance when he needs it, his frustration and the frequently resulting tantrums will decrease.

How to Promote this SKILL:

- Every time the child takes your hand to pull you somewhere, pause and clearly say "Help".
- Once he is used to you doing this, pause longer and hopefully he will look in your direction, then say "Help." If he doesn't do so don't get discouraged. Just try again next time.
- Once he is looking in your direction wait a little longer and hopefully you will get eye contact, however fleeting it may be.
- You then need to increase your expectation and expect him to vocalize any part of the word 'help'.
- When the child is able to make a sound then you can then encourage him to say 'help' more and more clearly.
- For children who already have single words the adult can quickly add her name, e.g. "Help, Mummy" or "Help, Kate."
- Use the sign for help coupled with a visual symbol as you go through the steps listed above.

(Excerpt from *The Early Years: The Foundations for ALL Learning* by Sue Larkey and Gay von Ess)

If you allow your child to 'pull you' without prompting any language, they will continue to do this as it works.

Most Popular Resource for Teaching in the Early Years

The Early Years: The Foundations for ALL Learning

By Sue Larkey and Gay von Ess

The Early Years has been designed as a 'how to' book that parents, teachers and carers can refer to for help in managing behaviour, promoting communication, establishing basic attending skills and for introducing new activities to young children with autism spectrum disorder or developmental delays. Full of practical ideas to give children with ASD and other developmental delays the KEYS to learning. Teaching to play, write, draw, imitate etc. Toileting training, community access, etc. To sit, ask for help, wait, play, attention to task, sign songs, etc. Great easy to photocopy programmes.

CODE B04 **\$39.95 (incl P & H)**



Why Making Mistakes is Frustrating

A key part of increasing participation and engagement is getting students to "have a go" BUT.....have you ever noticed that making mistakes is particularly frustrating for students with ASD?

This is because students with ASD often have 'cognitive inflexibility,' in other words they have a 'one track mind' and their thinking tends to be rigid. Essentially, students can't see an alternative option or opinion, or get frustrated when corrected as they believe they are right. Therefore this cognitive inflexibility is a barrier to learning as students are prevented from learning from their mistakes. Hence, it is no surprise when I talk with parents and teachers I often hear the following phrases, "He doesn't like making mistakes," or "If he gets it wrong, he stops work." This highlights that we need to encourage these children to 'have a go.'

Strategies to encourage 'having a go':

- Break activities into small achievable steps.
- Use Social Stories to support understanding that everyone makes mistakes (i.e. in Developing Social Skills book "It is okay to make mistakes" page 72).
- Model making mistakes and how to correct (cross out, rub out, etc.)
- Use positive phrases rather than negative e.g. put your hand up vs don't call out.
- Reward 'having a go' and/or making mistakes.
- Instead of putting an "X" for mistakes, try putting a circle around the mistake and call it an 'opportunity' for learning.
- Introduce mindset activities



A Change Starts with a Change in Attitude

Often when students with ASD and ADHD don't know what to do they use standard phrases such as, "I'm Stupid," "I'm bored" or "I forgot." They use these phrases instead of asking for help. In my experience this is often due to fear of failure and/or their one track mind.

An effective way to address this is to introduce the concept of "A Change Starts with a Change in Attitude." It is great to make a visual students can refer back to before they start work or when they are stuck. Use this worksheet to encourage students to consider words they often say and help them find replacements words to change their mindset.



Link to image to print; <https://goo.gl/SjezKM>

Other Ideas to encourage a change in mindset

- Show them how to ask for help and remind them everyone needs help.
- Recognise where they have had a go, praise them for trying rather than getting it right
- Remind them we are all learners -making mistakes is part of Learning.
- Discuss "Negative" and "Positive" self talk.
- Discuss your thought processes out loud when things aren't working.
- Talk about a Plan B i.e. "I tried this strategy it didn't work, that's okay I will try Plan B."

Top selling books for practical strategies

The Teacher Assistants Big Red/Blue Book of Ideas

By Sue Larkey and Anna Tulleman

Two fantastic companion guides with no repetition or overlap between the two books. Hundreds of ideas and practical strategies for teachers and teacher assistants to try.

