



Editor's Corner

Dr. Diane Adreon

Inside this Issue

Editor's Corner	1-2
Resources for Social Skills Training: Model Me Kids	2
When Your Child Has Special Needs Dr. Robert Naseef	3-6
Romantic Relationships Dr. Tony Attwood	7- 13
Dating Resources	14

Individuals with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders frequently have impressive skills which, understandably, are a source of pride for their families. These skills often include the ability to concentrate for long periods of time on topics in which they are interested, the extensive amount of information they seem to easily acquire and maintain, a phenomenal ability to store all kinds of information in long-term memory, and creative “out-of-the-box” thinking, are striking “talents” that many of us do not possess.

The profile of individuals with autism spectrum disorder often has considerable scatter; that is, some skills are high (and perhaps higher than the average for another individual of the same chronological age) and others are surprisingly low. Without question, we should celebrate and build upon an individuals' strengths. However, one cannot assume that strengths alone will yield good outcomes.

For individuals on the autism spectrum, there are a number of areas that may need to be addressed in order to do our best to prepare them for a life as independent as possible.

Some of these are:

- Emotional regulation skills—Emotional Regulation skills include being able to refrain from becoming extremely upset and demonstrating behaviors that offend other people, hurt other people, or scare other people. This might include learning to walk away from a situation and utilize some relaxation techniques to calm down. For older children, we might be focusing on teaching them to tolerate someone else saying something they find offensive, but holding it together at that time and discussing their frustration at a later time.

Editor's Corner (con't)

- Executive functioning skills— Executive functioning skills include prioritizing, planning, and executing a plan to achieve a goal. This might include planning and packing for a trip or developing and following an timeline for completing a project.
- Adaptive skills— Adaptive skills are often thought of as the way in which we use our intelligence to function in day-to-day living. Often, individuals with high-functioning ASD need direct instruction and practice to use their intellectual skills and successfully execute practical daily living skills. Your child may need to learn how to:
 - make a phone call to gather information, make appointments, or place an order,
 - use an ATM card to make a deposit, get cash, or check the balance on the account,
 - comparison shop—looking at price and quality and understanding “false advertising,”
 - obtain the assistance of a store employee to find an item or make a purchase,
 - check in at an airline counter, check luggage, go through security, and find the boarding gate for a flight.

As you go through your day, try and pay attention to things that you find yourself doing that you might be able to teach your child. It is much easier for all of us to learn a skill when we can gradually master its' different components.

Resources for Social Skills Training

Most neurotypical children learn social skills by watching and imitating the behavior of others. Many children with ASD need special assistance in knowing what part of the behavior to pay attention to and model.

Model Me Kids videos use children narrating the behaviors that they are modeling. In this way the children learn normal behavior and social interaction in a safe environment. Many of the children begin to pause the videos to practice the behaviors, without prompting.

There are additional complementary materials to teach critical social cues, nonverbal cues, turn-taking behavior, and much more. The Model Me Kids videos range in level of social behavior from 2-17 years old. For more information be sure to visit their website at www.modelmekids.com.



When Your Child has Special Needs

By Robert Naseef, Ph.D.

Is this just a stage my child is going through? Is this because of her condition? Or is something seriously wrong? For parents who have a child with special needs these can be haunting questions that come back over and over. Simply put, kids go through stages; parents go through stages; and kids and parents go through stages together. When there is a disability or special healthcare needs these stages are both similar and different. This article will provide a context for understanding and growth for both children and parents.

One major psychological adjustment to any newborn is the parents' need to feel better about themselves through bonding to the actual baby. In order to do this, they must mourn the perfect imaginary infant that got them through the pregnancy. The creation of this imaginary infant is a normal part of the parenting process and is identified as **image-making**, which occurs during pregnancy as the first phase described in *The Six Stages of Parenthood* by Ellen Galinsky (New York: Addison Wesley, 1987) which focuses on how parents develop as their children grow and their personalities unfold.

