

LIGHT IT UP BLUE



NOT ALL PEOPLE WITH AUTISM ARE THE SAME

People with Autism may act in uncommon ways. Some may have difficulty with certain activities, but they may have strengths in other areas.

For example, a person with Autism may not speak or they may speak but find social situations very difficult and find it difficult to understand emotions. Yet, they may be very quick and good at math, be a great artist, or be a wizz with computers and technology.

APRIL IS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

April 2nd marked World Autism Awareness Day. April is a month where we reflect on what we know about Autism, learn more information about Autism, and we promote the embracing and celebrating differences of all people.

Autism affects the way a person's brain works. It is not a disease. It is not contagious. Autism is also called ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder). Autism is known as a "spectrum" disorder because there is a wide variation, difference or range in type and severity of symptoms that people experience when having Autism.



*Come to
School
wearing
your blue
accessory*

LIGHT IT UP BLUE

FAMOUS INDIVIDUALS

Greta Thunberg was born on 3rd January 2003 in Stockholm, Sweden. As a child, she was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), which affects how people perceive the world and interact with others. Some autistic people develop a special interest in a specific topic; in Thunberg's case, she became particularly interested in climate change when she first learnt about it at the age of 8. As a result, she changed her habits to help reduce her carbon footprint, including becoming vegan and refusing to travel by aeroplane.

Thunberg also spoke at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2018. She has been commended for her ability to speak with clarity on the subject of climate change, something that some people attribute to her ASC. She has been listed as one of Time's 100 most influential people and has been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize.

Basketball player Anthony Ianni was diagnosed with pervasive developmental disorder, a form of autism that says few people are expected to succeed in school or even participate in sports. As a child, his parents would take him to games, and the experience was he described as "freak-out moments." The sensory overload – flashing lights, noise, and screaming was too much.

However, Anthony's passion for basketball surpassed these moments. He pursued his love for the sport and attended Michigan State University from 2009 to 2012. Remarkably, he became the first known Division I college basketball player on the autism spectrum.



*Anthony
Ianni*

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KEY FACTS

Autism is a type of neurodiversity.

Autistic people have differences in three key areas of social understanding and communication, sensory processing and integration and Flexible Thinking, Information Processing and Understanding.

Autistic people can get jobs, have relationships and live independently.

For some Autistic people routine is very important so it is important to warn them if things are going to change in their environment or routine.

Some Autistic people can find it hard to understand sarcasm, exaggeration or metaphorical language, for example, 'it's raining cats and dogs!'

Some Autistic people can sometimes be very sensitive to noise, light or touch sensations, for example, the feel of certain fabrics against their skin.

Autistic people are not all alike. Just like everybody, they have different personalities and needs.

Autistic people need friends, just like anyone else.

INDICATORS OF AUTISM

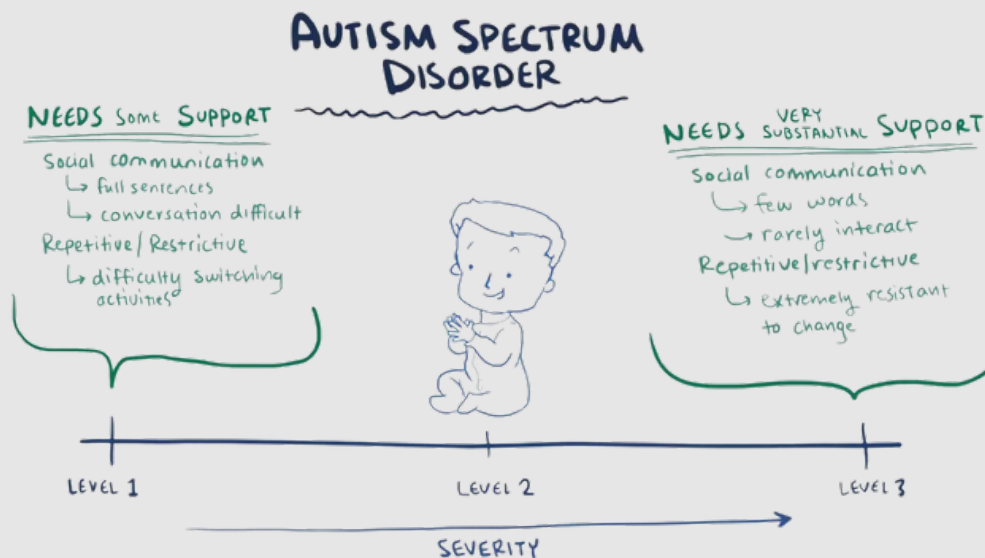
- Have trouble talking, make strange sounds, or not talk at all
- Flap their hands, spin, or laugh a lot
- Sit quietly and not look at others
- Play or behave differently than others
- Have trouble looking at you
- Do or say the same things over and over again (like lining up toys or repeating a line)
- Talk about or show interest in a select variety of topics (only about a few topics)
- Have trouble relating to others or not have an interest in other people
- Have trouble understanding other people's feelings or talking about their own feelings
- Repeat actions over and over again
- Have trouble adapting when routine changes or "going with the flow"
- Have unusual reactions to the way things smell, taste, look, feel, or sound

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT INCLUSION IN ACTIVITIES

- Use straightforward language. Be clear, literal and concise
- Avoid loud noises
- Respect personal space
- Give advance notice before an activity will end to prepare them for the transition.

