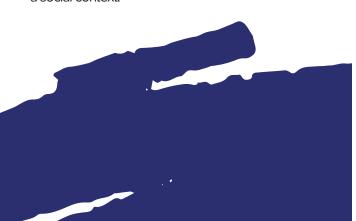


## SYMPTOMS/BEHAVIOURS

- Adult-like pattern of intellectual functioning and interests combined with social and communication deficits
- Isolation from peers
- Rote memory is generally good and the student may excel in math and science
- Clumsy or awkward gait
- Difficulty with physical activity and sports
- Repetitive pattern of behaviour
- Preoccupations with one or two subjects or activities
- Under/over sensitivity to stimuli such as noise, light or unexpected touch
- · Victims of teasing and bullying

## EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Many youth with Asperger's Syndrome have difficulty forming age appropriate relationships, displaying empathy, and understanding social interaction such as non-verbal gestures. When confronted with change to routine, they may show visible anxiety, withdraw into silence or burst into a fit of rage. They may be very articulate but can be very literal and have problems using language in a social context.



## SERIES ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Asperger's Syndrome

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Conduct Disorder

Depression

Eating Disorders

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Reactive Attachment Disorder

Tourette Syndrome

#### TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE CONTACT:

Rainbow District School Board Gord Ewin Centre for Education 275 Loach's Road Sudbury, ON P3E 2P8 Phone: 705.523.3308 rainbowschools.ca

This series on mental health and well-being is a Rainbow District School Board Parent Involvement Committee project funded by the Ministry of Education Parent Engagement Office.







# ABOUT ASPERGER'S SYNDROME

Asperger's Syndrome, formerly referred to as High-Functioning Autism, is now included under the term Autism Spectrum Disorder. A neurobiological disorder, Asperger's affects cognition, language, socialization, sensory issues, visual/audio processing and behaviour.

Students with Asperger's Syndrome are often known to be verbal and have an average to above-average intelligence quotient (IQ). Often, they become preoccupied with a single subject, activity or with parts of an object rather than its functional use, like spinning the wheels of a toy car rather than driving it around. They may also display excessive rigidity or resistance to change, non-functional routines or rituals, and repetitive motor movements.

The most common characteristic of Asperger's Syndrome is impairment of social interactions, which can include failure to use or comprehend non-verbal gestures in others, failure to develop age appropriate peer relationships and/or a lack of empathy.

## Instructional Accommodations and Classroom Strategies

- Create structured, predictable and calming environments.
- Consult an occupational therapist for sensory needs suggestions.
- Foster a climate of tolerance and understanding.
   Consider assigning a peer helper to assist in joining group activities and socializing.
   Teasing should not be tolerated.
- Celebrate the student's verbal and intellectual skills.
- Use direct teaching to increase socially acceptable behaviour. Demonstrate the impact of words and actions on others. Increase awareness of non-verbal cues.
- Develop a standard of presenting change in advance.
- Be cognizant of the usual triggers and warning signs of a rage attack or meltdown.
   Help him/her with self-management.
- Remain calm and non-judgmental at all times.
- Try to help support parents/guardians, as some may feel professionals blame them for poor parenting skills.