Parents have mental picture or dreams of how things are supposed to go when the child is born. Parents remember the child they once were and then form images of how they would like to have been treated by their parents. Galinsky sees parents as having myriads of images that filter in and out of our thoughts, as opposed to one dream. Parenthood can therefore be seen as a journey of images failed and achieved. There is a sequence of stages that parents go through in response to their children's growth.

After **image-making**, comes **nurturing**, which extends from birth through the first couple of years. The nurturing stage consumes parents from birth through the early years. By her very growth, the child leads the parent from one task to the next. The major task of this stage is attaching to the baby and reconciling the imagined child with the actual child. This reconciliation can be long and difficult if there is a problem with the baby's health or development. Holding, touching, and caring for the baby often brings the ecstasy of peak experience. There is also a fear of loss as many parents wake in the night to check on whether the baby is still breathing. The interactive relationship begins with a nonverbal inter-affective loop with parents learning to respond to baby's cues and clues. In this passionate stage, fathers play more with their babies while mothers take care of them.



Special Needs (con't)

This stage of bonding with the actual child and letting go of the image of the perfect child can be far more difficult when the infant presents with an actual defect or congenital disease. The gap between the real and the imaginary is much wider and harder to accept. The child is like a mirror to the parents of both their positive and negative traits. A visible abnormality, such as a cleft lip, for instance, unconsciously stirs up an inner sense of inadequacy in parents. "What's wrong with us?" is the question raised. It is no wonder that a child with a disability or chronic illness can create a trauma that wounds the parents' self-esteem. It takes time to heal a broken heart. Having known this pain first-hand, it is something that I live with and re-experience from time to time even now that my son is a young adult.

Next comes the **authority stage**, as small children begin to show independence and assert their wills, and parents have to learn to set limits. The authority stage begins as the theme of control/lack of control predominates as small children show independence. When do I say yes? When do I say no? How do I enforce my decisions? When do I shift or compromise? As it becomes necessary to say "No," each parent has the major task of accepting his or her own authority over the child. When a parent cannot be the kind of disciplinarian she wants, then her image of herself takes a heavy blow. Almost by surprise, many parents hear themselves saying things their parents said to them--things which they planned to never say. Parents must accept the unacceptable as they experience their anger with their own children. Guilt over the anger is frequently felt as parents are challenged to change and communicate with the child on the appropriate level.



Physical, mental, emotional, and behavioral challenges can complicate this already challenging task and make adjustment overwhelming. What is fair in terms of discipline is much more complex for a child whose development is behind that of her same aged peers. These challenges tend to disrupt the bonding process at whatever point in the life-cycle that they occur. This rupture in the relationship between parent and child needs to be explored and acknowledged, and then repaired or restored. Then joy and excitement can be rekindled for parents.

Throughout the stages of parenthood, parents are faced with the dilemma of sorting out what is typical at that stage versus what is atypical. It is a long process over a difficult emotional terrain, but as countless parents can attest, it is a rewarding journey. When we have a grasp on the overview of what is transpiring, it becomes easier to make sense of the trials and tribulations of our everyday lives. As our endearing and lovable children grow and change, we do likewise in ways we could have never imagined.

Special Needs (con't)

Children don't come with a user's manual, and more often than not, parenthood often seems like a land with no clear roadmap. We see countless articles and books about the stages children go through in their development with little insight into how parents develop in their lives after procreating or adopting a child and accepting the challenges of family life. Part 1 of this article was based upon *The Six Stages of Parenthood* by Ellen Galinsky (New York: Addison Wesley, 1987) and focused on the first three stages of how parents develop as their children grow and their personalities unfold. Part 2 will continue in this vein with a brief description of the fourth, fifth and six stages.



After image-making, nurturing, and authority comes the **interpretive stage** of parenthood. This stage blooms as school-age children ask parents about the world and their values. Children are pushing out and away from the home in school, the playground, and through TV, movies, reading, etc. Parents must evaluate the past and prepare for changes. There is increasing separateness while the connection is held onto, and parents must figure out the right amount of involvement in their child's everyday life. The parent is more and more aware of the child's individuality. Interpreting the world also involves setting standards for behavior in the world outside the home. Parents' images of "family" come into play. Parents must also interpret their child's development to their child as well as to themselves.

