

THE AUTISM INCLUSION TOOLKIT

Training Materials and Facilitator Notes

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Photocopiable resources

- Figure 1.1 – Planning INSET: Questionnaire for Participants Prior to Training
- Figure 1.2 – True or False Quiz
- Figure 1.3 – How ‘ASD-Friendly’ are you?

2 Living with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASDs): Same World; Different Perspectives – 20 Slides

3 The Impact of the Triad of Impairments on Everyday Life – 12 Slides

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6 Creating an ASD-Friendly Environment – 12 Slides

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Photocopiable resources

- Figure 12.1 – Checklist for Schools

How to Use This Book

PowerPoint presentation and handouts

The enclosed CD-ROM contains a PowerPoint presentation with notes for Sections 1 to 12. We would recommend that presenters make a printout of the slides and the accompanying notes and read them thoroughly prior to use. Using the CD-ROM, participants can be given copies of PowerPoint slides at the beginning or the end of the training session. It is often useful to print out the slides as handouts with a space for note taking when they are given out for information at the beginning of a session. Although the notes are primarily intended as information and a guide for presenters, yet they can also be printed out for participants if the presenter feels this would be useful.

Details of how to access the materials using the CD-ROM PowerPoint instructions for CD-ROM

Slideshow

- To access the PowerPoint screens for this Section, insert the CD-ROM into your disk drive.
- Left double click on the file named 'My Computer' and then click on the 'Autism Inclusion Toolkit' CD Drive.
- Left double click on Section 1 and then click on the 'View' icon on your toolbar.
- To make the slides work as a continuous slideshow, click on 'Slideshow'.

Speaker Notes

- If you wish to access the Speaker notes for this Section, click on 'View' and then choose 'Notes page'.
- You may also want to print off each slide with accompanying notes. Return to 'View' and click on 'Normal'.
- Click on 'File' and then click on 'Print'. In the section 'Print what' – approximately two-thirds of the way down the box on the left, choose 'Notes Page'. You may want to adjust which Notes pages you print off by specifying their number in the 'Slides' section, immediately above the 'Print what' section. Press 'OK'.
- Adjustments can also be made to reproduce colour or black and white printing.

Handouts

To reproduce handouts for your audience from this presentation, click on 'Handouts' in the 'Print what' option. Choose how many screens you want per page in the adjacent numbered box. Press 'OK'.

Using the extension activities and case studies

Each section contains some suggested activities and some sections offer case studies for discussion. Trainers can be selective in their use of these but it is advisable to break the session up with workshop activities or time for reflection and discussion.

Recommended reading and resources

Each section contains a list of Recommended Reading and Resources. It is important to provide participants with a list of recommended reading and resources as part of the training package. This will encourage them to explore issues raised further in the training. If the school has a resource bank of some of the recommended material this will help to encourage participants to explore issues further.

1

Planning INSET and Using the Training Materials in your Setting



This section will examine different ways of delivering INSET to colleagues, giving details of the issues for consideration, such as where should the INSET take place? What media should I use? What is the message I want to convey? Is there going to be a follow-up session? It will also suggest different ways in which schools can build up a resource bank of materials on Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASDs). It will tell the reader about the ways in which the training package can be used in school. Some schools may want to focus on one or two particular sections, e.g. 2 and 3 to raise general awareness of ASD in the school, others may wish to focus on an issue that is causing concern, e.g. challenging behaviour. This section also offers examples of how the package can be used in a flexible way to meet individual needs.

Learning outcomes

This Toolkit can be used to deliver INSET at a number of levels. It may be important in some schools just to concentrate on raising awareness of ASDs, using Section 2, whilst in other schools that have a number of pupils with ASDs, it might be considered essential to work through a number of the sections over a period of time. It is advisable therefore to think carefully about the needs of the audience before planning a training package. Training is only valuable if participants leave enthused and ready to improve their practice. Very often people attend training sessions because they have to, not because they want to. In such circumstances, training becomes a waste of time and effort for both the facilitator and the participant.

