

Hidden Disabilities

# Asperger's



#PauseChangeShare

## What is Asperger's?

Asperger's Syndrome (AS) is an Autism spectrum condition. Autism is a life-long neurological developmental condition that impacts individuals in several key areas: social communication, social interaction, social imagination, and sensory and information processing.

AS is not a mental health condition, but it is not uncommon for people with Autism to experience emotional health difficulties, especially anxiety. Around one in 100 people have Autism or Asperger's Syndrome. People with AS often have average or above average IQ. Their difficulties with social skills may appear to be 'at odds' with their general intelligence levels. They may have 'special interests', whereby the individual has an intense interest in and may be extremely knowledgeable about one or more subjects.

## Some common challenges?

- Difficulty reading and interpreting non-verbal communication
- Difficulty with social interactions and group situations; individuals become isolated and unable to access activities and events
- Sensory sensitivities – a simple visit to a shop can be overwhelming
- Eye contact can be uncomfortable, even painful
- Metaphor and sarcasm is often not appreciated or understood
- Changes in routine can be challenging

## Resources

Autism Guernsey [www.autismguernsey.org.gg](http://www.autismguernsey.org.gg)

NAS Guernsey [www.nasguernsey.com](http://www.nasguernsey.com)

Research Autism [www.researchautism.net](http://www.researchautism.net)

NAS [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

Our **Hidden Disabilities campaign** aims to to promote positive attitudes towards people living with a disability which isn't immediately obvious. To find out more visit:



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We all Matter, Eh! in partnership with the Guernsey Disability Alliance (GDA).

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## Common coping mechanisms

- Ear defenders help soften sounds and reduce stress
- Specialist tinted spectacles help ease the discomfort caused by lighting
- Use of fidget toys eases stress and anxiety
- Weighted blankets or cushions - deep pressure is calming
- Movements such as 'hand flapping' or rocking ease stress
- Choosing quieter times to do shopping or visit public places
- Taking 'time out' when experiencing sensory overload

## Top Tips

Top tips for the community for someone interacting with Aspergers.

- A person with AS may not pick up on non-verbal cues, so you may need to help them to understand the full picture.
- Give clear instructions. Allow the person time to process information and to respond. Written instructions can be helpful.
- Try to avoid making promises you may not be able to keep.
- Do not force eye contact as this may impact on their ability to listen and concentrate.
- Limit sensory and environmental challenges by adjusting lighting or the volume of music, or perhaps taking the person to a quieter area.
- Some people on the spectrum carry Autism/Asperger's Awareness Cards

### Watch the video

Sandra explains more about living with Aspergers including the impacts on work, social life and going to the GP

[www.matter.gg/hidden-disabilities/](http://www.matter.gg/hidden-disabilities/)



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