

SECONDARY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

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A satellite view of Earth showing a large, swirling storm system over the Atlantic Ocean. The storm is characterized by a dense, white cloud core with a distinct eye, surrounded by multiple layers of spiral clouds. The surrounding ocean is a deep blue, and the landmasses of North and South America are visible in the lower-left corner. The overall scene is set against the blackness of space.

The Perfect Storm

The developmental period of adolescence, autism as a spectrum disorder, and the social and organizational ecology of high schools merge to create a “perfect storm” of complexity, which creates challenges (Odom et al. 2014)

Primary School

* CONSIDER – the child's perspective.....

- * My educational needs profile
- * My social emotional skills
- * My (challenging) behaviours
- * My learning skills
- * My learning styles



Primary to Secondary



Where am I going?

What will I do there?

HEAD

Will I be able to learn?

- * Continuity of Learning
- * Internal Locus of Control
- * Ready for new challenges
- * Learning preferences
- * Learning strategies

HEART

Will I belong?

- * Being me and being with others
- * Communicating who I am and what I like
- * Making friends and keeping friends
- * Being a good friend
- * Dealing effectively with others who are not friendly

GUT

Will I be safe? Will I fit in? Will I know what to do?

- * Careful progressive introduction
- * Puberty and need to fit in – hide problems or become disaffected.
- * I have a right to extra help
- * What if.....timetable, lockers, getting around, money, uniform.
- * Safety – strategies and new strategies.

Preparation

- * School Choice – many factors.....
- * Uniform – sensory....
- * Transport
- * Communications
- * Rules



Transfer

- * Information
- * Books
- * Organisation
- * Orientation
- * Locker – bungee key ring



Induction

- * Lunch
- * Timetable
- * Homework
- * After school activities
- * Initial challenges
- * Timetable
- * PE – tri-laces



Consolidation

- * Social and emotional
 - * Catch up don't give up
 - * Communication
 - * Student problem solves
-
- * Aim to feel 'Settled'



Know your rights!!

- * The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) act supports the inclusion of pupils with SEN in mainstream school and recommends specific assistance during the transition to secondary school.
- * National Council for Special Education – NCSE
- * [Paper from Northern Ireland](#)

HOMework

- * Diary
- * Movement breaks
- * Time table
- * Study area
- * Goal – Plan – Do – Check

EQUIPMENT

- Blotack
- Document wallets – colour code
- Raised rulers
- Transparent pencil case x2
- Pens – lots of the same one

Issue of school work at home?

Study at home?

Study of Parental Perspectives

The Transition Process

- factors
- supports and strategies
- emotions

Communication for Success

- importance of communication
- parents as advocates

Social Participation

- desires and challenges
- social connections

The Student as an Individual with AS

- challenges of ASD
- the individual child

Factors for Attainment


- ethos and size of school
- factors within the child
- school personnel
- Inclusion

Study of students views (Australia)


- * Relationship with peers
 - * Build relationships and peer support
- * Anxiety and Stress in school
 - * Environmental considerations and curriculum supports
- * Working with teachers and other staff
 - * Teacher characteristics and knowledge
- * Negotiating difference
 - * Provision and nature of support
 - * Not being treated 'differently'
 - * Access to support and accommodations

The big questions?

- * What do you consider the purpose of secondary school education for your child?
- * Are their needs being met?
- * Are they reaching their potential?
- * What expectations do you have beyond secondary school?
- * Is the physical and sensory environment accessible to them?
- * Is the social environment accessible to them?
- * Is the curriculum accessible to them?
- * Do the teachers / staff understand ASD?
- * Do their peers understand ASD?



Children with ASD have needs which are common to all children, unique to the child themselves and also needs that are related to the ASD group within which they belong (Jordan 2005)



Mainstream provision must have the level of support and expertise to be truly inclusive as opposed to being nothing more than physical integration (Byrne 2012).

Five A's of inclusive education

1. Availability,
2. Accessibility,
3. Acceptability,
4. Adaptability
5. Accountability

My Study

- * <http://www.teenswithasdinireland.com>
- * National Study of Secondary School Experience for students with ASD
- * Where are they all???
- * Spread the word – numbers make a difference
- * FACEBOOK - teenswithasdinireland

“when the person with AS and the environment match, the problems go away and we even thrive. When they don’t match, we seem disabled” (Baron-Cohen 2003)