How to Interact with People with Autism	
✓ Do's	✗ Don'ts
 People with autism may take longer to process information or respond. Be patient and give them time to communicate.	 Do not use negative language such as "don't" or "stop," which can be confusing and may be misinterpreted by people with autism.
 People with autism often respond well to visual aids, such as pictures or videos. These can help them understand concepts and communicate more effectively.	 Don't assume they cannot understand you. People with autism may have difficulty with eye contact or other social cues, but that doesn't mean they are not listening or understanding what you are saying.
 Be clear in your communication. If possible provide the requirement or question in writing.	 Do not make a person with autism wait for too long. If unavoidable find a quiet area.
 Respect personal space: People with autism may be sensitive to touch or physical proximity. Ask for permission before touching them.	 Do not expect a person with autism to cope with a noisy environment. Eg loud music, continuous phone ringing, etc.
 Use clear and direct language: People with autism may have difficulty understanding sarcasm, irony, and figurative language.	 Do not make assumptions as everyone with autism is unique and possesses different abilities or preferences.
 Gather as much information as possible from the caregiver who has the most knowledge about the person's needs and the most effective approach.	 Do not disregard or exclude the person with autism from conversations. Give them respect & show interest in what they have to say.

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WHY IS IT CALLED A “SPECTRUM” DISORDER?

Put simply, autism can look differently for different individuals. For some individuals with autism, they can speak but they might find social interaction difficult, finding it difficult to be around large groups and noise. They may also find it difficult to understand other people’s emotions and may not get jokes or humor. While for other people with autism, they might never speak and only communicate with visual pictures.

Whatever the level, individuals with autism tend to prefer routine, and depending on the level, they might find transitions (i.e. changing from one activity to the other) challenging or very challenging.

VISUAL COMMUNICATION

For Students of Determination who are Level 3 on spectrum you might see Visual timetables used to help the student to transition easily from one activity to next.



These are **widgits** and we also use them to allow students to communicate with us.



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SOME BOOKS ON AUTISM



*Penguin
Days*

A Friend Like Simon
[Click Here](#)

The Girl who Thought in Pictures
[Click Here](#)

My Brother Otto
[Click Here](#)

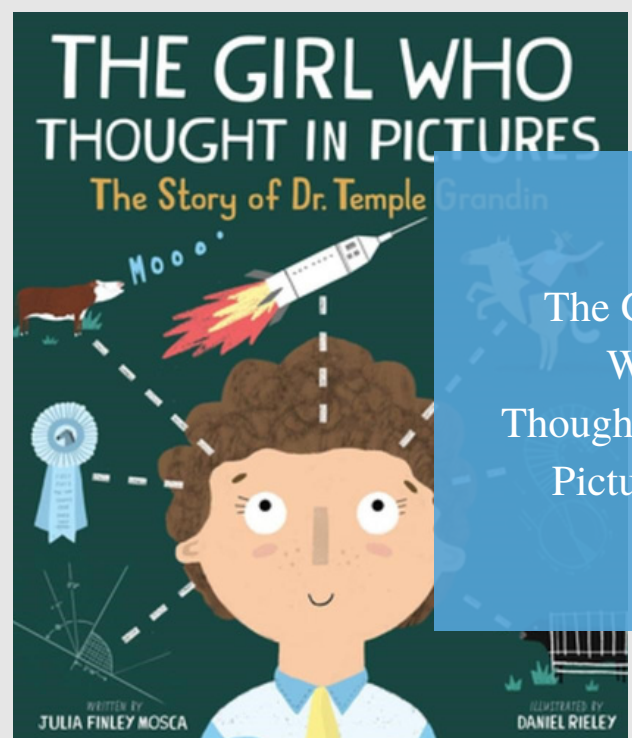
Penguin Days
[Click Here](#)

USE PEOPLE LANGUAGE FIRST

When a person has a disability and you are talking about them always say WHO they are before anything else.

"This is my friend, Mahmoud. He loves playing in the sandpit and he is good at science."

Describe who they are first not their disability.



The Girl
Who
Thought in
Pictures