



10 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL CLASSROOM



The following is a brief summary of some useful tips in making the classroom a more successful place for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

1. Use Concrete Language:

Even students with good language abilities have difficulty with language processing. Keeping language concrete and to the point will assist with comprehension.

2. Be careful with metaphors, irony, sarcasm, etc.:

Students with ASD have a very literal understanding of language. Many misunderstand expressions such as "toast the bride" and are very confused by teasing and sarcasm.

3. Use visual supports for communication whenever possible:

Visual strategies support students with ASD in processing information and assist in comprehension. Visual strategies include (tailored to the students level of skills) computer pictures, photographs, written instructions, timetables, and highlighting text to emphasize meaning or what is expected of the student.

4. Allow extra processing time:

Students with ASD often take longer than other students to process verbal instructions. Allow extra time before you repeat the instruction. Repeating an instruction too soon can interrupt the processing of the person's response.

5. Don't demand eye contact:

Some people with ASD cannot process visual auditory input simultaneously. They can look at you OR they can understand what you are saying. The fact that the student is not looking at you does not mean that they are not listening or attending.

6. Be Rewarding:

We are all more likely to work well in an environment where we can succeed and where our efforts are appreciated. Students with ASD are no different. The more opportunities the person with ASD has for success in the work they are given, the more likely they are to find the classroom a rewarding place. Also, the more we show our pleasure through rewarding them, the more likely they are to strive to succeed.



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7. Keep you eye on the "Big Picture":

Do not make everything an important issue. It may be much more effective to ignore minor problematic issues where to do otherwise will result in power struggles. Alternatively, redirect or compromise, where possible.

8. Use a team approach:

Parents and school staff are all experts in their own areas and they all want what is best for the child. Keep communication open and positive between home and school. Achieving success is much easier under these conditions.

9. Don't take it personally:

Students with ASD have a deficit in social understanding and at times they may appear to be self centered and or rude. This does not spring from a desire to cause difficulties, but simply from lack of social understanding. Students with ASD will often need to be taught explicitly what other students simply know from being in social situations. It is important not to assume that the students understand how they "should" behave. Very often they do not.

10. Be aware of the sensory environment:

People with ASD often have difficulty with the sensory environment, i.e. noise, busy visual environments, distractions, etc. Be aware of environments which may cause distress or lack of attention and take action. For example, if a student finds it difficult to complete written work because he is seated next to a window where there is outside activity, change his seating. Students may also need to move around to have their sensory needs met throughout their time in class. They may need to have fidgets to play with in order to better attend. Be aware of the impact of the sensory environment on the person's behavior and make the necessary adjustments.



HELPFUL WEBSITES



<http://www.dotolearn.com/>

<http://www.tinsnips.org/>

<http://room5ideas.com/>

<http://www.practicalautismresources.com/printables>

<http://www.positivelyautism.com/links.html>

<http://www.cindysautisticsupport.com/>

<http://www.autism4teachers.com/index.html>

<http://card.ufl.edu/supports/start.htm>

<http://trainland.tripod.com/pecs.htm>

<http://www.autismclassroom.com/home/>

<http://www.setbc.org/pictureset/Default.aspx>

