

Top 25 Tips and Strategies for Teachers

- 1 **Get to know your student** with Autism—develop a positive and trusting relationship.
- 2 **Gain from the family's expertise**—they know your student's strengths and potential difficulties.
- 3 Ensure an **I.E.P is prepared** as soon as possible.
- 4 **Integrate therapy goals** into the I.E.P. (Most students with Autism have a therapy provider).
- 5 Provide a **daily schedule** with images and/or words according to the student's ability.
- 6 Develop **structure in the classroom** along with clear and consistent daily routines.
- 7 Provide **visual warning of impending change** to routine, or of activity.
- 8 Provide **individualised visual supports** to support the student's communication, independence and sensory needs.

Where possible, **minimise the impact of environmental factors** that may prove difficult for the student e.g., sound, odours, flashing lights, busy crowded places.
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- 10 Implement a **(visual) system of breaks** to enable the student to participate more effectively throughout the day.
- 11 Build their confidence with **work that allows for greatest success**.
- 12 **Gradually increase** the complexity of tasks.
- 13 **Help them to learn what to do** rather than focus on what not to do.
- 14 **Adapt the curriculum**, where appropriate, according to the student's ability.
- 15 Provide motivation by **incorporating the student's special interest** into tasks and projects, where appropriate.
- 16 Keep in mind the **perfectionism often inherent in Autism**. Stress is likely to escalate if they feel unable to complete a task successfully.
- 17 **Explore ways for them to understand** what's required and convey their knowledge e.g. by responding to a list of questions rather than having to write an essay.
- 18 Implement a **reward/reinforcement system** to provide motivation.
- 19 Provide **information and support** to peers without disabilities to build their confidence to engage in a positive way with students with Autism.
- 20 Liaise with other staff to **facilitate generalisation** by providing opportunities to practise skills across different settings throughout the school day.
- 21 **Maintain contact with families**, ensuring that skills acquired at home or in school can be transferred to the other environment, without loss of skill.
- 22 Take into account that, with Autism, **organisational skills may not be strong**. Provide support where organisation and forward planning is entailed.
- 23 Provide **structure and/or quiet time** during recess and lunch. These are often the most difficult times for students with Autism.
- 24 Develop a **routine for managing homework** e.g. entries in student's diary—what's to be done, books to go home.
- 25 Visit the Autism Association website **www.autism.org.au** for further resources, professional training information and more.