School staff are constantly bombarded with paper work so another questionnaire to complete may not go down very well. However, it is important to have some idea of what people want to know and their existing knowledge base of ASDs. A selection of short sharp points with a tick box may be the best option. Examples of questions may include:

- Would you like to know more about Autistic Spectrum Disorders?
- Do you teach any pupils with ASDs at the moment?
- If the answer is 'No', have you ever taught a pupil with ASDs?
- Do you know about the Triad of Impairments?
- Would you like to know how to help pupils with ASDs maximize their learning potential?

A short questionnaire for this purpose is included on the CD-Rom as Figure 1.1.

Having the answers to just a few questions like this can help the facilitator to plan to meet the needs of an audience. He/she will be able to judge their level of knowledge and understanding of ASDs and whether or not the potential audience is interested in the proposal for training. Making a list of the Learning Outcomes or Expected Goals on a flip chart and referring to them at the beginning and at the end of your training can help keep facilitator and participants focused.

It is important to remember that not everyone is going to be enthusiastic about ASDs and so training does need to be as motivating as possible. Using videos/DVDs often helps in this respect. Each section of the Toolkit gives ideas about useful resources that can be used to this effect.

When and where?

The length of the training will vary depending upon the needs of your audience. The facilitator may have been tasked with raising awareness during a staff meeting, and if it is this case, may have to be selective in the slides that are used. For example, he/she might decide to use a few slides from each of the first three sections – Living with ASDs, the Triad and Sensory issues or alternatively, may decide to concentrate on issues addressed in Section 6 – ‘Creating an ASD-friendly Environment’ and Section 12 which focuses on schools’ Access and Inclusion plans and the Disability Equality Duty. He/she may find it useful to supplement basic training like this with some information about ASDs, e.g. a poster on the staff noticeboard or in reception area highlighting some of the issues relating to the Triad or containing a list of what makes an ASD-friendly environment.

It is important that at the very least staff are made aware of the issues in a staff meeting or for some time in a whole school professional development day. ASD is a disability and so the school has a legal obligation to meet the needs of pupils with ASDs as best it can. If it is difficult to persuade some staff that it is important to know about ASDs, this might be a good argument.

The Toolkit can also be used to put together a training day. Some issues or sections might be essential in this situation especially if the audience has a mixed knowledge of ASDs. We would recommend that it is important to cover issues relating to the Triad, sensory anomalies, environment and curriculum. It is also important to point out that breaktimes and lunchtimes may be particularly stressful for individuals with ASDs.

Once the core content/sections have been decided upon, the audience can then be given a choice of one or two other topics, e.g. Behaviour Management (Section 7), Tried and Tested Strategies (Section 11) or Working with Parents and other Professionals (Section 9). In order to break the day, and if two or more trainers are available, the audience could be given a choice and split into groups. This would give participants the opportunity to move around at the end of the day thus improving their concentration span and would allow them to focus on a topic that is of relevance/interest to them.

In the case of a staff meeting or a slot in the whole school professional development day, it may not be possible for the facilitator to influence where the training will take place. However, this is an issue that needs careful consideration for a whole day’s INSET. The budget may be such that the training does have to take place at school and the audience may be happy with this. However, the venue still needs to be as comfortable as possible and times set aside at approximately 90-minute intervals for comfort breaks and refreshments. Seating can often be an issue. There is a need to consider how seating will be arranged based on numbers in the audience, e.g. in rows (theatre style) or in groups around tables (cabaret style). If it is likely that the audience will be seated at a distance from the trainer, it may be necessary to use microphones or at least check for audibility at the start. Always make sure that any audiovisual equipment is working and can be seen and heard by the audience. However, in this respect always expect the unexpected and have contingency plans in place if a DVD/video player suddenly breaks down.

Plastic chairs can get quite uncomfortable after a long period so it is important that trainers are sensitive to this fact and watch out for times when participants are at their most fidgety. It may be that participants need a five-minute break to stretch their legs or stand up for a few moments. Some exercises suggested by the trainer in a humorous way, e.g. ‘Everyone stand up. Shake your left leg! Now, shake your right leg!’ can provide a bit of light relief and make people feel relaxed and ready to concentrate again.