As difficult questions come up, parents are impelled to re-examine and perhaps revise their own theories of child-rearing and parenthood. Over a period of several years new images of the future are formed. If there are developmental challenges, this process can be much more involved. A child with special needs will have an individual educational plan (IEP), may be in special classes, and may have complex medical issues, numerous therapies, and may need medications. Cognitive development may be slower and more difficult. The road will have more twists and turns, and the emotional terrain may be even more difficult to handle.

With the teen years, there is the onset of the **Interdependent Stage**, which can be extremely turbulent as teenagers challenge parents' authority. Emotional highs and lows are not far apart. Strong feelings are stirred up in parents. As their bodies change with the dawn of their emerging sexuality, parents have to rethink their authority relationship with their almost adult child. Because teenagers are by developmental necessity absorbed in themselves, they can be disrespectful, testing, worrisome, and upsetting to their parents. Images must be revised again as new ways to communicate must be developed based on the teenager's emerging independent identity. Parents must learn to talk less and leave the door open because their children still need them but on new terms. Limit setting and guidance are still needed but must be based on the particular child's needs.

Special Needs (con't)

More than ever parents must understand the deep passions that are evoked in this stage. Particularly challenging is accepting their child as a sexual being. As their teenager establishes his own identity, parents review their own struggles to separate from their parents and their wishes about how it should have been handled. As the separate identity is formed, separation brings feelings of envy, fear, anger, pride, and regret. Parents of children with special needs confront the reality of how far their child may be different from the norm once again, and may have special fears about their child being taken advantage of in the world. Overall, this further redefinition of the parent-child relationship brings to all parents the image of life without children at home which now looms on the near horizon.



The **Departure Stage** is something parents have thought about ever since their eyes first met those of their newborn. Now parents are faced with taking stock of the whole experience of parenthood. They are faced with letting go and getting a perspective on their accomplishments and short-comings as parents. They redefine their identity as parents with grown-up children. They are again forming and reforming images and revisited their own lives as they left the homes they were raised in. In today's world, economic realities can make this stage extend well into the twenties after graduate school is completed and careers are launched. The parents of children with special needs face the possibility that their children can never live independently and may live with them for the rest of their lives or in a community living arrangement with supports. But for all parents, it is clearer than ever that our job is never done for we are parents the rest of our lives, but our roles with our adult children are different.

At this point, parent and child alike are waving good-bye to childhood and looking out to adulthood, with wobbly knees I might from my own experience with my 22 year old son with autism. We don't know yet what the future holds for living and working. It a scary thought when your child is young. How do we get there? We get there by doing our best. To do that, we have to let go of what might have been. We will need to continue to face the future with courage while we do our best with what we have. This may be far from what we imagined before our child, whether typical or not, was born. Nonetheless, through acceptance and courage and endurance, the road through parenthood brings peace and love. Our special children truly light the way and help us find the inner strength and wisdom we need to do.



We wish to express our appreciation to Dr. Naseef for permission to reprint this article for our readers.

ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH ASPERGER'S SYNDROME AND HIGH-FUNCTIONING AUTISM

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While a young adult with classic autism may appear content with a solitary “monastic” lifestyle, this is often not the case with young adults who have Asperger’s syndrome or high-functioning autism. Clinical experience has identified that the majority of such adolescents and young adults would like a romantic relationship. However, there is remarkably little research examining this aspect of autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) or strategies to facilitate successful relationships.

We know that young adults with Asperger’s syndrome have significant difficulty developing peer relationships and are developmentally delayed in knowing what someone may be thinking or feeling. Typical children do this naturally and have practised relationship skills with family members and friends for many years before applying these abilities to achieve a successful romantic relationship. Young adults with a diagnosis of Asperger’s syndrome or high-functioning autism also have conspicuously limited social conversational skills or ability to communicate emotions, especially affection. They also can have an extreme sensitivity to particular sensory experiences. All of these diagnostic characteristics will affect relationship skills throughout childhood, and will eventually limit an adult’s ability to achieve a long-term successful relationship.