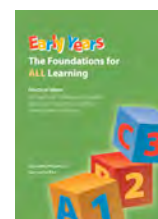
BIG RED BOOK | CODE B15 \$39.95 (incl P & H) | BIG BLUE BOOK | CODE B16 \$39.95 (incl P & H)

The Early Years: The Foundations for ALL Learning

By Sue Larkey and Gay von Ess

Full of practical ideas to give children with ASD and other developmental delays the KEYS to learning. Teaching to play, write, draw, imitate etc. Toileting training, community access, etc. To sit, ask for help, wait, play, attention to task, sign songs, etc. Great easy to photocopy programmes.

CODE B04 \$39.95 (incl P & H)



Recommended Resources for Teen Years and Beyond

I have had many parents and educators requesting resources and tips for teens and young adults. I agree it is hard to find information and resources for how to guide and support this age group so below is a list of my favourites.

The Essential Guide to Secondary School: By Sue Larkey and Anna Tullemans

Revised and expanded in 2016. A practical guide to secondary school. Ideas for all staff, from curriculum engagement, accommodations, group work, homework, using technology, behaviour support, organisational skills to building independence. Includes proformas to photocopy and save you time. This book has over 100 pages of proven ideas and strategies.

CODE B02 \$44.95 (plus P & H)

Preparing for Life: The Complete Guide for Transitioning to Adulthood for those

with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome: By Jed Baker

Easy to follow resource provides a complete toolbox of social skills and the means to attain them so that students may approach their futures with excitement rather than anxiety. Tackles a wide variety of issues across the spectrum, such as perspective-taking, nonverbal communication skills, conversational skills, and stress management.

CODE B150 \$49.95 (plus P & H)

Asperger's Teens: Understanding High School for Students on the Autism Spectrum: By Blythe Grossberg

If you have Asperger's, high school can be a time of great promise and opportunity but it can also be uncomfortable at times. This book helps you use your strengths and unique personal style to feel more comfortable in high school. Chock full of quizzes, exercises, and examples, this book can help you understand your unique strengths and weaknesses, work well with your teachers, connect with other

Parenting ASD Teens: A Guide to Making it Up As You Go: Andrew Schlegelmilch

The author draws on his experience working at a high school for teens with autism to provide savvy advice to parents coping with the difficulties that arise when their child hits the troublesome teenage years. Discussion includes setting realistic expectations, encouraging independence, and helping teens cope with mental health issues.

CODE B151 \$37.95 (plus P & H)

Taking Care of Myself: By Mary Wrobel

Through a unique combination of Social Stories™ and easy-to-understand activities, this unique book offers a curriculum that guides the child and caregiver on issues of health, hygiene, and the challenges of puberty. Young students can benefit from self-care skills such as using the toilet, brushing teeth, and washing hands. Parents and teachers should begin teaching these necessary skills as early as possible, even from ages 3-5. The ultimate goal is to maximise the child's potential for independence and lifelong social success.

CODE B98 \$35.95 (plus P & H)

The Aspie Teen's Survival Guide: By J.D. Kraus

The teenage years are a time when being social is the #1 priority for kids. But for kids with Asperger's, who have acute social challenges, these years can be the most difficult, confusing time in their lives. Enter J. D. Kraus, a young man who has been there, done that! He offers practical advice to his peers so they can get the most out of middle school and high school, both academically and socially.

CODE B82 \$29.95 (plus P & H)

The Wonderful World of Work: By Jeanette Purkis

Full of practical information, engaging activities, fun illustrations and inspiring personal stories, this hands-on workbook demystifies the world of work in order to help teenagers with ASD feel confident in their ability to be successful at their studies and get a job and encourages them to think about careers that might suit their skills and interests.

