



Black Hill
Kindergarten



Black Hill
Primary School

How We Support Autism Spectrum Disorder and Students with Anxiety and Sensory processing difficulties at Black Hill Primary School and Kindergarten.



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INTRODUCTION

Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism is a **complex lifelong developmental disability** that affects the person in all areas of life, throughout life. It is permanent and pervasive.

It is a dysfunction of the Central Nervous System that affected how the individual learns, uses language, processes information and interacts with his/her world. The domains of impairment are:

Social Communication

May include:

- Difficulties interacting with others
- Socially and emotionally immature behaviour
- Difficulties with empathy
- Difficulty initiating and maintaining a conversation
- Comprehension difficulties
- Agnosia – don't recognise faces
- Echolalia – repetitive speech
- Expressive language and receptive language difficulties
- Prefer own company rather than interact with peers
- Not responding when people speak or gesture to them
- Making little eye contact
- Clumsy approach to forming friendships
- Literal in their understanding

Restricted and Repetitive Patterns of Behaviour

May include:

- Overly intense interest/preoccupation with particular topics
- Inflexible adherence to routines and behaviours
- Stereotyped or repetitive motor mannerisms e.g. hand-flapping, rocking
- Hyper or hypo sensitivities to light, sound, touch, taste and smell
- Low muscle tone and low postural tone
- Gross and fine motor difficulties

Theories of Learning and associated difficulties

Theory of Mind (ToM) is understanding that others have their own thoughts, feelings and experiences that are different to our own.

Theory of Mind (ToM) difficulties present as difficulties in:

- Understanding emotions in themselves as well as others
- Predicting the behaviour of other people and taking into account what other people may know
- Lack of understanding of social interaction including difficulties with turn-taking, poor topic maintenance in conversation and inappropriate use of eye contact
- Inability to empathise
- Inability to gauge the thoughts, intentions and feelings of others.

Executive Functioning is referred to as the ability to maintain an appropriate problem-solving set

Implications of Executive Functioning Difficulties include:

- Inflexibility in routines and transitions
- Difficulties self-initiating a new task or idea
- Planning an approach to a task.

Central coherence is the ability to focus on details as well as wholes. It allows one to understand the context of things and to 'see the big picture'.

Assets and Strengths

- Specialised interests and encyclopaedic knowledge
- Visual learning strengths
- Talents in particular Subjects such as Maths, Music, IT and Science
- Rules based
- Factual learning strengths
- Refreshingly frank and logical
- Quirky sense of humour

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASD)

Setting Up a Classroom for Students with ASD

There are a number of specific areas that need to be taken into consideration when setting up a classroom for a student with ASD. The diagnostic criteria for ASD includes social, communication, sensory, behaviour, cognitive function and motor skills. Each child is individual and will need different accommodations depending on how the child is impacted by ASD. When strategies are put in place at the beginning of the year, there will be fewer problems and a better settling in period for the student.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

- **Lining up** – have a set place in the line or partner to line up with. When there is free choice as where to line up this requires social skills and problem solving which can be difficult for the student with ASD. By having a set place at the start of the year this will ensure a smooth start to the day.
Have the student as a door monitor or as a line leader. Try lining them up in a different position from the rest of the class. Use painted footsteps to line up on.
- **Position in Classroom** – (seating, mat time, assembly, parades) – have a set position for the student which takes into account who they are next to, where in the room or group, which direction they face, how close they are to the teacher, distractions, (i.e. too close to favourite activities like books, computers, Lego etc.), sensory distractions (noises, smells, lighting, objects hanging too close). Some students prefer to be near a door so they can leave if anxiety is building or some like to face the wall so other children don't look at them.
- **Bags/Lockers/Boxes** – ensure these are at the quiet end of the row. Students often don't like being touched or crowded or the noise that happens in the busy areas. For some students it may be best to have it in a completely separate area. Book boxes allow them to easily see their books standing up. Staggering the times students access them will assist with the noise and business in the area. Having a tub near their desk would help illuminate potential meltdowns.
- **Writing** – 60% of students with ASD have dysgraphia. This means handwriting can be messy, slow or avoided, especially as they get older. You will need to consider using iPad, computer and other forms of technology as their mode of work. In the younger years, pencil grips can support handwriting skills. Other strategies to try:
 - Draw planning pictures
 - Use labelled diagrams to capture their ideas
 - Use cartoon strips and speech bubbles to capture the message
 - Give time limits and amount of writing to be completed in that time frame
 - Use a range of writing templates and graphic organisers
 - Regular teacher check in
 - Link in with students special interests
 - Use post it notes of key words
- **Reading** – be aware that many students have hyperlexia where they can decipher written words but do not comprehend what they are reading. Make the reading environment a quiet, calm and relaxing one with cushions, tents, calming music, headphones etc. Use special interests of students and familiar books to get them engaged in reading. Allow students to have chew necklaces and wriggle cushions to help calm and soothe them.
- **Quiet area** – ensure there is an area the student can retreat to if they are feeling overwhelmed. This can be a quiet table, reading corner, outside classroom in hallway, alcove, office, tent etc. when developing a quiet area include the student in the decisions around what to have and where to place things. Have readily available a range of sensory toys, weighted blankets, I spy bags etc.
Some students also need to be placed near a door in the classroom or assembly as they need a perceived escape route and to assist if they need a break from the setting.

Organisation

ADHD students behaviour can be perceived as disruptive. They can frequently get into trouble for day dreaming, fidgeting, disrupting, interrupting, not completing work and not responding to instructions. The students themselves may feel anxious and useless and may try to avoid work. They often use distracting behaviours (clowning, talking, going to the toilet) rather than appear incompetent. They are fearful of new learning activities and may expect criticism and failure.

ASD students often find organisation of their school equipment very difficult throughout all years of schooling. Limit the number of books, equipment etc. In primary school they are better with their own pencil case than communal pencils that are placed on the desk

Have a well structured day:

- Display the day's structure with visual supports
- Colour code books etc. for different subject to assist organisation
- Notify the student in advance of changes to routine
- Establish a daily/subject check list
- Teach correct use of diary
- Carefully consider seating placement (it may vary depending on the subject)
- Have clear, realistic expectations
- Reduce distractions and keep the immediate environment uncluttered
- Prepare some fun activities for when the student needs to calm down such as a treasure box with calming items
- Allow outlets for energy by giving structured tasks or errands that require movement
- Teach student to organize materials (harness peer support)
- Keep oral instructions brief and repeat if necessary
- Where appropriate, issue a written copy of the instructions
- Set specific 'target-times' for the completion of work (or subsections)
- Arrange a buddy with whom to check instructions (when necessary)
- Allow transition time between activities

Partners/Group Work/Teams

Have set partners, groups and teams pre-selected by teachers as when students self-select it tends to be by friendship. This nearly always leaves the ASD students last as for by the time they process the instruction and select someone it is too late. You also risk then selecting inappropriately which can result in behaviour. When selecting a partner consider a student who is a good role model and who will support the student.

TRANSITION BETWEEN CLASSES / SUBJECTS / ACTIVITIES

Introduction:

Changing Environments (going to specialist classrooms, changing subjects, going to assembly etc.) – this is a high risk time for meltdowns as change creates anxiety for an ASD student. This is where having a timetable / schedule is vital as it pre-warns them about the upcoming change. If it requires lining up have a set place in the line or let them go to the door first or be your helper so you can keep a closer eye on them. Make sure all staff have a copy of the student profile (download from www.suelarkey.com) and introduce them before, if possible to the different teacher.

Students need time to process information. During a transition they need to pack away each bit of information piece by piece and then restart the unpacking of information again.

Changing Environments

Transition can be a highly anxious time for students with an ASD because:

- They need to finish a task they are currently doing
- They like a sense of order *and*, control of that order
- Often involves a lot of movement, noise, verbal instruction
- Often transition in schools happens very quickly “quick kids, pack away, the bell’s about to go!”
- They need time to ‘shut down and re-boot’
- Transition usually involves choice making: i.e., choose an activity, where to sit, who to play with etc. This is extremely difficult for them.
- The more routines the better
- Use visuals to show them what is next
- Pre-warn (5 mins, 3 mins, 1 min)
- Use timers
- Use Schedules
- Help them get started in packing away
- Tell them when they can come back to complete activity
- Allow processing time
- Let them start packing away before everyone else starts talking and moving (particularly important in Secondary)
- Allowing them to be the first or last (depending on which they prefer) as a natural reward for transitioning.

