Children’s Literature Kit: Socially Including Students with Autism
By Lynne Dudas

How to Be Friends with Someone with Autism

Recommended Children’s Books

Recommended Reading for Educators

Quick Facts About Autism—For Kids

Children’s Literature Lesson Plans

Web Resources for Educators
**Quick Facts About Autism - For Kids**

- Autism is not contagious. If you play with someone who has autism you will not get autism.
- People with autism are not bad people, but sometimes they may act or think differently because they see the world in a different way.
- People with autism may scream, run away, or hurt someone if they are confused, mad, or feeling bad. They are not trying to be bad or mean.
- Many people with autism have a hard time talking to others, and they may use pictures to help them communicate.
- People with autism may have a difficult time playing games with others because they do not understand the rules of the game.
- Many people with autism like things to stay the same. They may get upset if things change.
- A person with autism may have a hard time understanding how other people feel.
- Many people with autism have very strong senses and may do things like cover their ears if it is too loud.
- People with autism can be very smart, and they may be really good at something like puzzles, video games, playing an instrument, or reading.
- Some people with autism have a fascination (one thing they like a lot). A person with autism may be an expert in that thing they like a lot.
- People with autism want to have friends.

**How to Be Friends with Someone with Autism**

- Accept your friend's differences.
- Simplify your language by using short, simple phrases.
- Help your friend to cope with sensory overload.
- Get to know your friend's fascinations, skills, and talents.
- Help prepare your friend for what is happening next by telling him or her what is next on the schedule.
- Use pictures or written words to communicate if that helps your friend.
- Model proper social behavior by setting a good example.
- Pay close attention to the things your friend likes and dislikes.
- If you notice something is bothering your friend, then ask an adult to help you make things better.
- Remember that even if your friend is not talking to you, it doesn't mean that he or she does not like you being around.
- Keep in mind that your friend may not understand how you are feeling.
- Ask before you give your friend a hug. He or she may not like being touched.
- Invite your friend to play with you. Teach him or her how to play the game.
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Web Resources for Educators

Autism Speaks: www.autismspeaks.org

Autism Society of America: www.autism-society.org

Raising a Sensory Smart Child: http://sensorysmarts.com/

Organization for Autism Research: http://www.researchautism.org/

Paula Kluth, Toward Inclusive Classrooms and Communities: http://www.paulakluth.com/
Dear Teachers,

Thank you for recognizing the importance of socially including students with autism. Before beginning the lessons in this kit, I encourage you to talk to the parents of the students with autism in your class. I hope the "Children's Literature Kit: Socially Including Students with Autism" helps you and your students to learn a lot about autism. Even more importantly, I hope this kit contributes to the development of friendships between your students with autism and their classroom peers.  Happy Teaching!

Lynne Dudas