How can we improve our understanding of girls on the spectrum through training, standards, competencies & partnerships?

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Autism Education Trust
A guide to the AET

We help children and young people with autism to receive an education, enabling them to reach their potential.
Training: We have trained over 121,865 people since February 2012.
Introduction to the AET
On the whole AET Programme
Autism standards

[Diagram showing the relationship between Autism competency framework, Training materials, Training delivery through hubs, Autism standards, and Evaluation for schools]
National Autism Standards

How many children and young people on the autism spectrum are there?

It is estimated that there are approximately 1 in 100 children and adults on the autism spectrum. Autism is hard to detect in some pupils, particularly in girls, and so there may be pupils at your school or setting who are not yet diagnosed. Approximately 4 boys with autism are diagnosed for each girl, but we believe that many girls are going unrecognized until much later in life or are diagnosed with other conditions. However, identifying and addressing the educational needs of a pupil does not depend on having a diagnosis, whether that is autism, a literacy problem, or a social and communication difficulty, for example. Staff should not focus all their efforts on ‘getting a formal diagnosis’ as they can address the needs of the pupil without this, by finding out with the pupil, exactly what aspects of school life are difficult and the type of support the pupil would like and benefit from.
Tools for Teachers

Tools for Teachers
A practical resource designed to support teachers to work effectively with pupils on the autism spectrum

www.autismtraininghubs.org.uk/141

All approaches should be aimed at promoting independence
Although not all pupils on the autism spectrum can learn to be independent in every aspect of their daily life, the learning programme should facilitate choice and control and enable pupils to be as independent as possible.
This is the difference between ‘doing to’ and/or ‘doing for’, as opposed to ‘doing with’ the ultimate aim of enabling the pupil to ‘do it for themselves’.

All pupils with autism are different. Not all the strategies will work for all pupils, and every strategy must be adapted to meet the needs, skills and interests of the individual.
It is hoped however that the information contained in this booklet and the associated on-line tools and exemplars will enable practitioners to create person-centred strategies and resources which will support the pupils they work with to achieve and thrive in their setting.
“Schools should look beyond what is measured by National Curriculum level descriptors and be encouraged to include data that are collected as part of the school’s standard or in-house assessments (e.g. on social-communication and independent living skills; sensory sensitivities).”

Wittenmeyer et al, 2011, Educational provision and outcomes for people on the autism spectrum: Autism Education Trust
Progression Framework Training

Think of a pupil...
Complex Needs and Participation

DEFINING COMPLEX NEEDS

Autism is a spectrum and autism differences may present in a variety of ways. Pupils whose needs are described as ‘complex’ may:

- Have conditions that coexist and which may overlap and interlock creating a complex profile (Barry Carpenter, Director, DfE Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (CLDD) research project, 2011)
- Have significant educational needs which may require specialist input and support both within school and from other agencies

Other factors that may impact
- Family background or home situation
- Age (e.g. puberty)
- Gender
- Understanding / awareness of others
- ‘Autism-friendly’ environments

RESOURCES

Information on co-occurring conditions often related to autism: http://bit.ly/1UGj1e0
Research autism: http://researchautism.net/autism-issues/conditions-related-to-autism
CLDD research project: http://compalidd.ssatrust.org.uk/project-information.html
The 5 'i's document: http://bit.ly/1q1TXX
Using case studies in training

**autism education trust**

**schools programme**

**My name is Suriya and I am 15 years old.**

I am in Year 11 and I am in hospital at the moment because things got too much for me. I am supposed to be studying for my GCSEs at the moment, but I can’t which makes me really worry. I am good at school at my forecasts are all A stars, but now I won’t get them. My teachers and doctors tell me that I should just concentrate on getting better and shouldn’t worry too much about my GCSEs for now, but I do. I want to be a barrister when I am an adult and if I want to do this I will need to work really hard at all my exams.

I have cut myself lots of times with a razor blade and with pins and other sharp things. I cut my arms and my thighs because it makes me feel something real when my head is all messed up. I am trying not to do this now and in hospital I am trying to use chillis to bite on when I feel like I want to hurt myself. I’ve also got a band on my wrist that I can flick so it snaps on my skin. It helps me feel less overwhelmed.

One of the things that I can’t stop thinking about is wanting to die. I know it is wrong to want to die. I also want to live. I took an overdose of paracetemol before I came to hospital.

I’m good at school, but I don’t like PE. I don’t like it when things get too noisy though, and I hate it when the other girls start messing about. My least favourite time at school is dinner times, but I used to sit in the library and read. It’s quieter there.

I don’t have many friends at school, but I am friends with one girl that I knew when I was little. She likes spending time in the library too.

My mom says that I’m a fussy eater. I won’t eat what she cooks for everyone else. I prefer to make my own food, because I don’t like other people touching my food. There are lots of germs on people’s hands. It’s hard in hospital because I have to eat what they make in the kitchen.

I love to read. It is my favourite thing to do. I like books about Vampires. I also like drawing and I can spend hours writing and drawing Vampires and thinking about a world of Vampires.
Importance of wellbeing

Observe the pupil to identify when they are not stressed/seem happy. Start targeting ‘Smiling’!

- Activity – Time to talk
- Resource – What makes a person on the autism spectrum happy?
- Activity – Happiness
- Resource – Happy book

Happiness checklist
Parents’ guides

A parents and carers’ guide to finding a school for your child with autism

How can we find the best school for our child?

What should we look for when we visit a school?

What type of school should we look for?

FREE GUIDANCE - Working together with your child’s school
www.aettraininghubs.org.uk/parent-guide

Working together with your child’s school.
An AET autism guide for parents and carers
www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk
Key features of the AET programme

• It’s national
• It’s local
• It’s a partnership
• It’s organic

SUPPORTED BY:

Department for Education