Transition to a New Class, New teacher, New School

These strategies can be used at any stage throughout the year.

Make a Transition Booklet. Useful things to include:

- (In term 4) Daily visits every morning for 10 minutes to new class for the following year
- A calendar showing when student starts
- The name of the school, class or teacher
- How the student will get to school
- A map of the school
- What he will wear i.e. school uniform
- Picture of the classroom
- Where their bag goes
- Where the toilets are
- The out of bounds areas
- Where to eat lunch
- Where to get a drink
- Important places:
 - Canteen
 - Admin office
 - Principal’s office
 - Library (hours open)
- Things they are allowed to bring to school
- Things they must leave at home
- How many students will be in the class
- A list of who is already known in the class (photos if possible)
- Class rules

ORGANISATION STRATEGIES FOR THE CLASSROOM

Ways that we can support students to engage:

Learning Behaviour	Strategies to Support
Following Directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan out task Visual cues Keeping directions short and limited to 1-2 Write down directions where possible Use the same cue to make sure students are listening e.g., clapping, saying “stop, look and listen”. Use the student’s name as part of the directions Repeat back instruction after they have been given Establish eye contact Provide examples Establish eye contact before giving instructions Give short, concrete directions Provide examples (visual, auditory, tactile) Repeat directions Get student to explain the instructions Use peer support
Expanding Play Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student selects two classmates to sit and eat lunch with Invite friend to library time at lunch time Invite a friend you don’t normally play with and take them skipping or whatever activity you play Circle of friends – social stories and library club Visual prompts of different play options they could try Let students know that on....., this date they need to have a game with rules to play with two other students Offer the challenge to try a new option for a limited time – e.g., try it for five minutes Scaffold and provide support and gradually decrease support
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give advanced warning and time left Prepare in advance verbally and using visual timetable Apps available showing schedules will also help
Working Collaboratively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inviting a classmate to work with them. ASD child can choose child and a literacy and numeracy activity Buddy system-partner share Use a social story Tell the student in advance that they will be working with a student on this day for this activity Be more explicit with instructions on how to do this Giving explicit instructions that are clear and have clear expectations about what you want them to do.
Contributing to Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praise success outcomes OWLing – observe, wait before repeating and listen and value their contributions Praising students who show the “right” behaviour – e.g., “thanks for putting your hand up...” Give warning that you will be asking specific children and choose then when you know they will be correct
Listening Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eye contact and hands are still Giving a short explicit (positive form) explanation instructions Make instructions explicit Use the student’s name Praise attentive listening behaviour Having <u>steps</u> to take for giving instructions first.....then.....now.....
Starting an Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give a signal to begin work Present work in small amounts Explain the purpose of the task Show examples of completed work Provide immediate feedback and encouragement Get student to monitor the time taken

Learning Behaviour	Strategies to Support
Staying on Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove distractions from work area Train peer helpers who can help immediately Build success into the task Ensure variety Intersperse academic activity with brief periods of physical activity Seat student near a good role model Use visual and oral cues to redirect
Staying Seated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure student understands expectations Give rewards when student stays seated Use cue cards to elicit appropriate behaviour Keep student seated away from distractions Allow intermittent 'energy release' time
Working Independently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match activities with student's abilities Be certain student can foresee an end to the task Use cue cards to prevent interruptions Show examples of completed work Break task into smaller 'bits' and reinforce each stage
Inattention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide on most appropriate seating arrangement Pair student with good role model Break tasks into segments and deal with one segment at a time Use frequent verbal and visual cueing Establish eye contact before giving instructions Keep instructions short and concrete
Impulsivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ignore minor misbehaviours Give immediate reinforcements or consequences Supervise transitions between classes or activities Acknowledge positive behaviours Set up contracts for behaviours that need monitoring Assist student with self-monitoring skills
Hyperactivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include opportunities for the student to move around intermittently Supervise transitions Use student to run errands

SENSORY SENSITIVITIES

Processing sensory information gives us feedback about the environment and ourselves. It allows us to make sense of the world around us and how to respond to it. Many people on the autism spectrum experience some kind of sensory sensitivity or sensory processing difference.

We all know about the five senses (touch, taste, sight, smell and hearing) however there are another two sensory systems we need to be aware of: **the proprioceptive system** and the **vestibular system**. The following chart explains the functions of these systems.

System	Location	Function
TOUCH- tactile	skin	Helps to assess the environment, allowing us to react appropriately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Touch Pressure Temperature Level of pain
SIGHT- visual	Retina of eye	Helps to define objects, people, colours, contrast and spatial boundaries.
TASTE- gustatory	Chemical receptors in tongue	Recognises different tastes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sweet Sour Bitter Salty Spicy Can result in restricted diets as taste buds are extra sensitive.
HEARING- Auditory	Inner ear	Informs about sounds within the environment
SMELL- olfactory	Chemical receptors in nose	Informs about smells in the immediate environment
BODY AWARENESS- Proprioceptive	Muscles and joints	Informs where our bodies are in space and how they are moving


System	Location	Function
BALANCE-vestibular	Inner ear	Provides information on where our body is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In space • Its speed • Direction • Movement • It helps us to keep our posture and balance.




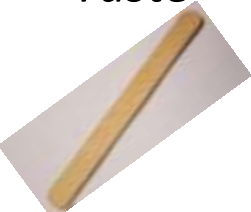
HYPERSENSITIVITY and HYPOSENSITIVITY

Sensory sensitivities can be broken down into two main areas:

Hypersensitivity (High sensitivity): This is where too much sensory stimulation occurs and the individual can become aversive.

Hyposensitivity (Low sensitivity): This is where too little sensory stimulation occurs and the person becomes sensory seeking

System	Example of hypersensitive behaviour	Strategies to support
Tactile touch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touch can be painful and uncomfortable and some children may withdraw from aspects of touch. This can have a profound effect on relationships.- • Only tolerates certain materials for clothing • Dislike of having anything on hands or feet • Overreacts to minor cuts • Can be aggressive if touched accidentally • Avoids touching certain textures such as clay, sand • Dislikes messy or dirty hands and clothes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warn the child if you are about to touch them • Remember hugs may be painful rather than comforting! • Gradually introduce different textures • Allow individuals to complete activities themselves (e.g. hair brushing and hand washing) to allow them to regulate their sensitivity
Tactile touch 	Example of hyposensitive behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds others tightly • Has high pain threshold (pain/temperature) • Self-harming • Enjoys heavy objects on top of them • Prefers tight clothing • Craves touch • Needs to touch everything • Doesn't notice when injured 	Strategies to support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider tight clothing e.g. leotards underneath clothing • Weighted blankets • Sleeping bags • Work with sand bag on lap
Visual sight	Example of hypersensitive behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distorted vision occurs, objects and bright lights can jump around • Fragmentation of images, as a consequence of too many sources of visual stimuli • Focussing on particular details (sand grains) can be more pleasurable than looking at something as a whole • Distracted by certain lighting 	Strategies to support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce fluorescent lighting • Sunglasses • Create a workstation • Use blackout blinds • Minimise too many colours in the room • Minimise hanging student work from the ceiling