To achieve a successful relationship, a person also needs to understand and respect him- or herself. Self-understanding and self-reflection can be particularly difficult for people with Asperger’s syndrome. Self-respect will have been adversely affected by being rejected, ridiculed and tormented by peers. Adolescents with Asperger’s syndrome also are gullible and vulnerable to being given misinformation on relationships by fellow teenagers. This can include instances of being deceived and “set up.” For example, a teenager with Asperger’s syndrome was lonely and longing for a girlfriend. His requests for a date had been consistently rejected. Then a very popular and attractive girl in his class suggested the two of them go for a date at the cinema. He was so happy and the date was progressing well, when the girl became embarrassed and confessed that she asked to go out with him only to complete a dare from her friends. He was devastated.



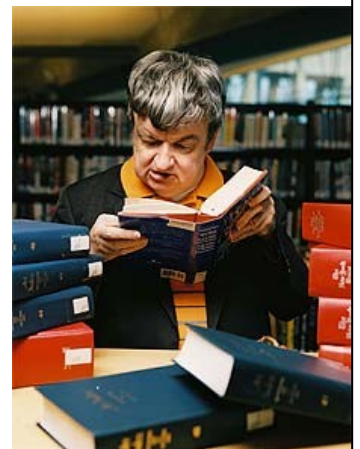
Romantic Relationships (con't)

Love and affection

People with an autism spectrum disorder have difficulties understanding and expressing emotions, and an emotion that is particularly confusing to people with ASD is love. Typical children and adults enjoy frequent expressions of affection, know how to express affection to communicate reciprocal feelings of adoration and love, and know when to repair someone's feelings by expressions of affection. A child or an adult with ASD may not seek the same depth and frequency of expressions of love through acts of affection, or realize that an expression of affection is expected in a particular situation and would be enjoyed by the other person. He or she can be bewildered as to why other people appear to be "obsessed" with expressing love for each other. Someone with an ASD also may be conspicuously immature in his or her expressions of affection, and sometimes may perceive these expressions of affection as aversive experiences. For example, a hug may be perceived as an uncomfortable squeeze that restricts movement. The person can become confused or overwhelmed when expected to demonstrate and enjoy relatively modest expressions of affection. I have recently developed a cognitive behaviour therapy program for children and adolescents with Asperger's syndrome to explain the emotion of love and the ways to express that you like or love someone. The program soon will be evaluated in a research study conducted by the University of Queensland in Australia.

Special interests

One of the diagnostic characteristics of Asperger's syndrome is the development of a special interest that is unusual in terms of its focus or intensity. In adolescence and early adult years, the focus can be a person, which could be interpreted as a typical teenage "crush," but the intensity and some of the associated behaviours could lead to accusations of stalking or harassment. The predisposition to develop a special interest can have other effects on the development of relationship knowledge. Special interests have many functions for people with Asperger's syndrome, and one of these is to acquire knowledge to understand bewildering aspects of their experiences. Teenagers with Asperger's syndrome often are eager to understand and experience the social and relationship world of their peers, including romantic relationships and sexual experiences, but there can be problems regarding the source of information on relationships and sexuality. An adolescent with Asperger's syndrome usually has few, if any, friends with whom he or she can discuss and be informed about relationship topics such as romantic or sexual feelings and the codes of sexual behaviour.



Romantic Relationships (con't)

Unfortunately, the source of information on relationships for adolescents with Asperger's syndrome can be pornography for males and television "soap operas" for females. The person with Asperger's syndrome can assume that the actions in pornographic material provide a script of what to say or do on a date, but this misunderstanding could lead to being charged with a sexual offence. The charges tend to be for sexually inappropriate behaviour rather than sexually abusive or sexually violent behaviour. Adolescent women with Asperger's syndrome may use television programs and films as source material to learn about relationships, and fail to recognize that the actions and themes are not an accurate portrayal of how to achieve and maintain a relationship in real life.