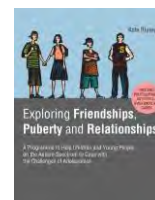
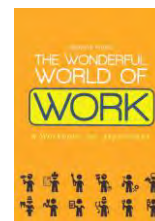
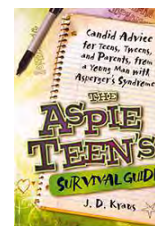
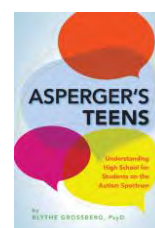
CODE B119 \$42.95 (plus P & H)

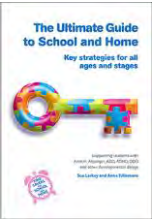


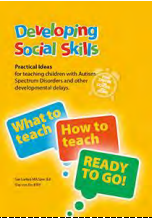
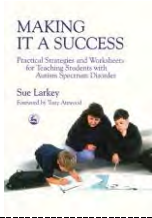


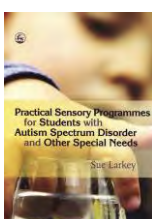
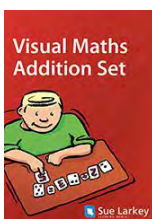
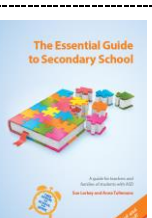
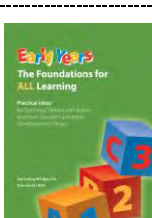

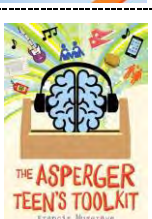


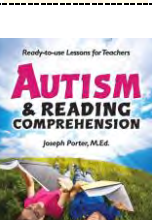


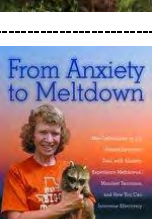
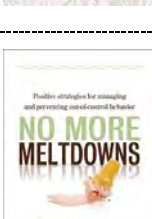

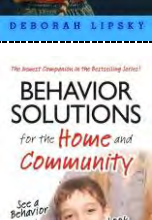


Exploring Friendships, Puberty and Relationships: By Kate Ripley

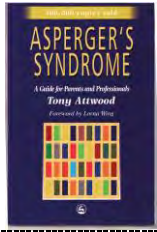


This evidenced-based programme is designed to help young people on the autism spectrum to cope with the many challenges of adolescence. It encourages them to explore their identity, develop their friendships and think more about adult relationships, tackling the important issues of puberty, sexuality, gender identity, body image, dress codes, self-care, safety and conventions for touching along the way.

For ages 11+.

CODE B117 \$59.95 (plus P & H)



The Ultimate Guide to School and Home By Sue Larkey & Anna Tulleman CODE B96 \$44.95		Teacher Assistants Big Red Book of Ideas By Sue Larkey & Anna Tulleman CODE B15 \$39.95		Teacher Assistants Big Blue Book of Ideas By Sue Larkey & Anna Tulleman CODE B16 \$39.95	
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Aspergirls By Rudy Simone CODE B64 \$37.95		Kids in the Syndrome Mix By Martin L Kutscher MD CODE B91 \$43.95		Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew By Ellen Notbohm CODE B43 \$28.95	
Asperger's Syndrome: A Guide for Parents and Professionals By Dr Tony Attwood CODE B12 \$37.95		The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome By Dr Tony Attwood CODE B13 \$50.95		Autism Spectrum Disorder and De-escalation Strategies By Steve Brown CODE B136 \$38.95	
Exploring Feelings By Dr Tony Attwood CBT to Manage Anxiety CODE B21 \$29.95 CBT to Manage Anger CODE B22 \$29.95		Starving the Gremlin Series For Ages 10+ By Kate Collins-Donnelly Anxiety B106 \$35.95 Anger B107 \$35.95 Stress B108 \$35.95 Exams B165 \$35.95		Starving the Gremlin Series For Ages 5-9 By Kate Collins-Donnelly Anxiety B109 \$35.95 Anger B110 \$35.95	
The Kids' Guide to Staying Awesome and in Control By Lauren Brukner CODE B111 \$35.95		How to be a Superhero Called Self-Control By Lauren Brukner CODE B142 \$35.95		Self-Control to the Rescue By Lauren Brukner CODE B163 \$35.95	
Socially Speaking By Alison Schroeder BOARD GAME CODE O05 \$84.95 BOOK CODE B27 \$72.95		The New Social Story Book By Carol Gray *INCLUDES CD* CODE B61 \$49.95		How to Stop Your Words from Bumping into Someone Else's By Anna Tullemans & Rhonda Dixon CODE B08 \$29.95	
The In-Sync Activity Card Book By Carol Kranowitz & Joye Newman CODE B161 \$34.95		The Motor Skill Flip Book Program By Sally McNamara CODE B137 \$54.95		Songames for Sensory Processing By Aubrey Lande & Bob Wiz *INCLUDES CD* CODE B76 \$39.95	
Gus the Asparagus By Kaylene Hobson & Ann-Marie Finn CODE B143 \$25.95		I am an Aspie Girl By Danuta Bulhak-Paterson CODE B144 \$25.95		Can I Tell You About Autism? By Jude Welton CODE B31 \$22.95	