<p>Visual sight</p> 	<p>Example of <i>hyposensitive</i> behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May see things darker, lose features and lines • May concentrate on peripheral vision as central vision is blurred • Conversely, some say that a main object is magnified and things on the periphery are blurred • Poor depth perceptions – problems with catching or throwing • Has difficulty maintaining eye contact • Avoids eye contact • Looks down a lot 	<p>Strategies to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use resources which stimulate visual system e.g. light sticks • may stare at the sun or bright lights • fascinated by bright coloured objects and reflections • moves finger and objects in front of eyes
<p>Auditory Hearing</p> 	<p>Example of <i>hypersensitive</i> behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume of noise can be magnified and surrounding sounds distorted and muddled • Inability to cut out particular sounds – difficulties concentrating • May have a lower hearing threshold which makes an individual particularly sensitive to auditory stimuli – hearing conversations in the distance. • Fingers in ears • Distracted by sounds that may not normally be heard such as a fan, water dripping, clock ticking • Frightened by sudden loud noises such as alarms and sirens • Refuse to go to assembly or music lessons • Makes repetitive noise to block out other sounds 	<p>Strategies to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat students away from noise from other classrooms • Warn students of sirens, bells and announcements • Use head phones to block out noise • Refrain from using hand dryers near students • Be aware of ticking clocks, swirling fans and air conditioners • Create a quiet corner / space • Auditory Integration Therapy such as an iPod for musical therapy • Use visual cues to back up verbal information
<p>Auditory Hearing</p> 	<p>Example of <i>hyposensitive</i> behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not acknowledge particular sounds • Attracted to noisy environments • Often does not respond to verbal cues or name • Appears to make noise for the sake of it • Talks to self very loudly • Difficulty understanding or remembering what has been said • Enjoys crowded noisy places • Bangs doors and objects • Makes own noise e.g. humming 	<p>Strategies to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shut windows and doors to reduce external sound • Prepare the child for noisy places • Ear plugs/ ear defenders • Walkman/iPod
<p>Gustatory Taste</p> 	<p>Example of <i>hypersensitive</i> behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some flavours and foods are too strong and overpowering • Certain textures also cause discomfort, some children will only eat smooth foods such as • mashed potatoes or ice cream • Only eats bland foods • Has a fear of choking • Uses tip of tongue for tasting 	<p>Strategies to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow opportunities to taste lots of different things to aid sense development • Encourage children to 'clean out' mouth with water between mouthfuls • Puree foods • Use ice pops to desensitise mouth • Introduce very small bites of portions

Gustatory *taste*



Example of **hyposensitive** behaviour

- Preference for strong flavours – like very spicy foods
- Eats everything e.g. grass, paper, soil, blu tac, materials.
- This is known as Pica
- Constantly eating
- Frequently chewing on hair, shirt, fingers
- Constantly putting things in mouth

Strategies to support

- Allow opportunities to taste lots of different things to aid sense development
- Provide oral stimulation throughout the day, crunchy foods
- Use vibration toys to stimulate the senses
- Keep students away from adults with strong perfume
- Consider foods eaten in range of student with sensory issues
- Be aware of strong deodorants
- Seat student away from kitchen areas
- Seat student away from smells of the toilets
- Be aware of students' constricted diets

Olfactory *smell*

Example of **hypersensitive** behaviour

- Aversion to particular smells
- Notice bad or funny smells
- Offended by environment smells e.g. Bathrooms, cooking, perfume, toilets
- Smells can be intensified and overpowering
- Toileting problems
- Dislike of individuals with distinctive perfumes or shampoos

Strategies to support

- Use unscented detergents or shampoos
- Refrain from wearing perfume
- Make environment as fragrance free as possible

Olfactory *smell*

Example of **hyposensitive** behaviour

- Smells objects
- May have no sense of smell and fail to notice extreme odours
- May lick objects
- Eats and drinks anything regardless of smell e.g. soap

Strategies to support

- Use strong smelling objects as rewards
- Use strong smelling objects to distract from inappropriate strong smells (faeces) for example scented play dough
- Create a book of scents - match pictures to scented cotton wool for example lemon, coffee etc.

Proprioceptive *body position*



Example of **hypersensitive** behaviour

- Dislikes close proximity of others
- Has difficulty with fine motor skills and manipulating small objects
- Moves whole body to look at objects
- Places body in strange positions
- Walks on tip toe
- Low muscle tone
- Weak grasp
- Bumps into objects and people
- Appears floppy, often leans on people, walls or furniture
- Rocks back and forward
- Stumbles frequently, tends to fall

Strategies to support

- Threading activities
- Lace boards
- Allow the child to stand at end of line when lining up
- Allow the child to sit on a stool instead of carpet

Proprioceptive *body position*

Example of **hyposensitive** behaviour

- Proximity – stands too close to others not knowing about personal space etiquette
- Little awareness of hunger/pain cold/need to go to the toilet
- Difficulties with navigating rooms and avoiding objects (bumps into things)
- Bumps into people
- Poor muscle tone
- A preference for deep pressure for example tight shoelaces or pushing their chin into people

Strategies to support

- Position furniture around the edge of the room to make navigation easier
- Put coloured tape on floor to indicate boundaries
- Use arms length rule (you must be at least an arms length away from someone when speaking to them)

Vestibular balance



Example of **hypersensitive** behaviour

- Dislikes playground equipment (swing/slide etc.)
- Difficulties in activities which include movement (sport)
- Difficulties in stopping quickly or during an activity
- Dislikes spinning
- Frightened of walking on uneven surfaces and walking up and down hills
- Frightened of jumping, hopping on one foot
- Lose balance easily
- Can appear clumsy
- Dislikes being upside down- forward rolls, handstands

Strategies to support

- Break down activities into small steps
- Use visual clues for finish lines or stops in movement activities
- Weighted blanket

Vestibular balance



Example of **hyposensitive** behaviour

- Need for rocking, spinning, jumping, swinging
- Seeks opportunities for movement/ constantly moving/fidgeting
- Can't sit still
- Runs around and around
- Spins without feeling dizzy
- Shakes leg while sitting

Strategies to support

- Encourage activities which develop the vestibular system – swing, roundabout,
- Rocking horse, see-saw, dancing
- Wiggle cushion
- Fiddle toys
- Weighted blanket
- Exercise ball
- Rolling cushions
- Mini trampoline

SENSORY ACTIVITIES AT SCHOOL

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jumping on a mini trampoline or bouncy ball • Roll up in a blanket and unroll • Bean bag throwing and catching, kicking and catching • Walk along a wavy rope • Jumping a turning rope • Sucking through straws • Clapping games • Playing tug of war • Throwing goals • Rock to and fro • Firm massage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climbing on the playground equipment • Hanging and swinging on playground equipment • Playing hopscotch • Jump like a frog • Chair sit ups • Row boats • Carrying heavy objects • Walking on hands and feet like a crab • Wheelbarrow walk with a partner • Making a bridge with body and holding it • Clapping games |
|---|---|

SELF-REGULATIONS STRATEGIES

Some students may need a calm, quiet and safe place to sit down and work or to calm down after an emotional outburst or before an emotional outburst is about to happen.

Ensure the activity is:

REWARDING RELATIONAL RHYTHMIC REPETITIVE RESPECTFUL OF CULTURE RELEVANT -
developmentally appropriate

- Tents
- Cloth over desk
- Quiet corner
- Beanbag

These are some strategies and activities for students to self-regulate themselves:

Slow breathing: blow a balloon up, blow bubbles, blow bubbles of water through a straw, breathe, count, drink, wash face, wash hands, read a book, colour in, scribble, listen to music, lego, chalk paintings.

Somatic- body: go outside, hide, quiet place, turn a rope, relax, dig, sweep, squeeze objects, weighted blanket, walk, run, jump, bounce.

Touch: brush hair/skin, fidget toy, hug a toy, massage, weighted blanket, pat a pet,

Run textured materials, slime, goop, clay, kinetic sand, snap play, magnets, scratch and smell stickers.

Communicate: call someone, chat with a friend, write an email or letter, chat with mentor teacher.

Fine motor- small muscles: squeeze objects, stamp, finger knitting, take a photo, use a computer, use an i-Pad, play dough, sensory sand, fiddle toys, hide and seek wheat bags.

Classroom helper: deliver a message, carry snacks, dust, weed, feed class pets, clean whiteboard, water the garden, wipe the table, sort board game pieces, tidy Mathematic equipment tubs.

TIMERS AND CLOCKS

Introduction

We all use time to guide us and organise our day. Teaching students to use times and clocks helps them with organisational skills. Timers also help with transition and planning. They allow students to know “when” and “how long” they are going to do an activity – when it will end.

Ideas to try

Here are some ideas for using timers to get you started:

- Use for calming or stress release for the child. Often the slow dripping of the liquid or spinning of the wheels inside can be relaxing.
- To give a child time to process, WHEN the timer has dripped through, THEN we will (start work, go inside etc.) Allowing the child those three minutes to calm and refocus/process is AMAZING.
- Time the student to get faster at an activity, e.g. “Can you write three sentences before the timer finishes”, “Can you pack away and sit on the mat before the timer finishes”. Always make sure the task is achievable in the timeframe with a 5 minute warning (bell).
- Give a student the opportunity to finish unfinished work e.g. an hour once a week.
- Count down to an activity starting or finishing
- “Can you pack away and tidy your desk before the timer finishes?”
- Indicate ‘when’ you are available. Sometimes children want us straight away. Help the child wait by saying “when the timer drips through, then I will....”
- Wait cards.

