

HONG KONG SOCIAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION

PRESENTED

**Helping Students with Autistic
Spectrum Disorder/ Asperger
Syndrome to Adapt in Mainstream
Secondary Schools**

2007.04.30

MS. ANN CHEN

Content and Schedule

9:00 -12:00

Understanding the adolescents with ASD and their difficulties in Secondary School life

12:00 – 1:00

LUNCH

1:00 -2:45

Parent interview

3:00 – 4:00

Intervention Strategies

4:00 – 4:50

Case discussion & Questions

4:50 – 5:00

HKSWA round up

WHO IS WHO ?

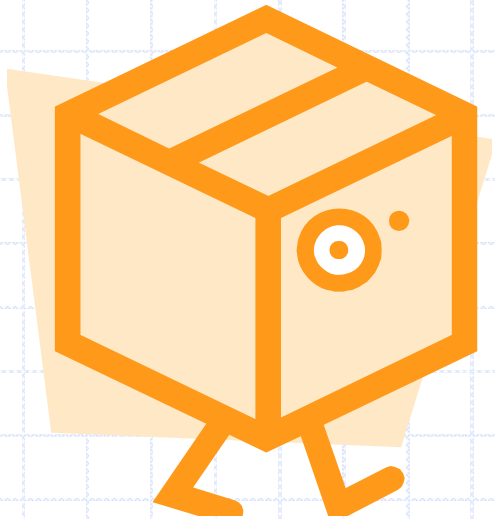


Autistic

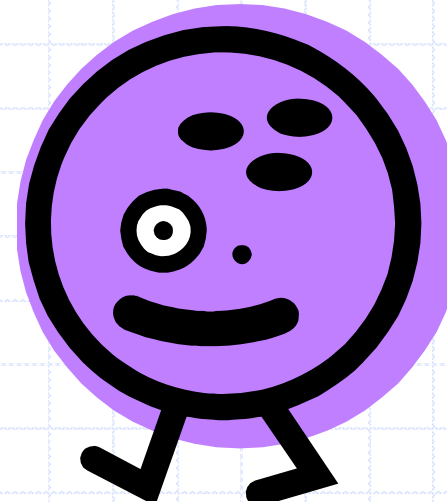


Neurotypical

WHO IS WHO ?



