

10 Essential tips for Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder

Information for Teachers and Families

1. ASD students don't have to look at you all the time.
Reason: They find looking and listening at the same time hard to do.
2. Give them time to answer any of your questions.
Reason: They have slower processing time. Sometimes it can take them up to a minute to formulate the answer in the correct sequence.
3. If they feel pressured they will answer with stock standard answers.
Reason: They know it will get them out of trouble quickly. This may include: "I don't know", "yes", "maybe" and often this isn't their true answer!!
4. They often don't "generalise" information between people and places.
Reason: Homework for teacher 'x' is in the yellow basket but for teacher 'y' it's to be placed in the green basket.
5. They find organisation of their school equipment very difficult.
Reason: They are best with one folder with everything inside. Limit the number of pencils, pens etc.
6. Limit their choices and be very specific with choices.
Reason: They find choices overwhelming and are often concerned with making wrong choice due to their difficulty with problem solving.
7. Be as clear, concise and concrete as possible.
Reason: People with ASD have difficulty with abstract thinking.
8. Avoid verbal overload.
Reason: They are visual learners and verbal information takes them longer to process and retain.
9. Avoid verbal arguments by redirecting them to what they should be doing. Eg "Start your work".
Reason: They often enjoy verbal arguments.
10. Asperger people need positive feedback to know they are on the right track.
Reason: Because of their fear of failure and they want to be Mr Perfect.

Source: .Sue Larkey www.suelarkey.com