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United Way of
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Autism:
Information & Resources
For Transitioning into
Adulthood

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Introductions

- My training & interest in ASD
- My work at HCDS
- My groups & staff trainings
- Please keep notes during discuss and please hold your questions till the end

What is ASD?

- Autism/ASD is a complex developmental disability characterized by:
 - Persistent deficits in social interaction and communication across multiple contexts
 - Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests or activities

What is ASD? continued:

- Symptoms must be present in early childhood period (typically recognized in the first two years of life); and
- Symptoms cause clinically significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important area of current functioning.
- Because of the range of symptoms, this condition is called Autism Spectrum Disorder-ASD.

What is ASD? continued

- Different people with autism can have very different symptoms. One person may have mild symptoms, while another may have serious symptoms. But they both have an autism spectrum disorder.
- ASD affects boys more often than girls (4:1), and siblings of children with the disorder are at increased risk.
- It is estimated that 1 in 68 children have ASD (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2014).

Co-Occurring most Distressing for Adults

- Obsessive compulsive disorder
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- Anxiety
- Depression

Personal Wellbeing Index

– Areas:

- Personal relationships
- Personal health
- Community connectedness
- Standard of living
- Future security
- Personal security
- Religion and spirituality
- Achievements in life

Video Clip

Autism in Pink Documentary

[Autism in Pink Documentary \(English\) - YouTube](#)

[▶ 35:52](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-FvExDAqh8>

Strategies to be Independent

- Helping an adult become independent-
- Ideally starts at birth!
 - Communication
 - Skills
 - Goals

Strategies continued

- What are the skills a person needs to leave home?
 - *Communication Skill Building Ideas*
 - *Life Skills Inventory-Independent Living Skills*
 - *Make everything Fun! PRACTICE!!!!*
- Develop a Transition Timeline to help person learn skills

Strategies continued:

- Like anyone else, personal interests and passions provide strong incentives:
 - To learn
 - To set goals
 - To take “Risks”
- Never Assume a person knows how to.....
- Yet it is never too late

Strategies continued:

- Learn norms- i.e. A trip to Japan!
- Learn conversation skills- again appropriate for setting
- Learn about one's environmental/sensory comfort needs
- Social Skill Development- Learn & practice norms

Strategies continued:

- Life is Change!
- Change IS Hard for Everyone to some degree
- Learn conversation skills- again appropriate for setting
- Learn about one's environmental/sensory comfort needs
- Social Skill Development- Learn & practice norms

Information

- **Daily social skills- per Culture/Norm based:**
 - **Fine motor skills required : handwriting, cutting food, dressing, jewelry clasps, contacts and lots more.**
 - **Gross motor skills used for walking, climbing stairs, or riding a bike**
 - **Sitting, posture, hand shakes**

Information continued:

- **Daily social skills- per Culture/Norm based:**
 - Awareness of his or her body and its relation to others
 - Visual skills for reading and writing
 - Play, coping, self-help, problem solving, communication, and social skills

Information continued:

- Romantic Relationships are possible!
- Assets a person with ASD bring a relationship may be:
 - Loyalty, punctuality, commitment, and honesty
- Specific difficulties that may affect a romantic relationship may be:
 - Sensory difficulties with physical touch, understanding intentions and reactions, knowing how to identify desire

Information continued:

- By working on these skills a person may be able to:
 - Develop relationships
 - Learn how to focus on tasks
 - Learn how to delay gratification
 - Express feelings in more appropriate ways
 - Engage with peers
 - Learn how to self-regulate

Complementary Therapies

- Complementary therapies may help an adult learn about themselves & accept themselves as they are:
 - Music
 - Art
 - Massage
 - Yoga
 - Aroma
 - Animal Therapy

Discussion

- What does independence mean to you?
- Was it easy?
- How does one encourage another toward independence?
- In your family/group are there individuals who are flexible for change and others who are not?
- Is change hard?

Resources through Howard Center

- Intake Coordinator for information
- Employment- Project Hire & Project Search
- Groups- Chess, Checkers & Cribbage, Dialectical Behavior
- Therapy, Gaming Group, Men's Group , Non-Gender Conforming/Transitioning & Allies Group, Relationship Group, Women's Empowerment Group, Women's Group
- Residential Programs- Avenue 7, Safety Connection, SUCCEED

Call 488-6500

Resources

- <http://www.vermontfamilynetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/Transition-to-Adulthood-Fact-sheet.pdf>
- <https://www.autismspeaks.org/resource-guide/state/vt>
- <http://www.ddas.vermont.gov/ddas-programs/programs-autism-default-page>
- <http://www.healthvermont.gov/family/autism.aspx>
- <http://www.socialsuccessmastery.com/social-skills-for-adults.html>

Resources

- <https://iancommunity.org/cs/articles/relationships>
- <http://www.amaze.org.au/uploads/2011/08/Fact-Sheet-Romantic-Relationships-ASD-Aug-111.pdf>
- In a Different Key- The Story of Autism by, John Donvan & Caren Zucker
- NeuroTribes by, Steve Silberman & Oliver Sacks

Conclusion

- Always remember- When you meet one person with ASD, you have met One person with ASD 😊