

Setting up for Success in 2011

If you have a student on the spectrum no matter what age there are a few **KEY** strategies that will make a huge difference and set both you and the student up for success in 2011.

S.P.E.C.T.R.U.M

Schedules

Send home timetables ASAP. Have a visual timetable up in the classroom. If there is going to be a change, let the student know in advance and indicate on the timetable/schedule.

Processing Time

Allow them time to process information (both verbal and visual) before you repeat instructions, questions or take away visual information.

Set up for Success

Most students on the spectrum have a huge fear of failure and this can be seen as “perfectionism”, “constant rubbing out/crossing out work” or “doing NO work”. Starting the year by saying “I want you to make mistakes”, talking about mistakes = learning, and encouraging ALL students to have a go, will help reduce anxiety. Role model making mistakes on the board, show students work that isn’t “perfect”, not the neatest, has crossed out work and incorrect answers will reinforce you are happy with mistakes.

Communication

Limit instructions, use monotone voice, name at start of sentence, remember they are literal. Instead of saying “Can you sit down”, say “Jack sit on the green chair”. Instead of “Do you want to join the class”, say “Jack come and sit next to me”, etc. If you raise your voice this can cause a sensory meltdown and most students on the spectrum can’t process high frequency sounds (see *Sensory Processing on page 2 for more information*).

Timeframes

See Top Tips for Using Schedules and Timers opposite.

Repeat Activities

Most people with an ASD love repetition, whether it is a DVD, movement, conversation or activity. Giving students repetitive routines and activities helps reduce stress as they know what to expect. Repeating activities allows success, build independence and increases confidence.

Understanding

Students on the spectrum are VISUAL learners. Sometimes they can repeat exactly what you said but do not understand. The more visuals you use, the higher the understanding.

Motivate/Reward

Use their “favourite” activities to motivate them. It is best to use lots of short rewards rather than waiting a whole day. I have found the most effective is a quick activity, then quick reward. For example: 30 minutes work, 5 minutes building rather than work all day = 20 minutes building. *For more information on using special interests and token systems download my FREE tip sheet at www.suelarkey.com.*

12 Top Tips for Using Schedules and Timers

Schedules and Timers tell the child HOW LONG and WHEN they are going to have to do an activity. Timers allow us to pre-warn the child. They help answer many of the questions these children have: What is happening? What order? What time? What is next? How long?

1. Break tasks down into small achievable tasks, with realistic timeframes. Use digital timer on Portable Schedule to count UP or DOWN. For example: Time for school = clean teeth, toilet, bag, hat.
2. Help move from one activity to the next. For example: Mat Time, Reading, Recess.
3. Finish. Letting a child know how long to go and what is next.
4. Independence. Allow students to self monitor and move from one task to another without prompts.
5. Toilet Timing! Put the visuals for toilet on the Portable Schedule: Toilet, Flush, Wash Hands, Dry Hands and re-set for 1 hour or more!

At Home

6. Set 10 minutes to get dressed – attach relevant clothing visuals to Schedule.
7. Morning Routine – Breakfast, TV, Get Dressed.
8. 5 minutes doing Lego and then Mum will be ready.

At School

9. 10 minutes work, 5 minute break, 10 minutes work etc.
10. How long will it take to write x sentences or how many words can you write in x time. You can use this idea for reading, maths, worksheets etc.
11. Set up for Recess/Lunch with a schedule of activities.
12. 20 Minutes for Assembly put visuals on strip for song, awards etc.

Time Timers

20 cm Time Timer	
CODE TT1	\$60
7.6 cm Time Timer	
CODE TT2	\$45
Time Timer CD	
CODE TT3	\$35



Portable Schedule with Digital Timer

CODE O02	\$15
Links visual schedules with a time frame.	
With Fast Grip starter pack	
CODE O02 (FG)	\$20