Clinical experience indicates that previously socially excluded and unpopular teenage girls with Asperger's syndrome have, after the physical changes that occur at puberty, become flattered by the attention of teenage boys. Due to her naivety, the adolescent girl may not recognize that the interest is sexual and not a way for the boy to simply enjoy her personality, company, or conversation. She may have no female friends to accompany her on a first date, or provide advice on dating and the social and sexual codes; consequently her parents may become concerned about her vulnerability to promiscuity, adverse sexual experiences, and date rape.

The relationship continuum

There is a relationship continuum from being an acquaintance to being a partner. People with Asperger's syndrome can have difficulties at each stage on the continuum. To progress along the relationship continuum from a friend to a boyfriend or girlfriend, an adolescent or a young adult with Asperger's syndrome needs to understand the art of flirting and romance in order to accurately read the signals of mutual attraction and understand the dating game. These abilities are not intuitive for people with Asperger's syndrome. I am often asked by teenagers and young adults with Asperger's syndrome, 'How do I get a girlfriend/boyfriend?' This is not an easy question to answer. One of the difficulties for people with Asperger's syndrome can be to correctly interpret someone's intentions. An act of kindness or compassion can be perceived as a signal of a deeper level of interest or more personal than was intended. I have had to explain to men with Asperger's syndrome that the smile and personal attention of a female member of the cabin crew on an aircraft are signs of courtesy, not indications of a desire for a relationship.

Despite the problems in relationship skills experienced by many people with Asperger's syndrome, some adults can progress along the relationship continuum and are able to experience romantic and subsequently intimate personal relationships, even becoming a lifelong partner. To achieve such a relationship, both partners initially would have noticed attractive qualities in the other person. What are the characteristics that someone would find attractive in a young adult with Asperger's syndrome?

Romantic Relationships (con't)

Attractive qualities of a person with Asperger's syndrome

Men with Asperger's syndrome have many qualities that can be attractive to a prospective partner. When conducting relationship counseling with one or both partners having the characteristics or diagnosis of Asperger's syndrome, I often ask the typical partner, 'What were the qualities that made your partner attractive when you first met him/her?' Many women describe their first impressions of their partner with Asperger's syndrome as being someone who is kind, attentive, and socially or emotionally immature. The term "silent, handsome stranger" can be used to describe someone who seems relatively quiet and good looking. Physical characteristics and attentiveness can be important, especially if the woman has doubts regarding her own self-esteem and physical attractiveness. The man's lack of social and conversational skills can lead to his being perceived as the "silent stranger" whose social naivety and immaturity can be transformed by a partner who is a natural expert on empathy, socializing, and conversation.

I have noted that many of the partners of men, and sometimes of women, with Asperger's syndrome have been at the other end of the social and empathy continuum. They are intuitive experts in Theory of Mind, namely understanding and empathizing with someone else's perspective. They are naturally gifted in the ability to understand the world as experienced by the person with Asperger's syndrome, much more so than a person of average Theory of Mind abilities. They are understanding and sympathetic, and they provide guidance for their partner in social situations. Indeed, these are the characteristics that an adult with Asperger's syndrome recognizes that he or she needs and would find desirable in a partner. He or she will actively seek a partner with intuitive social knowledge who can be a social interpreter, is naturally nurturing, is socially able, and is maternal. However, while a socially insightful and empathic partner may understand the perspective of the person with Asperger's syndrome, the person with Asperger's syndrome has considerable difficulty understanding the perspective of his or her typical partner.



Romantic Relationships (con't)

The attractiveness of a person with Asperger's syndrome in a prospective relationship can be enhanced by intellectual ability, career prospects, and degree of attentiveness during courtship. Sometimes, however, this attentiveness could be perceived by others as almost obsessive, and the words and actions appear to have been learned from watching Hollywood romantic movies. The person can be admired for speaking his mind, even if the comments may be perceived as offensive by others, due to his strong sense of social justice and clear moral beliefs. The fact that he may not be "macho" or wish to spend time with other men at



sporting events or drinking alcohol also can be appealing for some women. The person with Asperger's syndrome can be a late developer in terms of relationship experiences, which also can be an attractive feature. There may be no previous relationship "baggage." I also have had many women describe to me how their partner with Asperger's syndrome resembled their father. Having a parent with the signs of Asperger's syndrome may have contributed to their choice of partner as an adult.