Use timers and clocks as:

- Pre-warning to start and finish activities
- Help to move from one activity to the next
- Let them know how long they have to do an activity or task, particularly for tasks they don’t like
- Allow to self-monitor and move from one task to another without prompts (very important in secondary with so many changes in classrooms)
- Regulating use of rewards. For example 10 minutes on computer after 15 minutes of work
- Creating predictability and structure. E.g, knowing morning tea is at 11.00 every day keeps them calm
- Creating time limits for favourite activities and rewards. Many students lose track of time when doing something they love, using timers ensures they transition to another task with less arguments
- Turn taking. To ensure everyone gets a turn, particularly for the computer.

Visual Schedules

Visual schedules are management tools for students with ASD, kind of like a daily diary or shopping list.

Visual Schedules:

- Clarify that activities happen within a specific time period
- Help children understand the concept of sequencing
- Promote independent transition
- Help students to:
 - process language
 - Organise their thinking
 - Remember information
- Lessen anxiety levels by providing structure and predictability
- May provide an alternative form of communication especially when under stress

Creating a Visual Schedule

*Use for whole class. *Change card.

- Student must be taught how to use the schedule. Explain:
 - what the schedule does
 - how it is to be used
 - why it is being used
- Create visual prompts with the student, update and help the child to use them
- Choose an appropriate level and format of visual
- Refer to the schedule often to provide information on:
 - what is happening
 - what is changing
 - what is staying the same
- Know what is meaningful for the child, e.g. does he track up or down
- Ensure not too many pictures or words
- Visuals for excursions and camps.

COMMON CLASSROOM BEHAVIOURS

Behaviour Solutions

All behaviour serves a purpose. Behaviour occurs for many reasons and it is often helpful to ask everyone who has seen a behaviour the 11 key questions below. This will then guide you to what the purpose of the behaviour is and how you can replace it. Unfortunately, you can't stop behaviour – but you can replace it with a more appropriate behaviour.

Key things to ask when you see behaviour:

1. What is the student trying to communicate?
2. Has the student understood the words you have used?
3. Could the behaviour be sensory? If so, what sensory tools can we use?
4. Could the behaviour be a sign of anxiety?
5. Does this behaviour happen in a range of places? Home, school etc.
6. How can we replace the behaviour?
7. What strategies have been tried?
8. What strategies have worked in past?
9. How will we reward change in behaviour?
10. Are any structures, visuals, adaptations, timers etc. required?
11. Is this a battle we really need to have?

Behaviour – Why Do Children Do THAT? Solutions and Strategies

Behaviour	Reason why they <u>might</u> 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow to eat chewy foods in class – Gummy Bears, chewing gum, Roll Ups. • Chewy tubes, Chewigem necklace, Pencil toppers. • Oral Motor Programme. • Water bottle with straw – they will need a few straws as they tend to chew through them.
Hiding or running away.	Often displaying a 'flight response'. This is usually due to confusion, lack of ability to problem solve or emotional build ups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a Preventative Break (go for a walk, bounce on a fit ball). • Time out, being alone. • Teach problem solving skills (important to do this when calm). 50/50 Behaviour Programme (see Tip Sheet on www.suelarkey.com) • Reminders of safety rules.
Difficulty accepting criticism	This can be due to anxiety around making mistakes. Often part of Executive Functioning difficulties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write social stories about making mistakes. • Reward mistakes. • Reward having a go. • Allow time to process feedback
Swearing	Most kids swear, but they learn 'where to swear' so adults don't hear them. Often kids do this for social attention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 of doing it 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider introducing lunch clubs • Be cautious if you stop them following one student as they normally replace them with another student.
Not wanting to leave special interest	As their special interest makes them happy they often find it hard to leave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 students like to sniff people and objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. Let them know others need a turn but you will call on them.

Behaviour	Reason why they might do this	Suggested strategies
Excessive hugging, leaning against people, or pushing people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hypersensitive • Seek out deep pressure • Grounding or calming self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Push ups • As with many other sensory issues, providing movement breaks for the student can be a great benefit. • Use a weighted vest or lap weight to give the access to deep pressure he craves. • Encourage the use of isometric exercise such as hand-clasps or wall-pushing. • Remind the student of the rules of personal space.
Arm and hand flapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling anxious • Lack ability to express emotions • Happy or excited • Calming strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace flapping with a fidget toy • Movement activity
Excessive yawning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under-aroused body state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink water • Movement breaks • Eat sour candy – this is arousing
Student puts themselves down a lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of failure • Low self esteem • Attention seeking • Lacks confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking in front of an audience • Positive thinking stems • Telling an interesting story • Approaching and joining in
Student tries to avoid school by finding excuses to stay home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of resilience • Tiredness • Lack of friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaching and joining in • Build on interests • Give them a leadership role or special job • Reward chart • SSG meetings • Having an interesting conversation
Using rude or inappropriate language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-verbal learning disorder • Literal understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotions charts • Role play for empathy • Model appropriate conversations and language
Student is very attention seeking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking affirmation • Seeking positive approval • Wanting to be focus of attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telling an interesting story • Having an interesting conversation • Speaking in front of an audience • Approaching and joining in • Listening and asking good questions
Student rarely looks at others – instead they look at the floor or up at the ceiling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shame • Low self esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaching and joining in • Listening and asking good questions. • Self esteem activities
Student usually plays alone at recess and at lunchtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks confidence • Low self esteem • Lacks social skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaching and joining in • Sharing • Including others
Student get into fights a lot or hits and punches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fight/flight mode • Over anxious • Over stimulated • Sensory overload 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaching and joining in • Social stories 'Making and Keeping Friends' • Teach social skills such as taking turns, inviting others • Negotiating • Handling fights and arguments • Being a good loser
Student is very bossy and tries to tell others what to do and how to behave, or points out what they've done wrong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor social skills • Grandiose behaviour • Lacks empathy • Egocentric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggesting and persuading • Respecting other's opinions • Calm down area • Behaviour Plan • Negotiating • Sharing
Student rarely smiles and looks sad most of the time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive thinking / reflective sticks • Redirect attention and thought

Behaviour	Reason why they might do this	Suggested strategies
Student is very quiet and withdrawn, or doesn't take part, or never says much	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low self esteem • Anxious • Depressed • Lacks enthusiasm or energy • Tired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaching and joining in • Having an interesting conversation • Telling an interesting story • Listening and asking good questions • Speaking in front of an audience • Having thought prompts on how to respond or answer – 'I think...' • Give questions prior to activity
Difficulty accepting criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Student complains, whinges or grizzles a lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tired • Fatigued • Pessimistic attitude • Low self esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiating • Being a good loser • Positive tracking
Student puts others down all the time and says mean things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinks they are superior • Grandiose sense of self-worth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respecting other's opinions
Student disrupts other's games by not playing by the rules, or by being a bad winner or loser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks social protocols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing fairly • Being a good winner • Being a good loser
Student pushes in a lot and always tries to be first, or doesn't share anything with others, or hogs materials and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self centred • Egocentric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing • Negotiating
Touching and bumping into other students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under sensitive to touch • Unaware of own actions • Unaware of body in space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminders about personal space • Movement breaks • Rules about personal space
Lining up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crowd of children moving at the same time – overwhelming • Too noisy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line leader • Line up at end • Meet teacher in a separate area • Permanent place in line
Not asking for help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deficits in problem solving • Lack communication skills • Lack in confidence • Aversion to drawing attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking sticks • Signal to warn when to ask for help • Use 'Help Hand' visual prompt

ADHD Behaviours	How this may manifest	Suggested strategies
Poor selective attention	Tends to focus on unimportant parts of a task. Has difficulty 'tuning-out' distractions. Hates detail. Often daydreams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a time to show elapsed time. • Use an egg timer • Limit amount of work – checklists • Set clear expectations • Use First.... and Then....
Cognitive fatigue	Tires quickly when required to sit still for too long. Gives up easily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brain breaks • Quiet time • Movement breaks • Yoga • Change activity • change seating for next session

