

## **VIDEO SUMMARY**

### **ASPERGER SYNDROME: SUCCESS IN THE MAINSTREAM CLASSROOM**

**www.coultervideo.com**

#### **What is Asperger Syndrome?**

1. Neurobiological disorder on high functioning end of autism spectrum
2. Described in 1940's by Dr. Hans Asperger
3. Primarily causes problems in social interactions
4. Tendencies (varies by individual)
  - Bright but has difficulty reading social cues
  - Good vocabulary but poor conversation skills
  - Excellent memory for facts, especially in area(s) of special interest – obsessive about special interests
  - Difficulty with new situations/making transitions
  - Inflexibility – clings to specific routines or rules
  - Desires to interact but often rebuffed by peers

#### **Intro to Mainstreaming**

1. Placement should reflect individual needs
2. Private special ed. school can address learning disabilities and other needs
3. Mainstream public school can offer array academic and extracurricular programs
4. Mainstream classroom support can include teacher, in-class special ed. teacher and individual aide
5. Team approach helps student focus, learn and interact

#### **Mainstreaming Tips**

1. Teaching style should be structured but flexible
2. Let student know what to expect
3. Make accommodations that integrate student interests.
4. Give clear, explicit directions for class assignments and homework -- list assignments on board
5. Know subject well and direct class so student can't "take over" with his knowledge
6. Teach behavior skills before activity instead of correcting after the fact
7. Deal with tantrum by distracting student; teach how to deal with situation later
8. Give goal of raising hand/not interrupting and track progress
9. Let student prepare part of lesson
10. For class participation, call on student first or second
11. Hold weekly review sessions with case manager, aide and student to review performance and encourage progress
12. Use student interests (games, etc...) to relate to student
13. Present information both visually and verbally

14. Place student with aide on side of class for aide access
15. Place student away from windows, squeaky chairs, and noisy environments
16. Aide can take class notes as back up for student
17. Teacher should pick pairs for cooperative learning
18. Talk with class about student's challenges and enlist their aid
19. Give younger students "safety retreat" (such as chair or couch) in class
20. Communicate teacher acceptance of student to class

### **Essential Social Skills Training (SST)**

1. AS individuals need different interventions, but all need social skills training
2. Students must learn and rehearse skills that others learn intuitively – how to interact, converse, read other's interest and feelings
3. SST can be in class/school, group or individual
4. SST can use scripting for conversations
5. SST can help student interact appropriately with teacher and peers
6. Aide can be key to generating social interactions between student and peers
7. Social skills are critical to student success in later life

### **Parent Advocacy is an Art**

1. Approach school staff in positive manner
2. Individual Education Plan (IEP) is critical
3. Teachers/aides need IEP before school starts
4. Treat parent-teacher meetings as business meetings; be prepared
5. Volunteer in school, meet teachers and key staff one on one, and be visible and accessible
6. Initiate frequent parent/teacher communications
7. Make case manager your in-school advocate
8. Share information but don't overload teachers

### **Preparing to Succeed**

1. Learn about AS through articles, books, Internet, videos and seminars
2. Form relationships between staff and parents
3. Key staff who will support student should meet student before school year starts

### **The Bright Side**

1. Students bring individual strengths, such as strong intellects, sense of humor, acting abilities, encyclopedic knowledge of favorite subjects
2. Teacher can have tremendous positive impact on student
3. Proper combination of academic and social skills training can help students be successful in life as well as school

## Additional Resources

[www.aspennj.org](http://www.aspennj.org) (ASPEN website – includes article “Asperger Syndrome” by Stephen Bauer, M.D. ([www.aspennj.org/bauer.html](http://www.aspennj.org/bauer.html)))

[www.udel.edu/bkirby/asperger](http://www.udel.edu/bkirby/asperger) (Online Asperger Syndrome Information & Support – University of Delaware website)

### Asperger Syndrome

Ami Klin, Fred R Volkmar, Sara S Sparrow  
(book – The Guilford Press – [www.guilford.com](http://www.guilford.com))

Social Skills books by Dr. Jed Baker <http://www.jedbaker.com/books.htm>

Asperger’s Syndrome – A Guide for Parents and Professionals  
Dr. Tony Attwood

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program <http://www.clemson.edu/olweus/>

Aquamarine Blue 5 edited by Dawn Prince Hughes

Developing Talents by Temple Grandin and Kate Duffy

### Publications:

Autism Spectrum Quarterly  
Autism Advocate

### Bookstores:

Autism Society of North Carolina online bookstore  
Autism Asperger Publishing Co. in Overland Park, KS online bookstore

### Videos:

Coulter Video [www.coultervideo.com](http://www.coultervideo.com)