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Workshops:

May: In Hong Kong

June: Childcare conference Australia

July: Autism

Conference Australia
More details on website

To contact Anna:

Email:

annatullemans@gmail.com

Web:

www.annatullemans.com

Anna Tullemans
PO box 242
Redcliffe Qld 4020
Australia

m: 0419 168 742

From outside Australia
+61419 168 742

Hello everyone and welcome to term 2

I have had many people asking for information on behaviour and behaviour management so this newsletter will focus on behaviour strategies.

Always remember to not take behaviours personally as they are not aimed at you specifically even when you feel they are. It's just an ASD person's way of expressing his emotions, his frustrations, or his sensory sensitivities.

Also thank you for all your kind words regarding the newsletters. I will endeavour to incorporate as many of your questions as space allows.

Anna Tullemans

| Behaviour and its possible meanings | |
|--|---|
| What he does | What it might mean |
| Rips up worksheet, throws pencils on floor | This task is too hard, I don't understand what to do |
| Takes the student's ball or hat and runs away | I want to play with you |
| Repeats your instructions over and over, refuses to start work | Has not understood instructions, I need help |
| Covers his ears with his hands, hits another student, pushes some one over, attempts to bite | That student is too loud and it hurts. That student is too close |
| Tries to bite another student | I wanted to be first |
| Tells the relief teacher she is fat | I want to talk to you |
| Calls out in class, fiddles with items | I am confused and I don't know how to ask for help |
| Grabs the ball and runs the wrong way during a team game | I like the ball, I want to play |
| Screams, tips his desk over | Where is my teacher today? |
| Becomes anxious if people touch or brush past in classroom/community | I am sensitive to touch/ am unsure of my body in space and movement |
| Stripping off clothes | I am sensitive to heat/cold/feel of the clothes |
| Constantly removes socks | I am sensitive to the stitching in my socks |
| Chewing clothes or other items | I am becoming anxious. I am trying to calm myself |
| Smelling people, clothes, objects | I enjoy smelling as part of my calming routine |
| Fear of electrical appliances | I can hear the buzzing of the electricity |

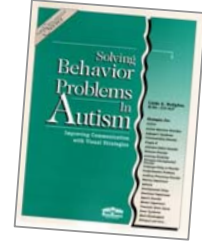
Book Review

Solving Behaviour Problems in Autism

Linda A. Hodgdon

QuirkRoberts Publishing

Available through: Book in hand, Redcliffe, Qld ph: (07) 3885 8525



This book is about helping to develop a plan or approach which will produce better long term outcomes for students with ASD. It is full of practical ideas and strategies that will work in your school day or at home.

Linda gives a good explanation of the link between behaviour, communication and visual strategies in the first chapter which sets the tone of the book. For those who are new to ASD or are a helper in the classroom there is a section on assessing behaviour situations and how to analyse and interpret this behaviour.

What I love about this book are the examples Linda uses. The examples of behaviour and solutions are common issues that we come across when we are working with ASD students. The book really focuses a great deal on using visual strategies in many situations and as such is a really useful tool for many teachers **and** parents.

Tip:

Never assume the student has behaved in a particular way to upset you. He cannot take your perspective. He only knows what **he** is feeling and he is trying to get his need met.

6 Reasons for Unsuccessful Behaviour Management

1. Not looking at the 'Big Picture'.
 - a. Sometimes we focus our attention on extinguishing a particular behaviour and not looking at why the behaviour is occurring.
2. Failure to find the true cause of the behaviour. Generally there are three factors that are woven into the students behavioural difficulties:
 - a. Their inability to understand effectively
 - b. Expressive communication problems
 - c. Sensory issues
3. Trying to deal with too many issues at the same time.
 - a. Focus on why one behaviour is happening as changing that will usually change multiple problems.
4. Focussing on extinguishing behaviours rather than teaching a particular skill.
 - a. We have to stop telling students what NOT to do and start teaching them what they should be doing
 - b. One of the most effective ways to eliminate inappropriate behaviour is to teach a more effective and appropriate way to get a student's need met.
5. Presuming students understand
 - a. Few people recognise that a student's difficulty in 'understanding' (the underpinning meaning of what we say and do) is frequently a source of behaviour problems
6. Reacting to difficult behaviours inconsistently
 - a. We need to be very consistent in our day to day encounters with our ASD students. The more inconsistent we are, the more confused the ASD student will be and the less he will be able to problem solve

In order to change a student's behaviour we must *understand* the reasons for this behaviour

Behaviour! What does it mean?

© Anna Tullemans 2008

For someone with ASD, *behaviour* always serves a purpose. When we want to convey our feelings, our wants and desires, or our needs we have a wide range of tools at our convenience. We use a combination of body language, words, emotions, and facial expressions. We also use underpinning meanings to convey our message.

