

IF I'M SO SMART, WHY IS SCHOOL SO HARD?

Supporting Students with Asperger Syndrome in Elementary General Education Classrooms

Support for the Anxious Student

Potentially stressful situations

Managing anxiety



From Buron, *When My Autism Gets too Big!*

Potentially Stressful Situations

- Getting ready for school
- Entering the building
- Sitting close to others
- Keeping up with classmates
- Struggling with difficult work
- Answering direct questions
- Dealing with sarcasm
- Making eye contact



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Potentially Stressful Situations

- ❑ Interacting with peers
- ❑ Dealing with teasing and bullies
- ❑ Eating in the cafeteria
- ❑ Navigating through unstructured times (recess, free-choice)
- ❑ Attending assemblies
- ❑ Having a substitute teacher
- ❑ Exiting during a fire drill
- ❑ Going on a field trip
- ❑ Arriving home

Unlimited possibilities !!

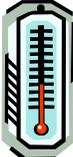


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Managing Anxiety

Take steps to reduce stress for the individual:

- Increase structure during stressful situations
- Maintain routines and predictability
- Help student recognize his/her signs of stress
- Provide options that allow student to self-regulate
- Refrain from asking WHY he did something
- Task cards
- No sarcasm
- Don't demand eye-contact



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Managing Anxiety

- ❑ Provide a "COOL ZONE"
- ❑ Music (background and through ear phones)
- ❑ Provide opportunity for down time
- ❑ Provide opportunities for exercise
- ❑ Give student more space
- ❑ Have a "0 tolerance" for teasing and bullying
- ❑ Provide accommodations where necessary
- ❑ Don't resent the need to accommodate
- ❑ Be patient




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Supporting Attention, Focus and Listening



Remember to use the strategies that you know for students with ADHD

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Supporting Listening / Attention

- **Provide visual supports when possible.**
 - Overheads, written instructions, pre-written notes, pictures, graphs, cartoons.
- **Teach student to listen with ears and eyes. Watch the speaker, “lip read” and pay attention to environmental cues.**
- **Ask student to repeat what was said (especially instructions).**

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Supporting Listening / Attention

- **Teach student “how to listen”:**
 - Sit up
 - Lean forward
 - Look at the speaker
 - Think about what you are hearing

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