ADHD Behaviours	How this may manifest	Suggested strategies
Insatiable	Wants everything immediately. Tends to want things all the time. Is always thinking ahead about the end result. Does not plan step by step, but jumps ahead to the end result.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step by step visual plans • Teach explicitly that they are not the only child in room – Social Stories • WAIT cards – teach how to use
Inconsistent performance	'Some days they can, some days they can't'. Difficult to motivate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put reward system in place • Investigate what has occurred prior to behaviour • Present work in a different way
Inappropriate activity	Often overactive. Has difficulty maintaining focus. Verbal and physical aggression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expend some energy – sensory break, push ups, weights • Delivering 'reams of paper'
Poor self-monitoring	Difficulty with meta-cognitions – does not think before doing. Does not check for errors. Has difficulty controlling own behaviours. Disorganised. Low frustration tolerance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria/rubric of expectations for work ethic and learning behaviour • Build up resilience by catching them doing things right
Poor memory	Has difficulty remembering specific facts and linking them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual strips • Step by step instructions • Paraphrase back instructions
Motor dysfunctions	Has problems with fine-motor skills and integration, which makes writing hard work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine motor skill exercises such as beading, rolling clay • Use a variety of writing implements • Use a pencil grip
Poor peer relationships	Aggressiveness and inadequate social skills means peers tend to avoid befriending ADHD students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Stories • Teach how to play board games • Role play • Circle time • Scripts for losing and winning • Anchor charts
Out of seat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kinaesthetic • Sensory seeking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run an errand • Manual task • Weighted blanket or lap weight • Work out on playground equipment

SENSORY MELTDOWNS

A Meltdown is not a Tantrum

Recognising and managing meltdowns and tantrums is vital to support people with ASD. Every child with ASD will experience very individual symptoms that are unique to them. Not all individuals with ASD will experience a "meltdown" and instead may "shut down." It is very important you are familiar with each child's triggers and responses.

When children have a meltdown, it's as if the world has ended. Everything is too much and they feel like an overwhelming darkness has engulfed their very being. Irrepressible anger that may seem completely irrational to an outsider can be inwardly devastating them internally. Meltdown not only affects them emotionally, but it also hurts them physically.

"Meltdowns and catastrophic reactions are involuntary responses while tantrums are purposeful manipulations of behaviour to achieve an intended end result. Whereas meltdowns are an unconscious reaction, tantrums are a voluntary choice.

Understanding the difference between a meltdown and tantrum is critical because the interventions are completely opposite, and using the wrong strategy will only worsen the situation in both cases."

"Meltdowns are extreme emotional and/or behavioural responses to a stressful situation. They are **always** involuntary.

Meltdowns come from prolonged exposure to sensory triggers or cognitive overload without a chance to get away from the overwhelming stimulation. Usually there will be signs of increasing frustration with accompanying anxiety that slowly starts to escalate if the situation is ignored.

There's also the **depressive** meltdown, the one that makes children feel like they're nothing, worthless, and like the world would be a better place without them.

There's no rationalising with someone in either of these meltdowns. If you tell them it's OK, it's not. You are trivializing Their distress and it will make them worse. "Stop" or "Get a grip" are also triggers, because they would if they could; no one wants to feel this way.

You just need to acknowledge how they are feeling!

What is the difference between a Meltdown and a Tantrum?

- Tantrums are a conscious deliberate choice to behave a certain way to manipulate others.
- In a tantrum the physical movements are controlled and easily altered to achieve a desired outcome – i.e. aggression towards a specific individual.
- A tantrum can stop instantly at any time.
- Tantrums act as defiance.
- In a tantrum they may try to bargain.
- In a tantrum the individual has excellent recall of the episode with little or no physical exhaustion.
- Please note a tantrum can develop into a meltdown.

What to do with a Meltdown

To effectively deal with meltdowns you must be proactive and not reactive. Identifying the child's anxiety and its cause is your starting point. Then try to calm the child as this will reduce the chances of a full-blown meltdown. Once the meltdown has started all you can do is make sure everyone is safe, reduce stimulation levels and if possible address the problem at hand. PLEASE never attempt to restrain a child with ASD from self-harm during a meltdown. They will only fight against your attempts and increase the intensity of self-aggression and aggression towards you! It is too late to stop the meltdown – simply let the meltdown take its course. Move your class out of the room / away from space.

10 Common Causes of Sensory Meltdowns

1. School clothes
2. Shoes and socks
3. school bells, fire alarms
4. Hand dryers
5. Whistles
6. Air conditioners, heaters
7. school canteens, lunch orders delivered into classroom
8. Yelling by staff or students
9. Fluorescent lights
10. Lining up, particularly touching

10 Common Causes of Behaviour Meltdowns

1. Change of teacher; relief teacher
2. Making mistakes
3. Losing
4. Not being first
5. Change of schedule
6. Teasing and bullying
7. Removal of sensory tools
8. Sitting still for long periods
9. Playgrounds / Assembly times
10. Being literal and misunderstanding the inferred meaning by people i.e. "Do you want to work?" They say "No", and get into trouble.
11. Cognitive overload
12. Being given too many choices at once
13. Vague instructions or commands
14. Being asked open ended questions
15. Crowded places
16. Being rushed
17. Being given a time limit
18. Sensory overload.

TIPS TO HELP DE-ESCALATE INTERACTIONS WITH ANXIOUS OR DEFIANT STUDENTS

Students' behaviour is a form of communication and when it's negative it almost always stems from an underlying cause. When we learn more about why children are behaving badly there are some simple strategies to approach defiant behaviour like avoiding work, fighting, and causing problems during transitions with more empathy.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a huge barrier to learning and very difficult for educators to identify. When anxiety is fuelling the behaviour, it's the most confusing and complicated to figure out. That's because a student isn't always anxious; it tends to come and go based on events in their lives, so their difficulties aren't consistent. When we are anxious our working memory makes it very difficult to recall any information.

Anxiety is a learning disability; it inhibits your ability to learn. For children with anxiety, the 'can't's' fluctuate. When they're calm they can. When they're anxious they can't. And that's very deceiving. Anxiety isn't about ability; it's about interference, which means that traditional rewards and consequences don't often work with this group of learners.

Rewards and consequences are very helpful to increase motivation for something, but an anxious person's brain has shut down and they aren't able in that moment to complete the task being asked of them. The best way to combat this tricky problem is to try to prevent anxiety triggers and build up students' social and emotional skills to cope with the moments when anxiety sets in.

When children are in the throes of bad behaviour they have poor self-regulation skills, often get into negative thinking cycles that they can't stop, have poor executive functioning, become inflexible thinkers and lose social skills like the ability to think about another person's perspective.

Check in regularly with students who have anxiety or poor behaviour

Tell children that you will be checking in with them in five minutes, and then actually go back in five minutes, as this validates the student's progress. Do this again in 15 minutes as it sets up a pattern of predictable attention for positive behaviour.

While it might seem unfair to take that extra time and care with one student, it ultimately saves instruction time when a teacher doesn't have to deal with a tantrum that sends the student out of the room.

Praise

Anxious children who don't want any extra attention from peers do not like public praise. Private or non-verbal praise is often better. Pulling students aside at the beginning of the year to ask how teachers can best tell them they're proud is a preventative strategy.

Anxiety triggers

Many children have predictable anxiety triggers:

- unstructured time,
- transitions,
- writing tasks,
- social demands or any unexpected change.

Teach children to wait

When you are anxious, despite your age, it's very hard to wait. For children with anxiety, there are a number of strategies teachers can employ.

- Do not to take any student behaviour personally. The student isn't trying to manipulate or torture the teacher, their behaviour is reflecting something going on internally.
- A short movement break can help relieve anxiety.

Time out or withdrawal from class

Sending students out of the class doesn't always give students a break from their internal negative thoughts. A break paired with a cognitive distraction does offer respite. Distractions such as silent reading, trivia, Sudoku, crossword puzzles, or mindfulness colouring helps children self-regulate.

Time warnings/counting down

When teachers want to wrap up a task they often use a countdown. Counting down doesn't support a high achieving anxious child who feels they must finish. It takes a lot of executive function skills and cognitive flexibility to fight the urge to keep going after the time is up. Instead of counting down, a teacher might walk over to a student and say, let's find a good stopping point.