Due to the nature of ASD, our students usually only have one tool at their disposal to convey all their feelings, wants and desires and that is behaviour.

There are several issues that will cause behaviours and we need to be aware of these if we want to make changes to behaviour with lasting results.

They are their:

- Inability to problem solve effectively with consistent results
- Inability to adapt to new situations
- Sensory sensitivities and inadequate social skills
- Not knowing what to do

For someone with ASD, *behaviour* is a form of **communication** and always serves a purpose

Where there are persistent behaviours we need to investigate fully the causes of these behaviours. Eg if a student is constantly calling out in the classroom for the teacher's attention he may:

1. Not know or understand the correct procedure for accessing the teachers attention
2. Be seeking reassurance that she is still in the classroom (some students use their peripheral vision and cannot see the teacher directly in front)
3. Not have understood the teacher's instructions and may be seeking the "leave this classroom now!" reaction.

If the answer is number three we need to investigate the reason. It could be:

- Is he using the quiet place outside the classroom as a calming technique?
- Perhaps he doesn't know what to do next and doesn't know how to seek clarification correctly?
- He doesn't recognise that he needs help and so is looking for an escape to a quiet place
- Is it too hot/cold/noisy in the room?

We need to teach appropriate responses through:

- Visual cues: "Put your hand up, wait until I say Daniel then talk" can be presented as a written list or as a photo of a raised hand or a combination of both
- Social skills groups
- Role playing different scenarios
- Direct teaching in the classroom
- Directive stories (© Anna Tullemans & Rhonda Dixon)
- Social stories (© Carol Gray)
- Visuals such as posters in the classroom

Each student must have an appropriate means of communicating what he wants and needs. When a student is taught to communicate effectively, there is a marked reduction in inappropriate behaviour. All staff who work with a student with ASD must know, understand and respond consistently to the students communication"-
Autism for All Teachers,
Klik Enterprises

Behaviour in the classroom – excerpt from *Teacher Assistants Big Red Book of Ideas* –
 Anna Tullemans & Sue Larkey

Behaviours in the classroom often take the form of:

- Irrelevant comments
- Interrupting
- Talking over the top of others
- Not following instructions
- Doesn't always understand the intent of words

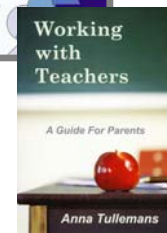
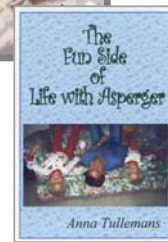
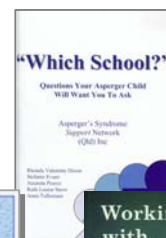
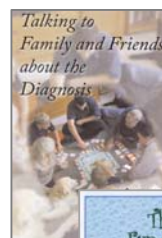
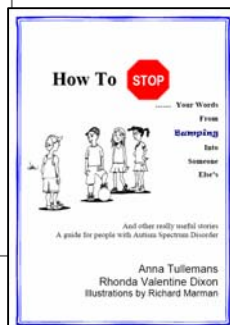
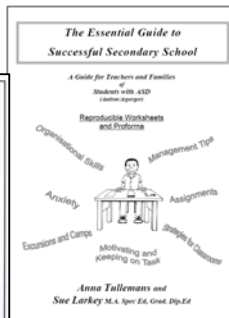
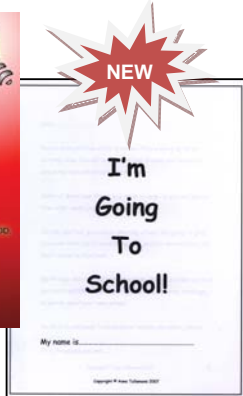
Ideas to try:

- Use Comic Strip Conversations – (Carol Gray)
- Model what is and what is not appropriate and explain why
- Teach the student to ask for help appropriately
- Teach the student how to ask for clarification
- Teach the student how to start and how to finish
- Pause between instructions
- Limit oral questions



Teacher Assistants Big Red Book of Ideas

Books authored by Anna Tullemans



To **order books** please fill out this form and send with your cheque:

Name

Address

If you would like to receive the newsletter via email: Post Code

Email

ABN: 44 458 927 927

- \$50.00 The Essential Guide to Successful Secondary School
 - \$45.00 Teacher Assistants Big Red Book of Ideas
 - \$10.00 I'm Going to School (workbook for students entering school)
 - \$29.00 How To stop Your Words From Bumping
 - \$25.00 Talking to Family and Friends
 - \$25.00 Working with Teachers
 - \$ 6.00 Fun Side of Asperger
 - \$18.00 Which School
- Prices include postage and handling

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Please make cheques payable to:
Anna Tullemans
PO Box 242
Redcliffe Qld 4020
Australia