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Course 1

Dr Tony Attwood - Psychologist

Autism Spectrum Disorder: A different
way of thinking, learning and managing
emotions.

Course 2

Sue Larkey – Teacher

Understanding Autism Spectrum
Disorder: Teaching Strategies and
Behaviour Support

- ✓ Both courses complement each other with very little overlap.
- ✓ **Recommendations:**
 - For full comprehensive understanding of ASD do both: Course 1 + Course 2 (10 hours)

Dr Tony Attwood

Free Webinar – What is ASD and How to Use this Knowledge to Succeed

Available: 30 April-13 May 2018

In this 40 minute online course you
will learn:

- ✓ The seven parts of the Criteria
for diagnosis of ASD and what
this means for teachers,
parents and professionals.
- ✓ Profile and characteristics of
Girls with an ASD.

Course 1 (same as 2017)

Available: 14 May 2018 (10 weeks)

Dr Tony Attwood – Autism Spectrum Disorder: A different way of thinking, learning and managing emotions.

In this five hour online course you
will learn:

- ✓ Cognitive Abilities: A different
way of thinking and learning.
- ✓ Managing Challenging
Behaviour.
- ✓ Managing Feelings: Cognitive
Behaviour Therapy and its role
in providing greater strategies
to manage emotions and
behavior.
- ✓ The Emotional Tool Box, What
it is and how to use.
- ✓ Special Interests: Origins and
constructive strategies.
- ✓ Strategies to Improve Social
Understanding and Friendship.

Accreditation – 5 hours

No Overlap

Sue Larkey

Free Webinar – Increasing Engagement and Participation

Available: 30 April-13 May 2018

In this 45 minute online course you
will learn:

- ✓ Key Strategies to Increase
Engagement and Participation.
- ✓ Increased Understanding of
How Children/Students with
ASD Learn.

Course 2 (same as 2017)

Available: 14 May 2018 (10 weeks)

Sue Larkey – Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder: Teaching Strategies and Behaviour Support

In this five hour online course you
will learn:

- ✓ Key Strategies from Pre-school
to Secondary.
- ✓ Teaching Strategies for School
and Home.
- ✓ What is ASD, ADHD, ODD,
SPD.
- ✓ Promoting Understanding with
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- ✓ Strategies for Social Skills and
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- ✓ How to Increase Engagement
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Making Friends and Being One

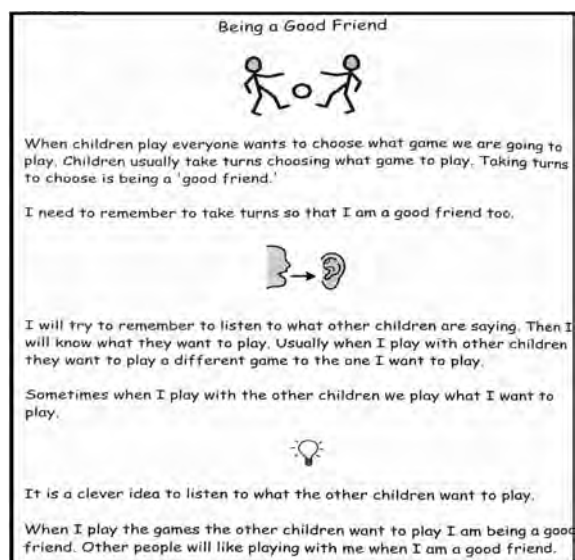
One of the biggest myths about ASD is they all like being on their own. Children with ASD often desperately want friends, and in fact worrying about friends can cause them anxiety. Many children show this stress by becoming more withdrawn, which of course makes the situation worse.

