

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Strengths

Can be very good at following set rules they have been taught

Can be very knowledgeable and skilled in their area of interest

Their skills in imitation can be used to teach role play

Some things you might see:

Running away from parents or caregivers: Not recognising danger.

Repetitive play (eg. lining up or spinning things), difficulty with imaginative play

Difficulty having a conversation that is not about their topic of interest

Difficulty toilet training

Difficulty understanding words that have one or more meanings, sarcasm and humour.

Difficulty sitting still, paying attention to important things instead of background noises or unimportant information

Difficulty balancing and they might walk on tip-toes, rock or hurting themselves

Difficulty holding a pen, cutting, threading, doing up laces and buttons

Difficulty taking turns, waiting and sharing, both in play and in conversation

Difficulty following instructions

Difficulty taking in new information not related to their interests

Difficulty problem-solving in social situations (eg. working out what to do when you are anxious) and in learning.

Difficulty understanding abstract ideas or things that don't follow a particular pattern or rule

Acting without thinking about whether they will be hurting themselves or others.

Sudden change in behaviour after eating foods that contain things such as gluten. Eg. increase in aggression, hyperactivity, and mood swings.

Good at rote learning

Can be good at things like computer programming, engineering and maths where things follow a pattern.

Often learn and communicate well through pictures.

Underlying issues

Theory of Mind (Social Imagination)

The ability to imagine what others are thinking or feeling, or predict what might happen based on an understanding of "social rules" and our environment

Sensory integration is about the way we organise and use information from our bodies. It helps us pay attention to what is important, to balance, have a sense of direction, and know what our bodies are doing.

Executive function

The ability to plan ahead, control your impulses, quickly store, retrieve and use information from your environment, and adapt to what is going on around you.

Health issues: This is an area that is still being researched. However, there is some evidence that for some people with autism intestinal tract difficulties and food allergies can be a factor. Some people with autism can also experience seizures similar to epilepsy

Meltdowns: Crying, screaming, rocking, flapping, rolling on the floor, kicking, hitting, freezing up

seizures



For more information, visit www.learn2bebuddies.com.au

By Amanda Gray

Note: more than one of the underlying issues can contribute to any of the above behaviours. This is not a comprehensive list, nor should it be used for diagnostic purposes or to replace the advice and expertise of doctors and medical specialists.

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