



# Things Every Teacher Should Know About ASD

Everyone with ASD is different. Autism is a spectrum because there's a wide range of symptoms and severity. Students with autism have their own strengths, weaknesses and learning styles. Using teaching techniques that focus on the child's abilities goes a long way in their overall development.

- Special interests are common in people with autism. You can use that passion as a motivational tool and supplementary topic for learning new subjects.
- Stimming (self-stimulatory) behaviors can frequently occur. These can have a calming effect, focusing attention away from an overwhelming experience.
- Students with autism typically have difficulty processing verbal instructions. Implementing visuals, written instructions, modeling of expected behavior and task analysis of easy-to-follow steps will go a long way.
- Sensory processing challenges lead to an oversensitivity to things in the environment, such as loud noises or fluorescent or bright lights. This creates a feeling of being overwhelmed by things that may go unnoticed by others in the same environment.
- Splinter skills are common in people with autism. This means that they may have much higher skills in some areas, while not exhibiting mastery of the precursor steps to get there. Don't that entry level is the place to focus your instruction.
- Generalization of new skills is a huge challenge. Students must be taught in a variety of settings, using alternating materials and by different professionals. Just because a student exhibits understanding in one location does not mean that they can do so across all settings.
- Decoding social cues can be difficult. Teachers can teach students with to model their peers and help by facilitating social interactions.
- Anxiety is especially common in autism. Students need your encouragement. They also may feel isolated due to having been bullied. Your support is crucial to their success.