For students with ASD a little extra support may be required to create friendships. For instance, when teachers allow children to select their own partners, children with ASD often are left out. Instead staff should consider who will be a good partner/ friend to the child and be pro-active in pairing them. Good examples of opportunities for schools to support friendships are in seating arrangements, partner activities and group work.

Parents, I would encourage you to support the school by organising some out of school activities such as having children over for a play, meeting in the park after school or joining in after school activities which friends attend. This will allow some one on one time to develop new friendships.

Why Teach This?

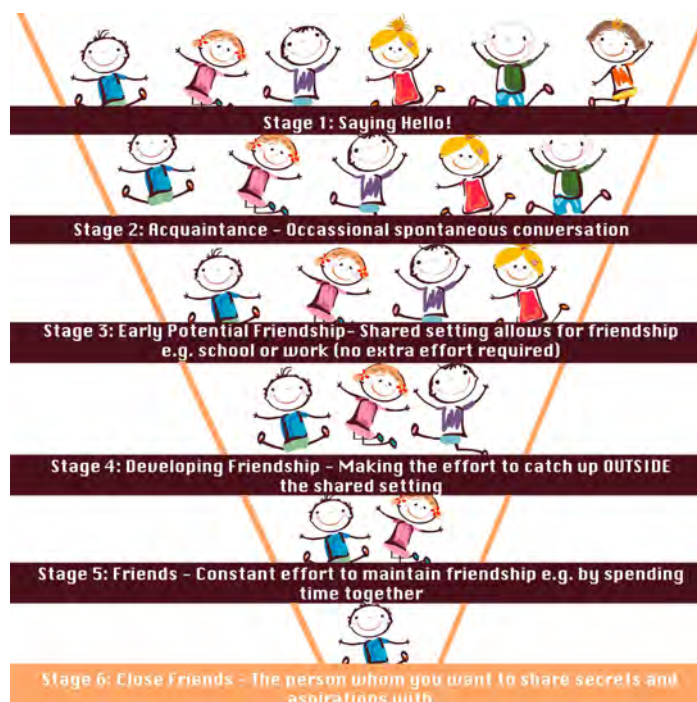
- Making and maintaining friendships is a constant challenge for people with ASD. Their inability to read social situations and recognise other people's emotions can impact on their relationships.
- It is important to explore the nature of friendships with children with an ASD as they often have an egocentric view of friendship. They fail to understand that friendship is a two way thing and that it does not happen on demand.
- Children with ASD tend to be drawn to one of two more noticeable groups — either the most popular children in the class or the noisy, poorly behaved children who demand a great deal of the teacher's attention. Children who would actually make good friends (the middle of the road group) tend not to be noticed by the child with ASD.
- Children with Asperger's Syndrome in particular want friends but frequently burn these friends out by their inappropriate expectations of friendship. Parents and teachers have to reinforce and acknowledge these friends to help keep the friendships going. Having a number of friends, possibly a couple allocated to each day of the week can help alleviate the demands on the mainstream friends.