Autistic



Neurotypical

Characteristics of Secondary School Life

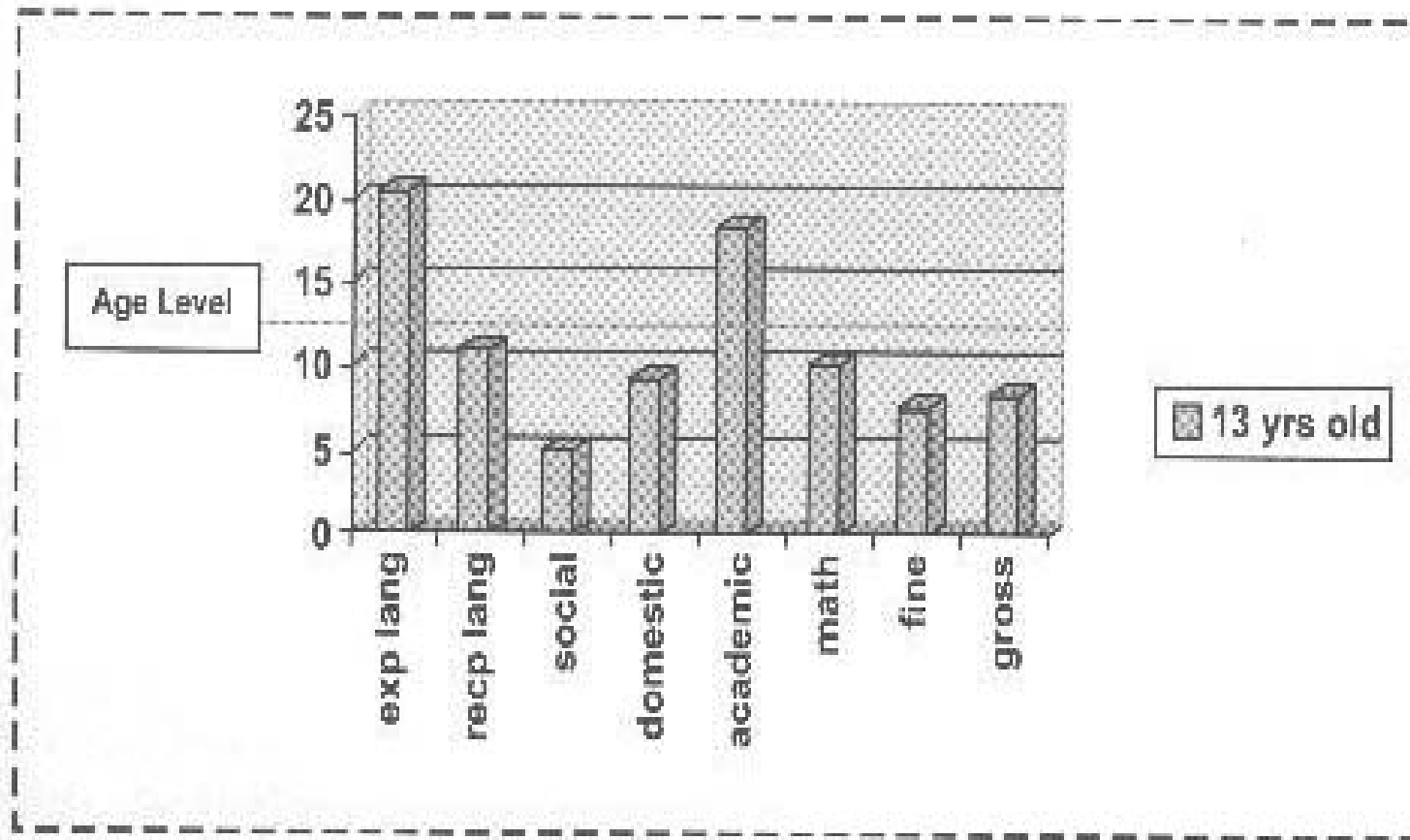
- ◆ Mobile and flexible in routine and environment
- ◆ Independence in life skills
- ◆ Projects management
- ◆ A lot of writings : essay, long questions, reports..
- ◆ A lot of group work

Characteristics of Secondary School Life

- ◆ Stressed on human relationships
- ◆ Romance and sex roles
- ◆ Learning are more integrated, abstract and required more self-reflectionrecognizetives taking and language expression
- ◆ Multiple roles: class members, house members, club members
- ◆ Need to make a lot of choices

Profile of AS students

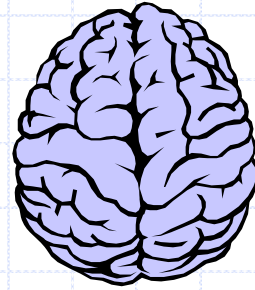
Examples:



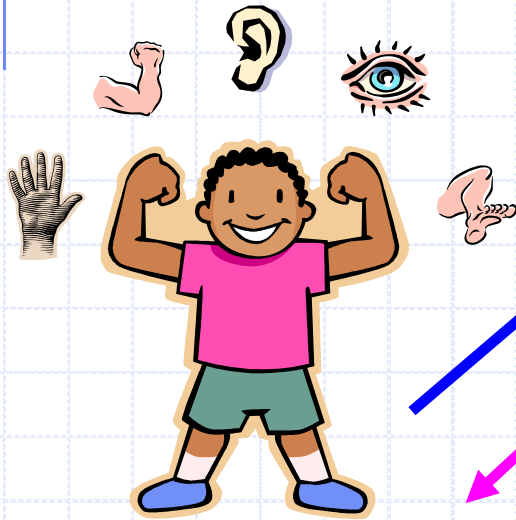
Developmental Difficulties:

- ◆ Self Development: usually at pre-school level
- ◆ Social Communication Development: usually at pre-school level
- ◆ Motor Planning: pre-school or early primary years
- ◆ Language: more problems in receptive and pragmatic use of language, verbal language usually ranged from pre-school years to early primary school years