Work Avoidance

Anxious students often have trouble initiating work, persisting through work and asking for help. You can have a really bright, able child whose anxiety is interfering with their learning. The anxiety isn't coming from nowhere; it's coming from prior experiences of feeling frozen and stupid. In that moment the child's working memory isn't working, so teachers need to find ways to bypass it until the anxiety passes.

- Let students preview the work for the day
- Alert the students to the strategies they will be employing
- Use planning pictures and graphic organisers
- Give students whiteboards, where the mess ups can be easily erased.

Persistence

Some strategies to build persistence include:

- skipping the hard ones and doing the ones a student knows first
- working with a buddy

Giving help in class is often a tricky balance, especially if a student is too embarrassed to ask vocally. Instead of acting out because they can't do the work, the student might raise their hand, pass the teacher a note or make eye contact. The teacher has to be careful not to give too much help as we can accidentally create dependency because we help so much.

Questioning

When demanding something of a student, don't ask yes or no questions and teach children not to ask yes or no questions. In that scenario, someone has a 50 percent chance of being disappointed with the answer. By changing the question, the teacher opens the door for the answer to be diffusing, rather than an escalation of defiance. For example, if a student asks, "Can I work with Jack?" The teacher can reframe the question: "Oh, did you want to know when you could work with Jack? You can ask: When can I work with Jack." The student might not like the answer, but it likely won't produce the same explosive reaction as getting an outright "no."

Time and space

Give children time and space. If a child is prone to arguing, eye contact and physical proximity can escalate potential protests. For example, if a child is humming in an annoying way, a teacher move might be to make eye contact with the child and shake your head to get him to stop. But in this situation eye-contact is non-verbally asking the child for a response, which they may be incapable of giving at that moment. Instead, calmly walk over and put a note on their desk that says, "Please stop humming." Then move away and do not make eye contact with that student for a few minutes.

The more teachers can empathise with students, teaching skill building and focus on preventing challenging behaviour, the smoother the classroom will run. Often that means learning about the student in order to identify triggers and design new ways of interacting with even the most challenging students.

TOOLKIT FOR (STUDENTS) AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES WORKERS TO DEVELOP OPTIMISM AND POSITIVE SELF-REGULATION BEHAVIOUR FOR CHILDREN WITH ASD AND ANXIETY.

Internal regulation

If children with ASD and anxiety have a consistent and predictable environment, with a care giver that they trust, they can learn a set of habits that will develop optimism and positive self-regulation behaviour. The goal of these habits are to build 'internal' protective factors, related to mastery and problem solving, that lead to feelings of pride, self-worth and self-efficiency. These habits include:

Social Habits

- Help the children to notice others facial expressions, tone and posture that indicate how the others are feeling,
- Let them know the norms of behaviour
- Help the child to think about and anticipate consequences for their actions.
- Prepare the child before social interactions like play time for good social habits.
- Promote a sense of belonging

Habit of naming feelings

- Give the child opportunities to create a vocab of feelings

Habit of Problem Solving

- Help the child to solve problems
- Give praise for personal mastery of something they find difficult.

Habit of smooth transitions

- Assist the child and pay particular attention to them during transition times.
- Let them know in advance if something in their normal routine will be different on a given day.
- Give a 5 min warning and then a 2 min warning before finishing a task.
- Provide advanced preparation if they are starting a new task.

Habit of making choices

- Limit choices to 1 or 2 within parameters.

External Regulation

There will be times that ESS will need to contain the fears and worries for a child with ASD and anxiety.

There is a difference between will-based noncompliance and a child who has been triggered and heading for a 'meltdown'.

Children with ASD and anxiety can easily be triggered by their environment, social situations, smells etc.

If you believe the child has been triggered the following technique **SOOTH** (Goodyear Brown 2010) can be useful:

Soft tone of voice, soft tone of face

Organise the child's experience

Offer choices or a way out

Touch or physical proximity

Hear what the child is needing

End and let go.

POSITIVE COPING STRATEGIES

Brainstorm with students different coping strategies for different situations.

Make class list of coping or self-calming strategies to try. Make a personal list of calming strategies.

Explicitly teach, model and practise regularly a range of calming strategies.

1. ENERGETIC		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport • Exercise • Dance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active play • Run • bounce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk • Skip • Spin
2. SELF-CALMING		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breathe and count • Lay down on the floor • Tense up then relax • Quiet space • Close eyes and listen to sounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness colouring • Read a book • Snuggling into a beanbag 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw • Listen to a story • Balloon breathing • Listen to music • Wash face
3. SOCIAL		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play • Read to each other • Passive Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mime • Social skills • Buddy activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role play • Play therapy • Life skills
4. SHIFT ATTENTION		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distraction • Read • Be a class helper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch TV or a movie • Go for a walk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing board games • Hobby • Go on an errand
5. GETTING ORGANISED		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and organise • Making lists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sort stationary • Sharpen pencils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan an activity • Tidy up

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Discuss what is meant by stress.

*...a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances. "he's obviously **under** a lot of **stress**"*

synonyms **strain, trauma, pressure, tension**, nervous tension, **worry, anxiety**,

: **nervousness**;

Brainstorm possible stressful situations.

Examine what is challenging about a situation, what things they may be afraid of and what can they do to cope?

Look at stress situations on a scale 1-10.

Personal signs and symptoms	Possible behaviours	Self-regulation strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tight in the throat • Sweating • Stomach ache • Biting nails • Feel sick • Headache butterflies in tummy • Racing heart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting out • Running away • Hiding • Yelling/swearing • Aggression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify feelings using emotions chart • Refer to coping strategies • Ask for help

MANAGING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS IN THE YARD

Strategy:	Script:	Body language:	Reason:
Walk away	"Please excuse me. I need some time to think through things".		This will remove you from the situation and give them a chance to cool off.
Go and get a drink	"Please excuse me. I am just going to get a drink."		This will remove you from the situation and give you time to think about the situation.
Say an I message	"I feel.... Because..." "I think..." "I would like..."		This will allow others to understand how you are feeling.
Tell them to stop, walk away and ask for assistance from an adult or Playground Mentor	"Hey, you should stop!" "if you don't stop I will get a teacher for help."		By politely and calmly asking others to stop, you are giving them a chance to do the right thing.
Ask for help	"Excuse me...I'm having trouble with..." "Can you please help me?"		Try to solve the situation yourself, but remember you can always ask for help if you need assistance.
Ignore	No eye contact No verbal response No physical response		By ignoring someone who is not behaving correctly, you are removing their audience.
Count to ten	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10, breathe		By counting and breathing, you will calm yourself down so that you can respond appropriately.
Apologise	"I apologise for..." "Are you Ok?"		It is important to apologise, especially if what happened was an accident. It is also important to acknowledge how others may be feeling.
Take five deep breaths	Breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, breathe out		Calm yourself down by taking five deep breaths. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.
Say sorry	"I am sorry that I ..." "Can I help you out?"		It is important to say sorry, especially if you played a part in the problem.
Shake hands and take turns	"Your turn". Shake hands Give a High Five		If you are having a disagreement in a game, remember to talk calmly about it, shake hands and take turns.
Talk it out	"Can we talk about what just happened?"		Explain what is bothering you and why you would like them to stop. Make sure you speak calmly and respectfully.
Compromise	"I didn't...." "Ok, maybe..." "Let's work out a solution."		To compromise means both people need to give a little bit in order to come to a solution.
Go play with someone else	"Excuse me...can I please play with you for a while?"		If you feel that you cannot resolve the situation, go and play with someone else.
Write or draw about it	"Can I please have some time out to reflect on..."		If you are having trouble expressing your feelings verbally, try drawing or writing how you feel.

ADJUSTING CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

Examples of Adjustments for Class Work

Type of Activity	Suggested Adjustments
Writing or recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write short answers to questions • Write point form notes • Tick pre-prepared checklists • Small page layout • Use photographs, pictures or symbols, e.g. the student sequences pictures to tell a story, combines symbols to convey meaning, circles a selection of symbols on a page to create a list • Oral responses – record on iPad • Use computer software, e.g. the student uses a drawing program and pictures to write, uses scanned pictures and/or digital photographs in a multimedia presentation type • Use assistive technology to select text or pictures from the screen. • Supply word banks, sentence beginnings. • Labelled diagrams. • Provide visuals • Scribe for the child • Shared pen.
Reading activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read simplified texts. • Read small amounts at a time. • Follow a text being read by a peer or adult. • Follow a text from audio tape, CD-ROM, multimedia presentation or video. • Highlight difficult words – first explore. • Follow a visual sequence of instructions, a visual recipe of a visual timetable. • Use cover paper so student sees one sentence at a time and is not overwhelmed by amount of text.