Example of Social Script for Being a Good Friend

Ideas for Teaching at School and Home

- Discussions on what a friend and what friendship really are -emphasise that friendship is a two way thing.
- Use the Friendship Funnel below to explain the stages of friendship. Discuss as a whole class or as a family who would fit in those different stages of friendship. Download the visual at www.suelarkey.com.au



Link to image to print; <https://goo.gl/sBESFM>

- Foster friendships by establishing buddy systems for primary school age children and mentors for older children with ASD. It is important that several buddies/mentors be allocated to each child with ASD to ensure that the other children do not find this too much of a responsibility.
- Run supervised clubs for the whole school at break times, especially long lunch-times. A variety of indoor and outdoor activities could be offered e.g. Lego, chess or computers. Often all children, not just those with ASD, will benefit from extra activities. Involve older students, parents, grandparents and other interested people in the community if at all possible.
- Discuss and brainstorm friends and friendships. Aspects could include:
 - Like to play together
 - Share
 - Let other people be first sometime
 - Take turns
 - Listen to other people's ideas
 - Let other people choose WHAT to play sometimes
 - Like the same things
 - Have the same sense of humour
 - Like to talk together
- When students need to break into pairs or small groups; teachers can encourage inclusion by asking students to pair up/group by eye colour or letters in their name etc

Excerpt from *Developing Social Skills* by Sue Larkey and Gay von Ess.

Lunchtime Clubs/ Passive Playgrounds

Many schools have introduced Lunchtime Clubs and had great success.

Playgrounds are unstructured, unpredictable places where children with ASD struggle to follow and join in the numerous social interactions surrounding them. Children with ASD frequently return to class from the playground in a high state of anxiety. In addition, their self-esteem frequently takes a battering. In our book *Developing Social Skills*, co-author Gay von Ess and I have lots of practical ideas and strategies to support social skills.

Top Tips for Creating Successful Lunchtime Clubs

1. Use students' current interests and create clubs around these, or skills the students need.
2. Consider setting up for students who are not coping in the playground or constantly having incidents.
3. Name the Club: 'The World of Fun,' 'Lunchtime Club,' 'Rest and Relaxation' or 'Games Group.'
4. Have set open days each week. This can be from 1-5 days.
5. Decide on number of students who can attend.
6. Decide HOW students join the Club i.e. Self-selected, teacher selected, bring a friend, open door or teachers identified on the day who would benefit from the programme.
7. Include a range of activities and provide variety e.g. music, board games, Lego, cards, chess, computer, jigsaws, art, drawing, colouring, craft, Origami, garden group, watering group, relaxation, sensory room, Nintendo Wii, interactive whiteboard, iPads, aviary with seating and trees, exercise bike, mini trampoline, cooking and more.
8. Staffing/Supervision – be clear about supervision by staff. Some schools have peer programmes set up where older students supervise. All the schools who used peer support report a tremendous response from students wanting to be involved in the programme.

Passive Playgrounds

Passive Playgrounds are another option for Lunchtime Clubs. They are a classroom that is open with table top activities, board games, etc where students can go for quiet socialisation. Passive Playgrounds are a great way to support students with social skills and social engagement.

Buddy Benches



Some schools use Buddy Benches where children can go if they want someone to play with them. Older children are taught to keep observing and involve any peers sitting there.

The Buddy Bench is great in addressing loneliness and instilling a sense of inclusion within the school community.

GOOD REMINDER

According to Dr. Rebecca Wood from the University of Birmingham, "it is crucial to understand and respect the social preferences of individual children." In other words it is important to acknowledge that some children would rather be alone and others would prefer a larger group of friends. It is not vital for children with ASD to have friends UNLESS they want to.

Top Social Skills Resource for Primary

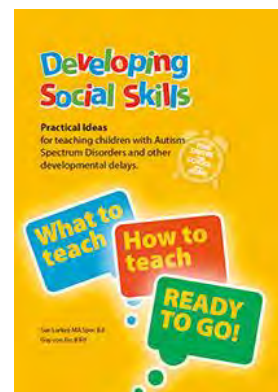
Developing Social Skills: By Sue Larkey and Gay von Ess

This book is for teaching and encouraging social interactions and skills for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other developmental delays.

What exactly is included in this book?

- Easy Ways to Include Social Skills in your Everyday Activities
- Different ways we Communicate - i.e. Body Language, Tone of Voice etc
- How Loud is my Voice Activities
- Personal Space
- Eye Contact - Why teach, What to teach, Steps to teach
- Conversation Skills - Including :Keeping on Topic & What to say
- Friendship : Making Friends & Being One, Working in groups
- Managing Emotions: 5 Steps to Teaching Emotions
- Ready to use social scripts
- Over 100 pages

CODE B18 \$39.95 (plus P & H)





Employable Me ABC TV Show

"Follow people with neuro-diverse conditions such as autism, OCD and Tourette syndrome as they search for meaningful employment. This uplifting and insightful series draws on science to uncover people's hidden skills."

