

AUTISTIC INDIVIDUALS

THEIR WORLD....

- Have neurobiological pervasive disorders of early development which cause:
 - world reading difficulties
 - people reading difficulties
- due to attention, memory, language, motor, and mood
- receiving, holding and processing difficulties.

Our world

- We must love them as they are so they may feel safe to grow
- We must join them in their world
- We must help them to join ours

Their sensory world

- Is often sending them confusing information
 - Too much...
 - To listen to
 - Colors that are too bright
 - Lights that hum
 - Music that hurts their ears
 - Clothes that scratch
 - Smells that overwhelm
 - TOO MUCH THAT' S TOO MUCH!!

Their sensory world...

- Is often sending them confusing information
 - Too little...
 - Attention to auditory input
 - Auditory memory to connect sequences
 - Visual spatial awareness
 - Focus on the big picture
 - **TIME to process**
 - **Ability to process**

Get into their sensory world

- Learn about their sensitivities through open communication
- Watch to see what situations cause them to “overload” or act out and begin
 - ...flapping their hands
 - ...screaming/tantrums
 - ...withdrawal
 - ...throwing things, etc.

Our world of teaching

- Give them a chance to “unload”
 - ...soft music ?
 - ...deep pressure ?
 - ...soft touch ?
 - ...dark room ?
 - ...being alone ?
 - ...movement ?
 - ...an object to manipulate?

Our world of teaching...

- Try to adjust home and classroom to minimize overload
 - Filtered glasses to soften light
 - Create quiet spaces (ear muffs, bean bags)
 - Build in chances to move
 - Pressure vests
- Help others to understand their need for
 - Quiet
 - Darkness
 - Flapping, etc.

Their world of learning

- Due to the “pervasiveness” of their developmental concerns, people with pervasive disorders exhibit complex learning patterns which must be:
 - Noticed
 - Understood
 - Recalled
 - Included as plans are made

Get into their world of learning...

- Understand their learning style
 - Strengths
 - Learning in chunks
 - Visual input
 - Concrete
 - Focused interests
 - Can often learn long routines

Get into their world of learning...

- Understand their learning style...
 - Weaknesses
 - Verbal memory
 - Understanding verbal directions
 - Remembering and following social situations
 - Meaning is not automatically attached to visual elements



- **Weaknesses**

- Scanning situations for most important details
- Social understanding (verbal and nonverbal input)
- Time concepts and perception of passing time
- Planning and organizing (executive functions)

Get into their world of learning...

- Understand any co-existing conditions
 - Attention Disorder
 - Memory Disorder
 - Language Disorder
 - Receptive
 - Expressive
 - Dyslexia
 - Mood Disorder
 - Tic Disorder

Our world of Teaching

- Teach them to pay attention
- Teach them to remember
 - What they hear
 - What they see
 - The sequence of their daily world
- Teach them to process
- Teach them to flex

Our world of Teaching...

- Teach them to avoid overloading situations
- Teach them to use their easiest learning mode
- Decrease their sensitivity through slow, careful increase of their sensory thresholds
- Teach them to advocate for themselves

Their World of People

- People move quickly
- People talk quickly
- People change their facial expressions
- Social situations change quickly
 - Causing confusion
 - Requiring memory for the sequence of events

Get into their world

- Minimize anxiety causing, sensory overloading situations
 - Large social settings
 - Recess
 - Large lunchroom
 - Subjects that overload
 - Gym class
 - Loud classrooms
 - Situations that are too abstract

Our world of teaching

- Increase their language skills
 - Auditory attention
 - Receptive memory and language
 - Expressive memory and language
- Teach them socially appropriate responses
 - Gestures
 - Conversations
 - Game rules
 - Cause/effect responses

Our world of teaching...

- Slowly involve them in safe, 1:1 social situations with adults, then peers
- Give them structure and routine
 - Teach them their routine ahead of time
 - Use visuals to assist their understanding
 - Give them the TIME they need to adjust and adapt

Our world is their world

- Slow our world down
 - Speak slowly
 - Show slowly
 - Give them TIME to process
 - Give them TIME to respond

Our world is their world

- Help them keep it in order
 - Warn them of change in advance
 - Make social situations into pictures
 - Helps them SEE the sequence
 - Helps them remember the event
 - Makes their world less confusing
- **MAKE THEM FEEL SAFE**
- Help them avoid overload

Autistic individuals...

- Experience joy
- Experience sorrow
- Experience hope
- Learn
- Love

Autistic individuals...

- Accept them as they are
- Assist them with their weaknesses
- Recognize their strengths
- Delight in their joys

Our world

- We must love them as they are so they may feel safe to grow
- We must join them in their world
- We must help them to join ours



**WE ALL BELONG TO THE
SAME WORLD**