At the end of any session, whatever the time span, provide participants with an evaluation form. Include on the form a question relating to future training needs on ASDs. Evaluation forms can be a bit daunting for the trainer/facilitator to read, especially if some participants have been negative about the presentation. It is important to view them objectively and not take any criticism too much to heart but bear any constructive comments in mind for the future. It is not unusual for some participants to comment more on the venue and the refreshments than the course content and skills of the trainer!

Building a resource bank of materials

To supplement training, it is important to build up a resource bank of materials in school. Resources might be housed in a large storage box in the library or in the staffroom. There could be a dedicated bookshelf or section in a filing cabinet with information about ASDs. Voluntary sector groups will often provide some useful information booklets and many useful articles can also be found on the Internet via the websites listed throughout this book. A number of texts and DVDs have been listed in Section 2 that can help raise awareness in a less formal way. The staff also need to be made aware that the resource bank exists via staff bulletins or the staff noticeboard.

Hints and tips for raising awareness in addition to formal training

- Information booklets for all school staff, containing basic overview of the impact of the Triad of Impairments and Sensory Issues on everyday life and what staff can do to help.
- Using moveable displays or posters in strategic places throughout the school, e.g. a large visual display or poster with a picture of child in the centre and highlighting difficulties he/she might have and how they can be overcome on either side.
- A film night to watch 'Snow Cake' or 'Rain Man' or any other dramas or films about ASDs.
- Circulating texts, such as Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time* (Vintage/UK) or Kathy Hoopmann's *The Blue Bottle Mystery* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers).
- Circulating a list of quotations from individuals with ASDs or putting them up on the staff noticeboard.
- Asking pupils with ASD to state what helps and does not help in school and circulating the information as a newsletter. It might be a good idea to include some quotations from some individuals with ASDs outside of the school to justify the points of view given (See Section 2 for examples). Do highlight pertinent issues, such as bullying and getting over-stressed.
- Using a true-or-false quiz on ASDs at lunchtime (See Figure 1.2 on the CD-Rom).
- Posters that state what makes an ASD-friendly school or conversely what does not! Sometimes people absorb what they should not do quicker than what they should do. (See Figure 1.3 on the CD-Rom.)



Go to the accompanying CD-Rom for the full selection of slides that accompany this section and remember you can also access detailed speaker notes to use with each slide.

Figure 1.1 Planning INSET: Questionnaire for Participants Prior to Training

Do you have any knowledge and understanding of individuals with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder? Yes/No

If yes, please give a brief explanation

.....
.....
.....
.....

Do you teach any pupils with an ASD? Yes/No

If yes, please give details

.....
.....
.....
.....

If no, have you ever taught a pupil with ASDs? Yes/No

If yes, please give details

.....
.....
.....

Do you understand what is meant by the Triad of Impairment? Yes/No

Would you like to know more about ASDs? Yes/No

If yes, what topics would you like your training session to include? Please tick as appropriate:

- The Triad of Impairment
- Sensory Issues
- Educational Implications of the Triad of Impairment
- Environmental Issues
- Transition
- Pupil Participation
- Access and Inclusion and Disability Equality Duty
- Behaviour Management
- Strategies and Interventions
- Working with Parents

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Figure 1.2 True or False Quiz

TRUE OR FALSE?

1. There is no currently known cure.
2. There are more boys than girls affected.
3. The ratio of boys to girls in Asperger syndrome is 20 :1.
4. Pupils with ASD do not benefit from inclusion.
5. ASD is most prevalent amongst the middle classes.
6. ASD has close links with epilepsy.
7. ASD has only been written about in the last twenty years.
8. Families of a person with an ASD have to pay a lot of money for help.
9. People with ASD function best in a specialist environment.
10. Families often spend a lot of time finding out more about ASD.
11. Over 75% of people with ASD have additional learning difficulties.
12. People with ASD often have unusual responses to sensory stimuli.
13. There can often be another member of the wider family who is somewhere on the spectrum.
14. ASD is caused by spending too much time in front of the TV.
15. Sometimes specific drugs can help the condition.
16. Everyone with ASD has a talent in art or music or drawing.
17. Most people with ASD have an excellent memory for something that interests them.
18. People on the spectrum exist in all walks of life.
19. I will not need to alter the way I work/teach for the child with an ASD.
20. Individuals with ASD can often like routine and structure in their daily lives.