I am LOVING this tv show on so many levels, in particular how it highlights the difficulty that people with ASD face post school. As they want work but they find it challenging to find jobs that fit their skill set. This is due to the complexity often associated with accommodating for their individual needs (e.g. sensory) in the workplace.



Dear my younger #ActuallyAutistic self,

I'm writing from 2018. 20 years on from when you went for your autism diagnosis. You always knew you were different, but now you'll know for sure. It will take a while to fully understand.

In your preteens you'll wish that you were 'normal'. Normal is a myth. Embrace your difference. There will also be times in your life where you will force yourself through challenging and socially exhausting experiences just to match neurotypicals. That approach will only drain you. Prioritise your wellbeing. Socialise only when you want to.

Read more at; <https://goo.gl/oi17ZS>

School to Work Transitions for Young People with Autism Spectrum Disorder

It is very important we start preparing students for post school options. A great starting point is getting teenagers involved in volunteer work. The school holidays are a great time to volunteer, checkout the volunteer websites as they have many options available. Jeanette Purkis has written a fantastic book *The Wonderful World of Work* and has kindly written a tip sheet for this Newsletter.

1. Start the conversation around employment with the young person early. Ideally, this should happen when they are 13 to 15 years old. That way, the transition from education to work will be less scary and unpredictable.
2. Ascertain the young person's anxieties around working and address them. Once again, the earlier this happens, the better.
3. Focus on the young person's potential and strengths rather than their problems and deficits.
4. Work on building the young person's sense of self-esteem and self-worth.
5. Education is very important in terms of success in the workplace. Try not to view education as a trajectory from school to university to professional job. Instead, see it as a journey, encourage the young person throughout their education journey, whatever they decide to study.
6. Help the young person find a mentor. A good candidate might be an employed person with ASD that the young person admires and/or enjoys spending time with.
7. Encourage a positive view of employment. Give some examples of employed and influential autistic people such as Temple Grandin or Anita Lesko.
8. Have a 'career day' where the young person can talk to different people about their jobs. People could be drawn from your own friends and relatives.
9. Think about what kinds of jobs your child or student might be good at and enjoy. You can approach businesses and create a job for them based on their strengths rather than having them apply for advertised jobs which may be inappropriate.
10. Talk about workplace communication. Practice using role plays if you like.
11. Do some research about disability employment service providers in your local area. Be proactive and encourage the employment service to engage with your child/student.
12. You can work through *The Wonderful World of Work: A Workbook for Asperiteens* with the young person.

Check out Jeanette's Tip Sheet: **Success in Employment – Tips for Asperiteens** – download free on www.suelarkey.com.au

Recommended Resource

The Wonderful World of Work By Jeanette Purkis

Full of practical information, engaging activities, fun illustrations and inspiring personal stories, this hands-on workbook demystifies the world of work in order to help teenagers with ASD feel confident in their ability to be successful at their studies and get a job and encourages them to think about careers that might suit their skills and interests.



CODE B119 \$42.95 (incl P & H)

Behaviour – Why Do Children Do THAT?