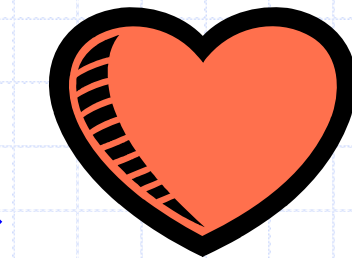
MIND



SELF



BODY



EMOTION

ASD Special characteristics:

- ◆ Poor awareness and in-charge of own body and senses
- ◆ Different awareness and expression of own emotions
- ◆ Difficulties in theory of mind: own and others' mind
- ◆ Limited/ narrowed awareness of Time and Space

ASD Special characteristics:

- ◆ Disconnection between self and human heart, between self and external environment. (external world is a video to me)
- ◆ Literality
- ◆ Non-social priorities
- ◆ Thinking in closed pictures, non-generalized learning
- ◆ Failed to predict outcomes

Common Psychological Needs of AS and Normal students

- ◆ Physiological needs: safety, enough food and clothes
- ◆ Unconditional love, acceptance and respect
- ◆ Release of Physical Energy
- ◆ Having companions
- ◆ Sex education

Psychological Needs of Autistic and Neurotypical teenagers: the difference

Neurotypical

- ◆ Self and Group Identity
- ◆ Expressing own opinions and in-charge own decisions
- ◆ Challenging limits

Autistic

- ◆ Security
- ◆ freedom
- ◆ Having playmates
- ◆ Independence in life skills
- ◆ Self searching: what do I like, dislike, want, what I am doing..?
- ◆ Enjoyment and success in tasks

Issues in School Life:

- ◆ Social difficulties, does not understand relationship
- ◆ Cannot hear long instructions
- ◆ Can't recognize people
- ◆ Did not understand feedback
- ◆ Clumsiness

Issues in School Life:

- ◆ Slow working speed
- ◆ Difficulties in planning and organization
- ◆ Difficulties in expressing self (verbally, emotionally, and logically)
- ◆ Irrelevant ideas

Problems in Social Relationship:

- ◆ Being bullied or teased
- ◆ Too seeking or avoiding in friendship
- ◆ Don't know how to judge the closeness in friendship
- ◆ How to make two-way interaction or discussion or daily conversations

Self care difficulties:

- ◆ Poor or awkward presentation
- ◆ Very messy
- ◆ Lost or broke own belongings
- ◆ Untidy and dirty
- ◆ Pumping into others
- ◆ Slow speed

Schoolwork difficulties:

- ◆ Fail to note down the homework requirements
- ◆ Miss deadlines
- ◆ Not understand the requirements
- ◆ Messy in handwriting
- ◆ Forget to hand-in assignments
- ◆ Lost books
- ◆ Excluded from project team
- ◆ Fail to do project or essay writing

Relationship with Teachers

- ◆ High expectation on teachers
- ◆ Obedient
- ◆ All or none relationship
- ◆ Real vs. pretend
- ◆ Very Very upset if they noted that the teachers behaved negatively and could not fulfill their expected roles

Response to stress

- ◆ Physically Escape:

e.g. hiding up, closing eyes, shutting up his ears

- ◆ Psychological Escape:

e.g. Going back to own internal fantasy world, or fixations or behavior pattern e.g singing

- ◆ Regression : behaving like a small child

- ◆ Mannerisms

Compensatory and Adjustment Strategies to Being Different (Attwood, 2007)

- ◆ Self blame and depression
- ◆ Escape into imagination
- ◆ Denial and arrogance
- ◆ Imitation of other children and characteristics

Parent interview:

- ◆ Mrs. So, a mother of a 14 year old, high functioning autism boy
- ◆ His son is now studying Form 2 in a local private co-ed school using the IB curriculum.

