

Autistic Spectrum Strategies



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What is autism?

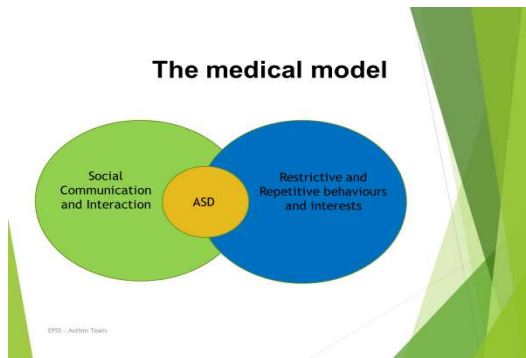
Autism affects the way that a person communicates, interacts, and experiences the world around them.

"Autism affects a person biologically, and this in turn influences how the person processes and experiences the world, whilst their development and experience will also be shaped by how they are supported and educated."

(Guldborg, 2019).

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The medical model



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Activity – so how will an autistic child interpret these statements?

- We are going swimming in the minibus.
- Go and wash your hands in the toilet.
- Give me your hand.
- Crying his eyes out.
- Do you want to get your maths book out now?
- Can you open the door for me?
- Write the days of the week
- Give me a shout when you've finished

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Non-Verbal difficulties:

- Unusual eye contact.
- Difficulty reading body language, facial expressions, gestures and social cues.
- Gestures that are stiff and stilted, or too dramatic or exaggerated.
- Tone of voice.
- Proximity.

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- Difficulties understanding and predicting other people's thoughts, feelings and actions.
- Limited ability to follow or remember a sequence.
- Unable to see the bigger picture, a tendency to focus on the details.

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Introduction to using visuals

- Sometimes PECS™ Picture Exchange Communication System is recommended.
- We recommended 'First and Then' boards. Starting with a choice of 2 activities the child likes.
- This can then move to 'First, Next and Then'.
- If the child does not yet respond to pictures, use photos or objects of reference.
- Make everything a visual as you can, with words, pictures or both.
- More examples will be coming up later.....

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Sensory Processing

- Difficulty coping with sensory stimulation others find ordinary
- Hyper stimulated – over
- Hypo stimulation – under
- Sensory integration

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SPELL

- S – Structure
- P – Positive (approaches and expectations)
- E – Empathy
- L – Low arousal
- L - Links

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Structure

- It makes the world more predictable, accessible and a safer place.
- It plays to the strengths of a sense of order and preference for visual organisation.
- It can aid independence.

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Structure

- Day

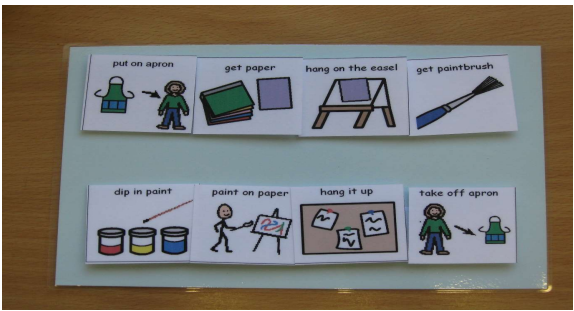


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- Date: _____
- _ Registration
 - _ Quiet reading
 - _ Literacy (Mrs. Smith)
 - _ Playtime
 - _ Numeracy (Mr. Brown)
 - _ Lunch
 - _ P.E. (~~Mr. Brown~~) Miss Parker
 - _ Music (Mrs. Smith)
 - _ Tidy up
 - _ Home

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Structure



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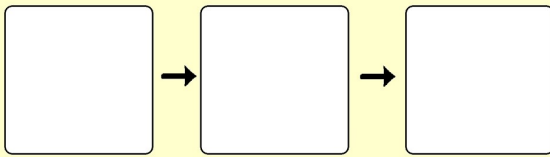
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TEACCH approach



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First → Then → Next



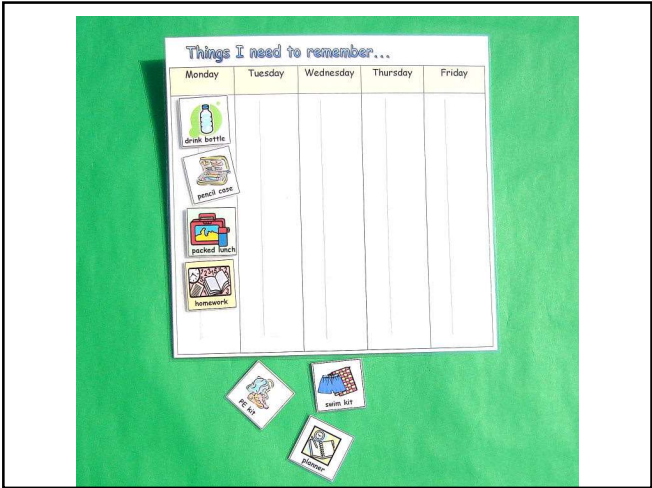
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Structure

- Provide structure in unstructured times.



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I need to be careful with the things I own.
It is important to keep track of
and not lose my things.

Before I leave school for the day,
I have to check for...