Solutions and Strategies for Common Classroom Behaviours

Behaviour	Reason why they might do this	Suggested Strategies
Chewing on shirt, hat string or objects	Chewing is calming for these students so it is important you provide opportunities to chew.	Chewy tubes, Chewigem necklace, Pencil toppers. Oral Motor Programme. Water bottle with straw – they will need a few straws as tend to chew through.
Hiding or running away	This is a 'flight response,' usually due to confusion, lack of ability to problem solve or emotional build ups.	Give a Preventative Break (go for a walk, bounce on a fit ball). Teach problem solving skills (important do this when calm). Recommend reading <i>From Anxiety to Meltdown</i> Code; B59
Difficulty accepting criticism	This can be due to anxiety around making mistakes. Often part of Executive Functioning difficulties.	Write social stories about making mistakes. Reward mistakes & having a go (see page 5). Allow time to process feedback. Recommend reading <i>Autism & Everyday Executive Functioning</i> Code; B169
Swearing	Most kids swear, but often kids with ASD don't learn the social nuances of swearing. Often kids do for social attention.	When you hear them swear, tell them a replacement word. Use Social Stories to set clear boundaries and expectations. Work on friendships and social skills if doing to gain attention of peers.
Stalking other students	This is usually because they want to be friends but do not know how to connect socially.	Consider introducing lunch clubs (see page 12). Be cautious if you stop them following one student as they normally replace with another student.
Not wanting to leave special interest	As their special interest makes them happy they often find hard to leave.	Let them know when they can go back to special interest. Have rules and routines around special interest.
Sniffing people or objects	This is part of sensory processing and many kids love to sniff people and objects.	Occupational Therapy Assessment. Use sensory tools to redirect. Social Stories about appropriate sniffing.
Constantly putting hand up and calling out if teacher doesn't ask them	Many students constantly put their hand up as they want to share their knowledge and are keen to participate. However, they often miss the social understanding that everyone wants a turn.	Use Social Stories to explain that everyone likes to have a turn, and that the teacher can't always ask everyone. Use a visual tally to let them know how many times they can put their hand up in each lesson.
Constantly thirsty	This is thought to be part of the Sensory Processing Difficulties. It is very common for students with an ASD or ADHD to drink more than their peers	Provide regular drink times during class. Let them have a water bottle on their table. Remember they will need more toilet breaks too.
Asking for the toilet all the time	See above as often part of thirst. Some students do use this as a form of preventative break when they feel their anxiety rising.	Some students will not use toilets during recess and lunch as toilets are too noisy, so have set times they can go during class e.g. once per session. Use a visual schedule so they know when their toilet break is.
Eating specific food/not eating at school	Part of Sensory Processing Difficulties Some children have sound sensitivity known as Misophonia. Not uncommon for kids with ASD to only eat five foods.	Get an Occupational Therapy assessment to check sensory issues in relation to taste and sound Allow 'snack breaks.' Allow to eat away from other children Understand that their limited diet is part of their ASD
Rips up worksheet	Usually anxiety as do not know how to do work, fear of making mistakes or frustration.	Use CBT to teach about anxiety and what to do. Teach replacement behaviours like asking for help, accepting mistakes, etc.

Excerpt from *Teacher Assistants Big Blue Book of Ideas* by Sue Larkey and Anna Tullemaans **Code; B16**

Online Courses in 2018

If you can't make it to one of my live workshops you can now experience the same course online. Broken into five modules to watch at a time and place that is convenient to you. For more information see page 10 and to register go to <http://elearning.suelarkey.com.au>.

Dr Tony Attwood 2018

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.



Book your place NOW and pay closer to the workshop.

Email Dearne at dearne@suelarkey.com, or go to www.suelarkey.com.au

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Accreditation Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
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(For more information refer to flyers on website).

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Please join me on Facebook for workshop dates, quick tips and lots of practical strategies.

E-Newsletter

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Term 2 and 3 2018 Workshops

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Sydney / Campbelltown	Thurs 23 Aug
Sydney / Hornsby	Fri 24 Aug

Victoria

Melbourne/Bulleen	Fri 11 May
Ballarat (Tony Attwood)	Thurs 6 Sept
Mulgrave	Fri 7 Sept

Queensland

Cairns	Thurs 31 May
Townsville	Fri 1 June
Mackay	Thurs 13 Sept
Brisbane (Tony Attwood)	Fri 14 Sept

Australian Capital Territory

Canberra (Tony Attwood)	Fri 22 June
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Western Australia

Perth	Fri 15 June
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Limited places available please register ASAP

To reserve your place or have a registration form sent to you email Dearne at dearne@suelarkey.com.au or go to

www.suelarkey.com.au

For more workshop dates and locations visit www.suelarkey.com.au

Sue Larkey Author and 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.



Sue Larkey
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