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Education

Asperger Syndrome: What Teachers Need to Know
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The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Strokes states that two out of every ten thousand children have Asperger Syndrome ("AS"). As more symptoms are added to the list, children are being diagnosed earlier and more often. To be effective teachers need a guide to the syndrome and the necessary tools and resources. *Asperger Syndrome: What Teachers Need to Know* is a compact book with discussions of symptoms, recommendations, and sources.

Teachers have the most contact with children throughout each day and this succinct and easy-to-grasp book enables them to comprehend Asperger Syndrome. Studies are inconclusive at this time, however they indicate that boys are three to four times more likely than girls to have Asperger Syndrome.

Asperger Syndrome: What Teachers Need to Know is comprehensive and devoid of jargon. It is worthwhile for parents of children diagnosed with Asperger's as well as parents who suspect that their child should be tested for the syndrome.

Named for Hans Asperger, an Austrian pediatrician in 1944, the syndrome has taken a back seat to ADD and ADHD. "Asperger Syndrome is a neuro-developmental difference that falls within the autistic spectrum," writes Winter.

Stress is a major factor in AS. "We need to stay 'on the ball' and to defuse situations before they overwhelm," write the authors in chapter 7. Recommendations start with advice to teachers for managing their own emotions: Among the suggestions offered to that end are the use of stress balls, angry cards, safe havens, attention diversions, and exercise. Anger management techniques "can be taught to your whole class but will particularly benefit the child with AS," explain the authors.

The book presents a balanced look at the positive and negative traits of the syndrome and thoroughly describes the four distinct components of AS: social interaction, communication,

imagination, and sensory sensitivity. Concrete strategies are presented to assist students with AS to participate fully in school without being remanded to classes for learning disabled students.

Matt Winter possesses extensive experience working with children with AS. The focus of his work is on supportive intervention techniques, which form the basis for this book. Clare Lawrence, the mother of two children, one with AS, teaches and works with autistic children.

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