What are the characteristics that men find attractive in a woman with Asperger's syndrome? The attributes can be similar to the characteristics women find appealing in a man with Asperger's syndrome, especially the degree of attentiveness. The woman's social immaturity may be appealing to those men who have natural paternal and compassionate qualities. There can be an appreciation of

her physical attractiveness and admiration for her talents and abilities.

Unfortunately, women (and sometimes men) with Asperger's syndrome are not very good at making character judgments or identifying relationship predators. Women with Asperger's syndrome often have low self-esteem, which can affect their choice of partner in a relationship. They can be the victim of various forms of abuse. As one woman with Asperger's explained to me, 'I set my expectations very low and as a result gravitated toward abusive people.' (Romantic relationships (con't on pg. 12)

Our thanks to Dr. Attwood for giving us permission to reprint this article.

The original article contains citations and reference that have not been included. The original is available at www.iancommunity.org/cs/article/relationships

Romantic Relationships (con't)

Strategies to improve relationship skills

People with Asperger's syndrome will require guidance in relationship skills at each point on the relationship continuum and probably throughout their lives. Children will need guidance from a speech pathologist in the art of conversation, and strategies to improve friendship skills throughout the school years from a teacher or psychologist. The development of friendship skills must be a priority for educational services that support a child with Asperger's syndrome, as greater maturity and ability in friendship skills will improve self-esteem, reduce incidents of being teased or bullied, lay the foundations for adult relationship skills, and encourage teamwork abilities for successful employment. Adolescents will need accurate information on attraction, the dating game, and sexuality. While this information is easily available for typical teenagers, often from friends, parents, classroom programs, and gradual experience, it may not be as easily available for a teenager with Asperger's syndrome. The lack of peer guidance, group discussion, and practice will inhibit the development of relationship skills. Fortunately, we now have programs on relationships and sexuality specifically designed for adolescents and young adults with Asperger's syndrome, and advice from fellow teenagers with Asperger's syndrome. Some clinicians and therapists, particularly in Australia, are developing resource material and expertise in teaching relationship skills to adolescents and young adults with Asperger's syndrome. The education ranges from improving knowledge on dating etiquette and dress sense to learning ways to identify and avoid sexual predators. A valuable strategy is to have a socially perceptive friend or relative meet a prospective date to determine whether the person appears to be of good character, before developing a relationship.

Young adults will need encouragement and opportunities to make acquaintances and friends. This can include joining a hobby or interest group that is associated with a special interest, such as attending a Star Trek or Dr Who convention, or it may involve an application of a talent, such as having a natural ability with animals and joining an animal protection group. There can be opportunities to make friends at community activities such as a local choir or adult education classes. Local Asperger's syndrome support groups for parents have established support groups for young adults with Asperger's syndrome. This can provide an opportunity for a professional to address the group and provide discussion and guidance in relationships. Such groups also can be an opportunity for relationships to develop between group members. The relationship that developed between Jerry and Mary, two adults with Asperger's syndrome who met at a support group in Los Angeles, has been the subject of a film and book. Some adults with Asperger's syndrome have used the Internet and dating agencies to meet people, but this method of introduction also can be used by relationship predators, and an adult with Asperger's syndrome needs to be aware of the many risks associated with using this strategy.