Examples of Curriculum Adjustments for Assessment

Type of Assessment Task	Suggested Adjustments
Specific word test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple choice • Labelling • Completing sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited options, provide widely different choices • Supply a list of words – word banks • Supply letter, associative word clue • Allow reader and writer oral responses
Cloze test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide word bank. Supply letter, letter associative word clue. • Allow reader and writer oral responses
Written answer test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an open book assessment • Provide questions to students prior to test • Structure paragraphs with opening sentences • Outline main points – students elaborate • Provide tape recorded questions • Allow reader and writer oral responses
Timed test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Untimed • Allow extra time
Assignment based task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain, demonstrate and illustrate the process • Break the task into component parts or sub task • Keep track of time • Provide examples of the task • Ensure students know the purpose of the task • Provide research assistance and additional information • Allow assignments to be presented in alternative forms
Oral presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student writes speech but it is presented by another student or teacher • Presented with the use of assistive technology such as Intellitalk or Clicker 4 which read the presentation back • Student gives the presentation to a single assessor only • iPad / Netbook
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks can be at stations where students perform the tasks in rotation • Use of technology • Use of Web quests to guide students through the appropriate material • Provide students with adequate and appropriate material • Reduce the number of sources they need to use in order to research the topic. • Provide reader or scribe – what are you testing for? • Provide quiet space, no distractions.

Adjusting Worksheets

- Substitute shorter sentences for longer and complex ones
- Substitute simple words for difficult words where possible
- Limit the use of pronouns. Use names rather than he, she, they etc.
- Use pictures, diagrams, graphic organisers such as flow charts to clarify text
- Make instructions stand out clearly from the rest of the text
- Page layout should be uncluttered
- Put paper over so student looks at one question at a time.
- Use bold or italicising for headings and key words.
- Where possible, present information in point form.
- Highlight the main idea of a paragraph
- Provide a word bank or glossary giving the meanings of difficult words.
- Highlight difficult and new words in text
- Enlarging print can help some students.
- Focus on content (de-emphasise untidiness / spelling).

Consider this checklist

- ☒ Have I kept the sentences short, simple and clear?
- ☒ Have I kept clauses and phrases to a minimum?
- ☒ Have I limited the number of elements in each sentence?
- ☒ Has the vocabulary been clearly defined or explained?
- ☒ Have I used too many abstract and complex concepts in any single sentence?
- ☒ Are key terms highlighted?
- ☒ Does other information obscure the main idea?
- ☒ Do the sentences follow a logical order/
- ☒ Have I clearly indicated more heavily weighted questions?
- ☒ Have I used too many colloquial terms and phrases?
- ☒ Have I made use of headings and point form?
- ☒ Have I used examples in appropriate places?
- ☒ Is the required style of response made clear?
- ☒ Do the visual cues aid the students' understanding?
- ☒ Have graphics and diagrams been used to enhance the main idea?
- ☒ Are my evaluation criteria clearly stated?
- ☒ Would it be simple for a student to understand this question?
- ☒ Have I considered other ways to present the question? topic?

GIVING INSTRUCTIONS

Adjustments to Directions and Instructions

Each day students are bombarded with hundreds of directions and often students with a learning difficulty cannot process all the directions due to inattention, poor listening skills, limit receptive language, or inability to sequence information.

When giving instructions, consider these:

- use child's name
- Don't give too many instructions at once
- Be sure that you have the student's attention before you begin – get response
- Give enough instructions so you are not vague
- Give realistic, concise and simple instructions
- Simplify vocabulary
- Use visual cues as well as the oral instructions
- Use peers as a tutor to coach the student through multi-step instructions
- Allow the student to complete the first part of the instruction before giving the next
- Limit the choices
- Monitor the comprehension of the student by asking them to repeat the instruction to you
- Keep body language and instructions consistent
- Be within close proximity when giving instructions
- Write the instructions in sequential order
- Number the steps of multiple instructions
- Allow students time to read instruction at least twice and underline key words and phrases
- Provide cues with instructions as a visual reminder to students.

A checklist for Curriculum Adjustments for Units of Work

Consider the inclusion of these strategies:

- ☐ Use of the planning pyramid
- ☐ Reduced number of outcomes
- ☐ Concept map of topic – unit overview
- ☐ Pre tutoring schedule]
- ☐ Glossary of new/ interesting words
- ☐ Vocabulary building activities
- ☐ Oral language activities such as barrier games
- ☐ Multiple Intelligences contracts / choices
- ☐ Diagrams to label
- ☐ Pictures with brief explanations
- ☐ Partially completed retrieval charts
- ☐ Graphic organisers
- ☐ Flow charts
- ☐ Use of text type scaffolds
- ☐ Use of technology – computer, calculator
- ☐ Questions with help – page references
- ☐ Questions with answer stems
- ☐ Options to draw or represent information in other forms
- ☐ Cloze activities – word banks
- ☐ Use of cooperative learning groups
- ☐ Group role cards
- ☐ Tasks divided into manageable blocks / segments
- ☐ Negotiated homework tasks
- ☐ Visual aides and cues
- ☐ Concrete materials
- ☐ Additional demonstrations
- ☐ Use of learning logs, checklists etc.
- ☐ Use of suggested reference material.

ASD REWARDS

Tips for Reward Programmes

- Make it easy to get a reward. Be generous – remember the child's true 'social/emotional' age.
- Rewards can be given for increasing pro-social behaviours and reducing negative ones
- Reward with obsessions / passions wherever possible
- Link reward with home activities for that extra hit! Work with the family to try to get them to also use mostly rewards in their home life
- Encourage 'deal making' – First... Then....
- remember rewards are stress relievers
- Be their 'mate / mentor / earthling interpreter' rather than the authoritarian
- Never take rewards away – punishment does not work with ASD children

The Golden Rules

- If the reward does not work today – try again tomorrow. Avoid a battle of wills – Neuro Typicus usually lose!
- Focus on your relationship with the child, not compliance (give 80%, get 20% back).

GENERAL TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

- All effective behavioural treatments involve:
 - living by routine (develop rules and consistent structure)
 - rewarding the good (build on the student's strengths)
 - avoiding confrontation (confrontation increases opposition and resentment, and damages relationships)
- Give unusually clear cut, consistent and immediate consequences (logical) for inappropriate behaviour
- Tell students what you want, not what you don't want
- Develop a range of signals to cue behaviour
- Get to know the student (ask about their interests etc.)
- Target a limited number of specific behaviours at any one time
- Have clear, consistent, logical consequences (no humiliation!), revise frequently
- Let student graph improvements
- Coach student in appropriate responses to provocation
- Your positive comments to the student must outnumber the negative ones
- Reinforce appropriate behaviours

- Don't argue and don't confront
- Identify and value strengths
- use an unemotional, controlled voice, preferably in private. (There are risks in challenging students in front of their peers. First give the student an opportunity to comment about the situation before you criticise. Focus on the behaviour not the person.)
 - Ask the student to describe what he/she is doing,
 - State the class/school rule,
 - Ask how the behaviour complies with the rule,
 - Ask how the behaviour needs to change in order to comply,
 - Check that the student is able to make the change.
- Give the student limited choices (show them how the outcomes they get are linked to their choices)
- Don't expect immediate responses (allow the student a few seconds to process the information)
- If the student is upset, allow the student time-out to regain composure
- Make sure the positives and the negatives balance
- Do not take a student's misbehaviour personally. (It's most often the work that frustrates them.)
- Change happens incrementally; don't expect perfection; celebrate improvement.
- Allow regular outlets for energy (they can't sit still for any length of time).
- Social skills need to be deliberately targeted and taught extensively.
- You can't do it alone, peer support is imperative.

