



ALL CATS HAVE ASPERGER SYNDROME

By Kathy Hoopmann

Before Reading the Book:

Determine if you have any children in your class with Aspergers Syndrome and consult with the family if their child knows they have this. Family members may choose to be present when you complete some of the activities listed below.

Discuss the front cover with the class. Who has a pet? List types. Who has a cat? List and discuss different types. What does your cat like do?

Class or Family Discussion

Have you ever been in a situation or place, and felt you didn't fit in or belong?

Do you like being with people or do you feel more comfortable in your favourite place, with your favourite belongings? What is your favourite place? What is your favourite thing to do?

What makes you feel safe?

Suggested Activities to Help a Child with Aspergers (using areas mentioned in the book as characteristics of Aspergers)

People/Places/Things

- As the book suggests, the child with Aspergers may want to be near those he/she loves, but not be held. Places and things may comfort him/her.
- Remember to be patient and encouraging. The child with Aspergers may be adventurous but unaware of dangers. Teach the child that actions have consequences.

Senses

- The child may have very good hearing. Due to this sensitivity, turn down and avoid loud noises, and sudden movements.
- Other senses may be heightened. Listen to what a child likes and dislikes but teach that sometimes certain situations are unavoidable. Use Social Stories™ or social scripts.
- The child may like the same food, presented the same way, day after day. Family and School need to know that this is important for predictability for the child.

Social skills

- The child needs to be taught social skills. (See ideas in *Developing Social Skills* and other social skills games and books available at www.suelarkey.com). These resources provide quick, easy and ready to use ideas, to teach a child important skills such as Friendship skills. What is a friend? How to I be a friend? What is Bullying? What is teasing? What do I say and do?
- Educators and family members need to be patient and persistent.
- Teach the child that it is ok to enjoy a particular activity BUT not everyone is interested in YOUR activity. Teach the child that everyone has their own special interest.
- A child with Aspergers may have Misunderstandings in Language. Teach the child about sayings, idioms and humour. Teach the child that people don't always say what they mean.

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Persistent

- Repetition is important to a person with Aspergers; in speech, activity and lifestyle. This focus on a task makes them as the book says “Focus on things in a different way” to create solutions. Finding answers and testing ideas in ways others may not have considered. Teach the child that whilst some people are willing to listen to what they want to share, others are NOT interested. Teach the child to ask “Would you like to hear about.....? Wait for answer! If Yes, then proceed with sharing. If No, then teach them to find someone to share with.

Routines and Schedules

- Provide repetition and consistency for the child with Aspergers. They need and appreciate it.

Follow Up

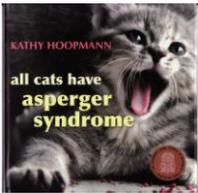
What activities have helped you help a child with Asperger Syndrome?

Teach the child, the class and the family that:

- EVERYONE is different!
- EVERYONE has their own routines, for their own life!
- EVERYONE wants to be accepted for who he/she is!
- EVERYONE needs guidance and support!
- EVERYONE wants to be recognised for being him/herself!

Recommended Resources (available online at www.suelarkey.com):

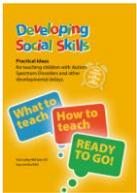
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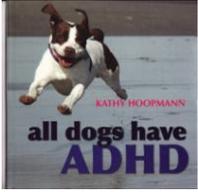
Putting the Pieces Together
By Sue Larkey and Gay von Ess



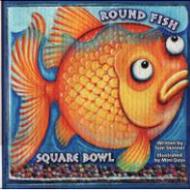
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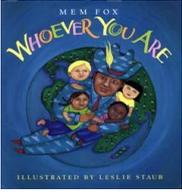
All Dogs Have ADHD
By Kathy Hoopmann



Round Fish Square Bowl
By Tom Skinner



Whoever You Are
By Mem Fox



For more activity sheets, recommended resources, tip sheets, to sign up for a free newsletter or request a free catalogue visit:

www.suelarkey.com