

Understanding Your Aspie Child



The LAFAYA Way

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Chapter 1

Twelve Common Challenges and Difficult Traits in Aspie Children

“It is impossible to effectively deal with a matter, without first understanding it.”

-Lafaya Mitchell

Children with Aspie traits have areas of challenge, which tend to impede their ability to function in socially acceptable ways. If you are looking to create manageable interactions with your child, it is important to recognize and understand the symptomatology associated with the struggles of Aspie children.

Some of the symptoms or traits of the Aspie child that can cause the most disruption are outlined on the following pages:

1. Extreme Impulsivity

The Aspie child goes from 0 to 60 in their reactions. In part, this extreme reactivity stems from the Common Challenges and Difficult Traits in Aspie Children fact that “the novelty does not often wear off,” when they are upset or traumatized by an event. For example, if there is a current event happening that is similar to a past upsetting event, the Aspie child reacts as if he/she is reliving the most explosive part of the past event. The 0 to 60 in their reaction can also come from a sense of hopelessness in things not getting better and feeling they lack control over themselves or their given circumstances.

2. Tunnel Vision

Aspies often only see or focus on their area(s) of interest. Often, there is one specific area of hyper-focus, in which they constantly obsess.

3. Black and White Thinking

They take what is said by others literally and often have a difficult time understanding jokes or ironic statements.

4. Struggles with Abstract Thought Processes

The Aspie has trouble with looking at things removed from the fact of the here-and-now. In other words, telling them if they do not finish their vegetables, they will not grow up to be big and strong will not convince them to eat their veggies. To the Aspie, what they are doing now has nothing to do with a future they can't see.

5. Sensitivities to Sensory Input

Sensitivity to sensory input (taste, touch, smell, sight, and/or hearing) may seem odd or excessive (i.e., a child reacting to the sound of a motorcycle with surprising panic-like responses, including jumping, tensing, screaming).

6. Food Sensitivities

Food Sensitivities are quite common among Aspies who are often referred to as finicky eaters. (This critically relevant area will be discussed in detail in [Chapter 7](#)).

7. EF Challenges

Executive function (EF) is a set of processes, related to managing oneself and one's resources in order to achieve a goal. Executive function struggles contribute to challenges with starting and/or completing projects, organizing tasks, etc.

8. Attention & Focus Difficulties

Attention and/or focus are especially problematic when you try to have Aspies focus on a subject other than their area of hyper-focus.

They may also struggle when they don't see the logic in being asked to do something, especially if they feel that a task is pointless or mundane. It is

senseless for Aspies to do things like repetitive math calculations or cleaning their bedroom that will become messy again.

9. Difficulties Showing or Recognizing Social Cues

Many Aspies do not show much emotion, unless they are angry. It is difficult to know if an Aspie child is enjoying something due to lack of facial expressions. Conversely, Aspies do not read cues from others very well, which often causes a great deal of awkwardness during social interactions.

10. Trouble with Transitions

Trouble with transitions includes adverse reactions when transitioning from one place to another, from one activity to another, and general changes in structure and routine.

11. Lack of Physical Coordination

This can be frustrating to parents who feel their child should have outgrown being so clumsy by a certain age.

12. There Are Quite A Few Symptoms That I Did Not List Here

I highly recommend that you search on YouTube for a segment entitled, "My Autism," by George. He gives a fantastic glimpse into the world of a child on the autism spectrum.

When I viewed the video, it made me cry because it contains the material I have been explaining to parents with children on the Spectrum or with Spectrum traits.

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