

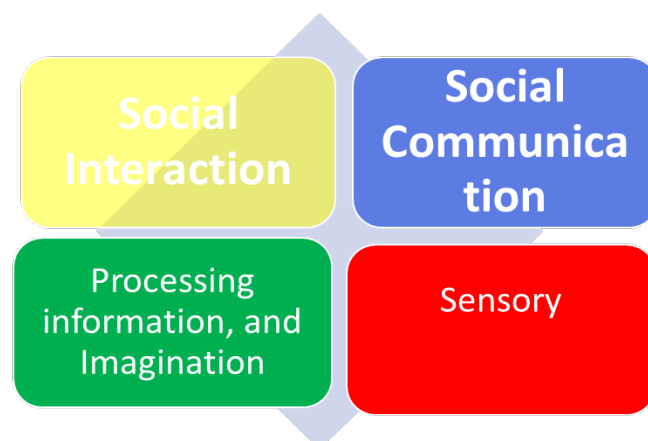
Autism and deaf children Conference day

Tips/advice for ToDs

Apologies if I am stating the obvious to those of you who are already very experienced. I have just tried to summarise and touch on key points to support for CYP with autism, which may be helpful for when working with those with dual diagnosis or going through an autism assessment.

- Liaise with Specialist autism teachers in your area; these may be known as Inclusion service or Communication and Interaction. Specialist autism teachers may be able to advise and provide visual resources, lego based therapy, emotional regulation supports etc
- Liaise with SLTs for visual communication systems such as PECS, SCERTS, AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication)
- Use the NAS and AET websites for advice, resources to support children with autism

Autism Areas of difference and key supports/strategies



Supporting areas of difference:

Social Communication-

- **Reduce language**
- Use child's name first and wait before giving instruction
- Allow time for child/young person to process and respond (count to 10 in head)
- To clarify a request/instruction use exactly the SAME words
- Be aware that expressive language may be in advance of comprehension
- Use visuals to support communication as needed. Can be very helpful with pre-verbal children (<https://pecs-unitedkingdom.com/pecs/>) Liaise with SLT for advice on SCERTS and visuals to support communication with peers eg simple sentence strips, visuals on keyrings to support interactions

Social Interaction (including emotional regulation)

- Joint attention activities for young children
- Turn taking with a peer- try visual, structured activity eg jigsaws, simple lotto games to help develop these skills which can be particularly difficult for children with autism
- Social Stories (<http://carolgraysocialstories.com/social-stories/what-is-it>)
- Social Groups - Time to Talk, Socially Speaking, Talkabout – all structured communication programmes for small groups. Lego based therapy- has been v popular with many children with autism.
- Emotional regulation- teach emotional recognition from early years. Explore use of The 5 Point Scale <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Incredible-5-Point-Scale-Significantly-Improved/dp/1937473074> and Zones of Regulation for older children <https://teachingautism.co.uk/zones-of-regulation/>
- Remember many children with autism are working at high levels of stress throughout the day, which some may mask - check with parents how the child is when they go home.
- Reduce demands and build in breaks throughout the day if child is highly stressed. Short breaks of 5 -10 mins doing an activity the child enjoys can be very useful eg. colouring, doodle book, lego box

Imagination, processing information and imagination

- Predictable routines and structure are very important- can reduce anxiety and enable child to focus on learning. Try and keep these going at times of change eg Xmas activities, end of term off timetable times.
- Organisation- use visual timetables so child can see what is happening and manage change, see Communicate in Print for visual resources <https://widgitonline.com/>
- Access to quiet area for independent work
- Transitions - prepare for by using photo books, Social Stories

Sensory

- Reduce clutter in classroom, be aware of noise from projectors, light through vertical blinds, smells in dining halls etc
- Movement breaks (eg walk to office, around school, up/down stairs as needed, according to signs of dysregulation)
- Access to quiet area, low distraction for **breaks** (can help reduce anxiety and reduce over stimulation from busy classroom)
- Access to sensory tools- headphones, break card, gym ball for bouncing, 'sit & move' chair cushions etc
- Sensory box or calming activities- twiddlers, blu tac, etc
- Sensory circuit -timetabled activities to alert, organise and calm the sensory system (<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Jane-Horwood-Sensory-Circuits-Programme/dp/B00NBCZIPG>) for those who need this building into daily timetable
- See NAS (National Autistic Society – lots of information on sensory needs)
- Ask parents to request a referral for an OT assessment from their paediatrician /GP if child's needs in this area are very high; may need to show how they impact on daily living to get an NHS assessment.

Good Luck!

Anne McKelvey

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