- ☐ -my hat
- ☐ -my gloves
- ☐ -my wallet
- ☐ -my lunch bag
- ☐ -my school bag
- ☐ -the books I need
- ☐ -my agenda
- ☐ -anything else I brought with me

What do I need to take home for
homework today?

- 1) ☐
- 2) ☐
- 3) ☐
- 4) ☐
- 5) ☐
- 6) ☐
- 7) ☐
- 8) ☐

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Visual structure



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Remember....

- Name first
- Instruction
- Processing time (at least 10 seconds)
- Repeat if necessary (same words)
- Next step

Use language that is **clear, precise and concrete.**

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Positive

- Be consistent
- Positive alternatives
- Use their strengths / special interests
- Build self esteem
- Mistakes

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Empathy

- Pupil profile
- Sensory profile
- Educate
- Practical help
- Behaviour

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Low Arousal

- Environment
- Workstation
- Filter out
- Resources

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Links

- Parents
- Child
- Staff
- Share

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	Looks Like	Feels Like	I Can Try to
5	Kicking or hitting	My head will explode	Sit in my safe area and play with bubbles.
4	Screaming or hitting	Nervous	Go see Mr. Peterson
3	Quiet, rude talk	Bad mood, grumpy	Stay away from children
2	Other children	Good	Enjoy it
1	Playing	Happy	Stay that way

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How to Handle Distressed Behaviour

- Don't use:**
- Loud voices
 - Negative statements/threats (e.g. "You had your chance", "You made your choice, now you need to leave class")
 - Taking away preferred or comforting materials or activities
 - Physical redirection
 - Angry tone or body language
 - Punishments (e.g., "You just lost your sticker on your behavior chart")



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Do:


- One of the most important skills an adult can have, is the ability to be clam and comforting in a crisis or “meltdown” situation.

A comforting adult may:

- talk softly and share encouraging words
- repeat a calming phrase
- or simply keep one’s own body relaxed


• Pick your battles - reframe

“The more you try to control the situation, the less control you will have!”

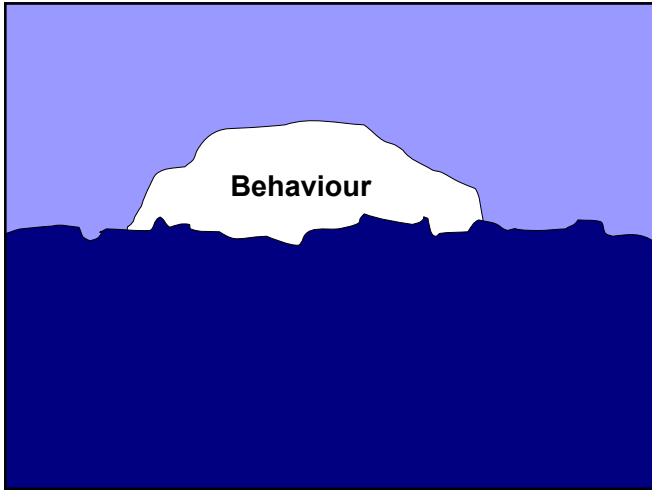


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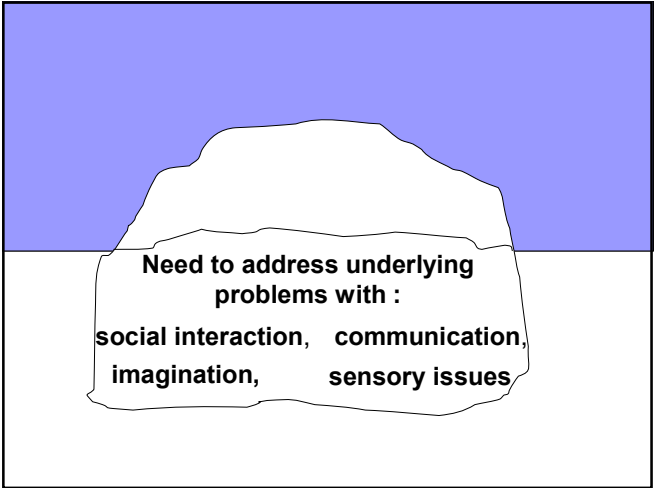
Reframe our thinking



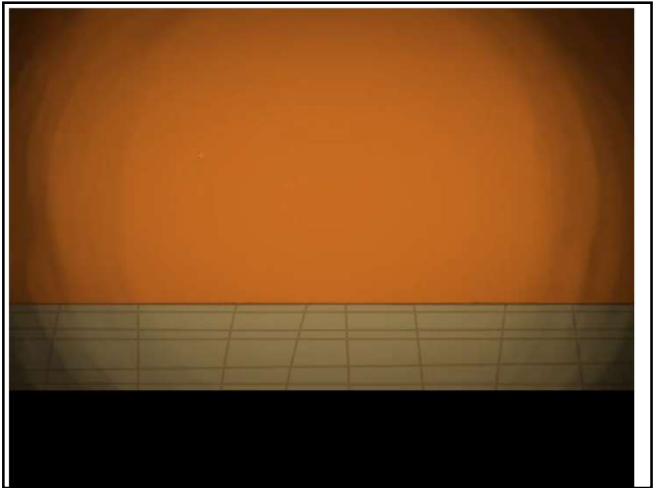
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