

CFHS Autism Awareness Newsletter

"In a world where you can be anything, be kind."-Etta Turner

Sensory Needs:



Hyposensitivity: Individuals with ASD may have a lower than normal sensitivity to stimuli. Examples: smelling, licking, stomping, or repetitively touching objects.

Hypersensitive: Individuals with ASD may have a higher than normal sensitivity to stimuli. Examples: sensitivity to loud noises, t-shirt tags, lights, and certain foods.

Communication Needs:



Not every student with ASD will have a language deficit. An individual's ability to communicate will vary, depending upon his or her intellectual and social development. Some individuals with ASD may be unable to speak, but may use communication devices, pointing, or picture supports to communicate. Others may have rich vocabularies and be able to talk about specific subjects in great detail. It is important to note that although individuals with autism may not be able to use words to express themselves, one should always presume average intelligence.

What is Autism?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurological developmental disorder that causes deficits with communication, social, verbal, and motor skills. The most important thing to know about autism is that it is a spectrum disorder, meaning its affects vary significantly from person to person. ASD is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum condition" that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. There is no known single cause of autism. The term autism describes conditions in which a person is removed from social interaction, hence, an isolated self. Individuals with autism often display social, cognitive, and communication difficulties before the age of two. Individuals with ASD may engage in repetitive behaviors, as well as hyperactivity, perseveration, hand flapping, rocking, and lack social interaction. Autism statistics from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identify around 1 in 68 American children as on the autism spectrum. ASD is found in all racial, ethnic, and social groups. Studies also show that autism is four to five times more common among boys than girls. An estimated 1 out of 42 boys and 1 in 189 girls are diagnosed with autism in the United States. Autism is a life-long condition. Individuals benefit from interventions, or therapies, that can reduce deficits and increase skills and abilities. Although it is best to begin intervention as soon as possible (early intervention), the benefits of therapy can continue throughout an individual's life.

Tips for Educating Students with A.S.D

Visual Supports: A visual support refers to a picture of other item to communicate with a child who has difficulty understanding or using language. Visual supports can be photographs, drawings, objects, written words, or lists. Visual supports assist individuals to communicate wants and needs.

Wait Time: Wait-time is the amount of time that elapses between a directive and response. Individuals with ASD require wait time to process auditory direction. Allow individuals with ASD time to process a directive by providing one directive, then waiting for the individual to respond.

Transitions: Individuals with ASD often struggle with transitions. Prepare individuals with ASD for transitions by using visual supports, verbal preparation and repeated practice.

Peer Modeling and Support: Individuals with ASD often lack appropriate social skills. Research has shown increase in appropriate social skills and interaction when individuals with ASD are exposed to their typical peers.

Sensory Breaks: Individuals with ASD may need breaks such as walks, sensory breaks, swinging, etc. throughout their day to address or prevent over or under stimulation and sensory needs.