GUIDELINES FOR CONSEQUENCES

- Use punishment sparingly
- Think before you act
- Don't escalate emotions (yours or the student's)
- Give a clear warning prior to punishing (offer choices)
- Show clearly the link between the action and the LOGICAL consequence
- Be clear about where the punishment begins and ends
- Once punishment is completed, let the matter drop.

MANAGING DIFFICULT TIMES

(NB The goal is safe and rapid control)

Control the things that set off reactions

- Remove objects or activities that distract
- Redirect student to activity he/she usually enjoys
- Relocate the student or re-arrange the environment
- Avoid unnecessary demands
- Avoid statements and actions that antagonise the student
- Refocus other students' attention
- Check medication has been taken
- Teach the student self-management strategies
- Re-locate class

Interrupt the build-up

- Position yourself in the most advantageous spot
- Give instructions that the student is likely to follow
- Remind the student of self-management strategies you have taught
- Cue them to take a break or recognize the beginning of build-up
- Facilitate relaxation
- Actively listen
- Acknowledge the student's needs
- Provide some boundaries
- Remind student of the support people he/she can access

Once calm has been restored

- Communicate to the student his/her success with, or the need for taking responsibility for his/her own behaviour – this may be the next day – use restorative script.
- Confirm that others involved will be dealt with separately
- Talk through ways of managing and preventing similar situations
- Reinforce appropriate behaviour on the student's return to the group using cue cards.
- Assist student in maintain self-worth and dignity.

PLANNING FOR CAMPS, EXCURSIONS AND OTHER SCHOOL EVENTS

Social stories- *to be sent home and shared with the parents*

- Create social stories with students using photos to show expectations of the camp/excursion including the bus trip and staff that will attend.
- Show students video footage from past camps or look on google maps to take a virtual tour.
- Make a checklist outlining what to bring and wear using visual picture strips.
-

Staffing- *to be shared with the parents prior to attending*

- Give students and family a copy of staff photos who are attending the event.
- Give student a copy of their groups and teacher in charge, making explicit to student and family
- Cabin or room allocation of students has been explicitly shared with student and family
- Consider placing student in a room with less students

Snapshots

- All staff must familiarise themselves with the student snapshot
- Students must have their support equipment and resources with them such as, chew beads, headphones, traffic light bookmarks etc.

Student lanyards

- Student lanyards must include student name, student group, teacher in charge and rotation of activities or time table of activities in a visual format

RESOURCES

1. Jordan & Powell, 1995, cited in Cumine, Leach and Stevenson, 1998
2. Autism Spectrum Australia – Educational Outreach 2013
3. Teacher Assistants Big Blue Book of Ideas. Sue Larkey and Anna Tullemans
4. Catholic Education Office, Wollongong – Learning Services – Leanne Woodley 2009
5. Friendly Kids, Friendly Classroom – Helen McGrath & Toni Noble 1993
6. Different Kids, Same Classroom – Helen McGrath & Toni Noble 1993
7. Positive Partnerships Workshops, DET
8. Tools for teachers- Practical resources for classroom success- autism education trust by Victoria Erbes
9. Sensory tools Australia catalogues
10. Stories teachers Share – Mindshift PodCast
11. Lookout Centre- trauma resources
12. Sensory activities- Hilarie Kohn (OT) 2007
13. Autism Association of Western Australia
14. Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Materials – DET 2016
15. Behaviour solutions for the Inclusive Classroom – Beth Aune, Beth Burt & Peter Gennoro
16. Your Therapy Source www.YourTherapySource.com

USEFUL WEBSITES

Useful websites:

The National Autistic Society

www.autism.org.uk

www.autism.org.au

General resources:

www.senteacher.org

www.specialdirect.com

Communication:

www.pecs.org.uk

Social Understanding:

www.thegreycenter.org

Free Symbols:

www.do2learn.com

www.enchantedlearning.com

www.pdictionary.com

www.usevisualstrategies.com

Traded symbols

www.widgit.co.uk

www.makaton.org

Sensory resources:

www.sensetoys.com

www.thenoveltywarehouse.com

www.sensoryplus.co.uk

www.hawkin.com

www.tickseed.co.uk

www.kapitex.com

www.specialneedstoys.com

www.sensory-direct.co.uk

www.backinaction.co.uk

www.thesensorycompany.co.uk

www.tanyatwood.com ; www.suelarkey.com


www.rompa.com

Auditory Integration Training

www.light-and-sound.co.uk

STUDENT SNAPSHOT EXAMPLE

Student Snapshot

Name: Date: Year level: Diagnosis: Health: 	Parents:	ESS:		Teacher:		Photo
	Visiting teacher:					
	Other Agencies:					
	Interests/Passions/Motivators					
Communication/Learning Style:	Anxiety/Challenging Behaviour Triggers:		Recommendations:			
Social Skills:						
Sensory Profile:	WHAT HELPS: (Successful Strategies)				Milestones achieved:	
Resources/Sensory Supports Required:						
Strengths:						

ABC (ANTECEDENT, BEHAVIOUR, CONSEQUENCE) CHART TEMPLATE

ABC (Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence) Chart template

[illegible]

Checklist for Severe Behaviour or Disturbing Behaviour PSD Funding Traumatic Events Information Sheet



Introduction:

People who experience a traumatic event (loss of a loved one, threat to own life or any emotionally overwhelming situation) may experience strong physical and emotional reactions. Such reactions are common and part of the process of coming to terms with a horrible event. Sometimes the emotional aftershocks appear immediately after the traumatic event, or they may appear a few hours or few days later. In some instances, reactions will occur weeks or months after the incident.

The signs and symptoms of stress reactions may last for a few days, a few weeks, a few months or longer, depending on the severity of the traumatic event.

Stress response:

The common signs and symptoms following exposure to a traumatic event are as follows:

Physical	Behavioural	Cognitive	Emotional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue • Nausea • Upset stomach • Diarrhoea • Trembling • Pain • Headaches • Chest pain • Sweating • Irregularities to heartbeat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restlessness • Apathy • Sleep disturbances • Isolating self from others • Increased use of alcohol/tobacco • Inappropriate use of gallows humour • Absence from work • Avoidance of TV/Newspapers • Acting differently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nightmares • Flashbacks • Focussing on the event • Inability to remember the event • Inability to name common objects • Difficulty concentrating • Fear of re-occurrence of the event • Difficulty making decisions • Mental confusion • Fear of losing control • Unable to understand own reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety • Fear • Panic attacks • Irritability • Frustration • Depression • Guilt • Helplessness • Vulnerability • Numbness • Withdrawal • Disorientation • Paranoia

ROLL SOME BRAIN BREAKS

Visit www.YourTherapySource.com/rollsomefun for the complete download.

ROLL SOME BRAIN BREAKS

Directions: Roll one die for each of the columns. Perform the quick brain break that matches the number you rolled on the die. For example, if you roll a 1-2-4-3-5 you would perform the following brain breaks: 10 jumping jacks, 5 wall push ups, 10 Twists at the waist, 10 jumps over a pencil on the floor and 10 windmills.

	Column #1	Column #2	Column #3	Column #4	Column #5
1 	10 jumping jacks	Wiggle your whole body for a count of 10.	Bring R elbow to L knee and L elbow to R knee 5 times	Jump in place 10 times.	Rub your entire R arm with your L hand
2 	Squeeze your R hand firmly with your L hand	5 wall push ups	Move the upper half of your body	Spin in a circle 3 times to the right	Touch L hand to bottom of R foot. Repeat 5x.
3 	Move the right side of your body	Spread legs apart and bend at waist looking between knees. Repeat 5x.	Make 10 small circles with your arms	10 jumps over a pencil on floor	Give yourself a big hug for 10 seconds
4 	Rub your entire L arm with your R hand	Touch R hand to bottom of L foot. Repeat 5x.	Twist at the waist 10 times with arms out to the side	Spin in a circle 3 times to the left	Make 10 large circles with your arms
5 	Touch R hand to L shoulder. Touch L hand to R shoulder. Repeat 5x.	March in place with knees high for a count of 10	Squeeze your L hand firmly with your R hand	Move the left side of your body	Touch R hand to L foot and then L hand to R foot 5 times
6 	Run in place for a count of 15	Move the lower half of your body	Touch hands overhead and try to balance on one foot for 5 seconds.	Tap your feet on the floor while making small circles with fingers for 10 sec.	Take 10 deep breaths