

AUTISM

ASD -AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER



HOW DOES IT AFFECT YOU

AUTISM IS A LEARNING DIFFERENCE THAT CAUSES CHALLENGES WITH SOCIAL SKILLS, COMMUNICATION AND THINKING. SOME PEOPLE WITH AUTISM (ASD) ALSO DISPLAY REPETITIVE BEHAVIOURS AND FIND BREAK IN ROUTINE DIFFICULT.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS YOU MAY BE WORKING WITH A LEARNER WHO HAS AUTISM?

INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM (ASD) MAY DEMONSTRATE SOME OF THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIOURS:

- **AVOID EYE CONTACT AND/OR PHYSICAL CONTACT**
- **IS PRONE TO BLOW OUTS OR ISSUES DURING LESSON DUE TO SENSORY PROCESSING ISSUES, ANXIETY, FRUSTRATION OR COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES**
- **GETS UPSET BY CHANGES IN ROUTINE**
- **STRUGGLES WITH SOCIAL SKILLS AND MAKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS**
- **MAY USE EXCESSIVE BODY MOVEMENTS TO SELF-SOOTHE**
- **HAS OBSESSIVE INTERESTS**
- **IS CONSTANTLY “ON THE GO” OR MOVING; FIDGETS AND NEEDS TO PICK UP AND FIDDLE WITH EVERYTHING**
- **IS VERY ADVANCED VERBALLY, BUT STRUGGLES WITH NONVERBAL CUES**
- **MAY HAVE TROUBLE SHOWING UNDERSTANDING OF OTHER PEOPLE’S FEELINGS AND THEIR OWN**
- **MAY HAVE AN OVER THE TOP REACTION TO THINGS SUCH AS SOUND, SMELL, TASTE, LOOK OR FEEL (SENSORY PROCESSING ISSUES)**
- **MAY HAVE TROUBLE WITH SAFETY AND DANGER AWARENESS**

AUTISM DOES NOT MEAN A LACK OF INTELLIGENCE

AUTISM TEACHING TIPS

Where possible, try to seat students with Autism closer to the teacher and to classroom materials.

- Use visual prompts and color coding to highlight and teach new information.
- Have a ‘safe’ space on campus for the individual to go to when anxiety levels get too high and highlight this to autistic students before they start their course.
- Provide information in a visual format if necessary e.g. photos of campus, site and staff.
- Ensure all staff are given information about a student’s needs.
- Adopt a flexible approach, enabling learners to progress and gain meaningful qualifications in the settings and time frames that are best for them.
- Be clear in communication, both written and verbal.
- Autistic students will need to be prepared for changes e.g. to timetables.
- Be mindful of using literal language in written materials.
- Allow extra time after group sessions to check the student has understood everything.
- Have alternative ways to demonstrate team work skills other than working in groups.
- Ensure there is sufficient awareness of autism among other students.