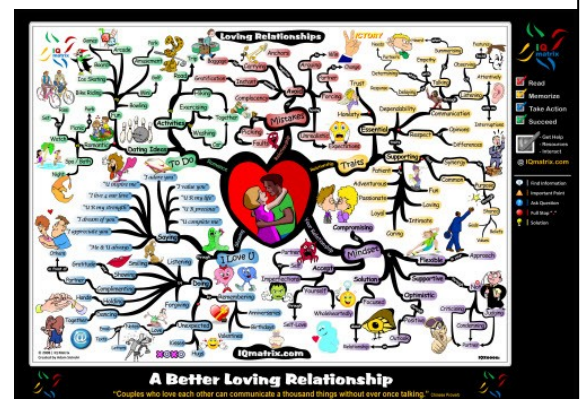
maintaining a relationship

Romantic Relationships (con't)

I have noted that adults who had clear signs of autism in early childhood (that is, significant language delay, learning difficulties, and avoidance of social situations), and who in later childhood progressed to a description of high-functioning autism, are often less motivated to seek a long-term relationship. They are more likely to be content with solitude and celibacy and having acquaintances rather than friends. A sense of self-identity and personal value is achieved by having a successful career and being independent. Temple Grandin is a well-known example. Some adults with Asperger's syndrome also have decided not to seek an intimate relationship with someone for legitimate reasons when one considers the characteristics of Asperger's syndrome. Jennifer explained her rationale: 'Can I deal with sharing a house with someone who might possibly touch my model airplane collection?' and 'Model airplanes do not decide that they want to be built by someone else who is more attractive or less needy.' Her life does include moments of intense personal satisfaction. She states, 'I can assure you that being in love and having special interests are much the same feeling.' Not having a relationship can be a positive choice for some adults with Asperger's syndrome or high-functioning autism who enjoy pursuing and are fulfilled by their special interests, such as wildlife photography or a career in information technology. They are content not to be swept away by the cultural belief that marriage or a long-term relationship is the only way to achieve happiness.

Areas for future research

We know that adults with Asperger's syndrome have considerable difficulty progressing along the relationship continuum, but we lack research that provides quantitative and qualitative data on their relationship abilities, circumstances, and experiences. There is research on the friendship abilities of children with Asperger's syndrome that has recently been reviewed, but very little research on boyfriend/girlfriend relationships and sexuality. Dr. Isabelle Hénault, from Montreal, and I have been conducting research on the sexual profile of adults with Asperger's syndrome, and preliminary results indicate a different profile than typical adults in terms of poorer body image and fewer sexual experiences, although sexual interest usually develops at the same time as in adolescent peers. There also can be a more liberal attitude to sexual diversity such as homosexuality and bisexuality, and a rich fantasy life and sexual imagery. There may be less concern regarding age and cultural differences in a relationship. However, there needs to be more research, and the Interactive Autism Network database may be extremely useful in providing information on romantic relationships for adolescents and young adults with Asperger's syndrome and high-functioning autism.



Dating Resources

1. Uhlenkamp, J. (2009). *The Guide to Dating for Teenagers with Asperger Syndrome*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing.

This book focuses on providing teenagers with Asperger Syndrome useful tools to help with navigating the complex world of male-female relationships. By acknowledging the difficulties that these teenagers already face this book uses a Dear Abby approach to respond appropriately to each scenario. These scenarios include getting acquainted to unfortunate break ups, and everything in between. This acts as an excellent resource for parents who can learn about the different issues that their child is dealing with and what they can begin to expect. As noted by other supporters of this text it provides answers to the many questions that teenagers may find difficult to ask, in this way it acts to help teenagers not feel uncomfortable with learning about relationships in a way that few other works are able to do.



2. Edmonds, G. & Worton, D. (2007). *The Asperger Love Guide: a Practical Guide for Adults with Asperger's Syndrome to Seeking, Establishing and Maintaining Successful Relationships*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.



Recognizing the needs of many people dealing with Asperger's Syndrome Dean Worton sought to provide information on establishing and maintaining relationships. Because so many people strive for a long-term relationship, but find the anxiety associated with it nearly unmanageable this book was written. By combining the authors' experiences with their knowledge of AS they were able to make this book which provides invaluable information on initiating and maintaining relationships, one of the most complex subjects in society. Through easy to understand language and excellent advice *The Asperger Love Guide* is a must read for anyone who knows someone on the Autism Spectrum.

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Center for Autism & Related Disabilities

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