Intervention Strategies:

- ◆ Prevention work
- ◆ Parent work
- ◆ Emotion outburst management
- ◆ Incidence investigation
- ◆ Teasing and Bullying
- ◆ Peer programming
- ◆ Social Skills training
- ◆ Study Skills training
- ◆ Self care skills
- ◆ Provision of physical activities

Prevention work:

- ◆ Get to know the student comprehensively and deeply
 - get a report on his developmental strengths and weaknesses
 - assess his functions in social-communication, functions
- ◆ Provide the student information about the school/ activities that he is going to join:
 - teachers, classmates, classrooms location and map, classmates, rules and regulations, schedules and hidden rules.

Parents Work:

- ◆ Arrange support network so that parents can ring to other parents/ students to seek help for information when in need.
- ◆ Don't push for diagnostic assessment
- ◆ Use the term developmental difference/ Social and Cognitive and Motor Difficulties
- ◆ Check clearly on parents' view on having the autistic/ Asperger diagnosis. What is their present attitude towards their Autistic child?

Meltdowns Management

- ◆ Clear the environment, keep everybody safe
- ◆ Keep quiet
- ◆ Communicate in writing: guide him what next to do, Don't ask "why"
- ◆ low and slow
- ◆ Don't threaten the child. "If you don't..., I'll ..."

Incidence Investigation:

- ◆ Listen
- ◆ Ask concrete and close type questions
- ◆ Start with when and where and with whom
- ◆ Draw out the scenario/ use comic strip conversations
- ◆ Guide the student to describe the actions of different persons one by one: what others did, and then his/her action response.

Incidence Investigation:

- ◆ Ask straightly what he/ she thought and felt when he/she responded, instead of asking why he/she did it
- ◆ Seek information from the student individually
- ◆ Be patience! Trust the student!

Teasing and Bullying:

- ◆ Teach the student where, with whom and how to seek help
- ◆ Select a guardian who has high social status to protect the student
- ◆ Help the target to “hide” in a group of students.
- ◆ Be prompt, fair and straight in handling bullying
- ◆ Teach the student how to protect himself, how to be assertive and express himself honestly
- ◆ Teach the child how to identify what is teasing/ bullying

Support from Counselor/ teachers

- ◆ Be the best friend or a mentor to the student, or act as a life coach
- ◆ Give a lot of time to listen to his frustration
- ◆ Provide him a lot of concrete, explicit, action-based feedback
- ◆ Focus on self awareness development:, start from pre-school levels
- ◆ Teach him emotional identifications, release and management

Support from Counselor/ teachers

- ◆ Explain to him about the moral rules and human nature. Give him reasons how things happen.
- ◆ Help him to solve daily problems
- ◆ Develop his interests and talents
- ◆ Provide written instructions

Social - Communication training

- ◆ Provide structured and skill based training
- ◆ Do it individually or in small group of two-four.
- ◆ Teach the skills in reading personal space, non-verbal body language, listen and look, what not to say.....etc
- ◆ Teach the relationship between intentions, thinking, feelings and actions and teach the vocabularies in reporting

Social - Communication training

- ◆ Use thermometer as emotions reader
- ◆ Always explain clearly the logic, and practice the skills repeatedly in different scenarios
- ◆ Ensure after-school social experiences are voluntary

Structured Sex/ Romance Relationship education

- ◆ Teach the physical difference in boys and girls.
- ◆ Gives rules
- ◆ State clearly which and where are the sensitive parts of the body.
- ◆ Teach the related vocabularies
- ◆ Teach him identify social cues

Social/ Peer Support

- ◆ Provide him a mentor, an adult/ senior peer/ peer that he/she can trust and ask for help
- ◆ help to introduce different social partners: project partners, play partners, sports partners.... **Only if needed by the ASD student**
- ◆ Give some training to the peer helpers so that they know how to help

Learning skills training:

- ◆ Writing skills
- ◆ Text books presentation
- ◆ Relationship between subjects, meaning of doing homework/ classwork
- ◆ Read skills for test/exercise papers
- ◆ Questions explanation: what are being expected in different format of questions
- ◆ Time management and decision making in timed tests
- ◆ Organization skills and problem solving skills e.g. use checklist

OUR HUMAN WORLD

