

December 2023

Anxiety

This month we're sharing examples of reasonable adjustments that could be used as part of your universal approach to reduce anxiety in your school setting:

Social Interaction and Communication:

- Consider pairings/ groupings when completing a task
- Create a quieter/ safer space to use during break/ lunch.
- Provide workstations in a quieter area of the classroom/ school.
- Use visuals - pictures stay, words disappear.
- Use simple language and allow time for information to be processed.
- Accept that learning behaviours, e.g. eye contact, may be different.
- Avoid saying 'there's nothing to worry about'.

Information Processing and Flexibility:

- Prepare for all transitions and changes throughout the school day.
- Refer to a visual timetable throughout the day.
- Break tasks down into manageable chunks.
- Be clear about expectations, display these visually for reference during tasks.
- Clearly share what they need to do, how long they'll be doing it for, what they'll be doing next and how they can seek support and obtain resources.

Sensory Environment:

- Consider how the auditory and visual environment can be calmed.
- Provide opportunities for breaks from sensory input.
- Enable access to fidget toys, sensory calmers and/or movement breaks.

Emotional Regulation:

- Develop the sense of interoception so that pupils understand their physiological responses to emotional events.
- Teach strategies to relax, energise, discuss and problem solve.

Most importantly: Be kind, be curious, be connected

Forthcoming CPD - Invites will follow in the new year

- Improving Communication Webinar - 3.45-4.45pm Thursday 25/01/24.
- Autism Advocate Network - Spring Term: 3.45-4.45pm Monday 05/02/24 and repeated 2-3pm Wednesday 07/02/24
- Cohort 2 Good Autism Practice and Cohort 4 Making Sense of Autism training February and March - venues/ dates being finalised.

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Autism Advocate Delivery Review December 2023

Involvement

- 285 Autism Advocates in Derbyshire schools and Nurseries
- 20 Autism Advocates in DCC Schools and Learning teams
- 25+ DCC AET trainers in ISS
- 4490 delegates trained.

Improvements Noticed by School Staff

- Staff feel empowered in their understanding of autism and the strategies they can use to support autistic learners.
- Better understanding of the impact of school environments on sensory needs.
- Growing awareness of the three autistic differences and methods of making reasonable adjustments to reduce the impact and improve social and academic inclusion.

Resources

- Termly networks including networking and CPD
- Autism Outreach Bulletin with CPD and Neurodiversity updates
- Termly CPD webinars

Autism Advocate Delivery Evaluation Feedback

92% said 'my understanding of autistic young people has improved since completing the training'.

94% said 'what I have learned will impact on my practice'.

94% said 'they would recommend this training to a friend or colleague'.

95% overall training rating

Interested in becoming an Autism Advocate?

Would you like to improve awareness, acceptance and understanding of Autism in your setting?

Autism Advocates Cohort 4 training will take place in Spring 2024.

Please contact:

Autism.Outreach@derbyshire.gov.uk
for more information.

Are you an Autism Advocate who needs information?

Look on our Local Offer page for:

- Booking forms for Autism Advocates to deliver training.
- Network meeting dates and times.
- Flyers for schools wanting more Information.
- When your Autism Advocate will next receive training from DCC.