



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations



positive  
partnerships

Supporting school aged students on the  
Autism Spectrum

**aaetC**  
Australian Autism  
Education &  
Training Consortium

Autism Spectrum Australia  
University of Canberra  
Autism SA  
Department of Education and Training, Western Australia  
[www.autismtraining.com.au](http://www.autismtraining.com.au)

# Parents and Schools In Positive Partnerships

Victorian Autism Conference  
2010

# *Positive Partnerships*

*supporting school aged students on the autism spectrum*

Developed and created by...

**aaetC**  
Australian Autism  
Education &  
Training Consortium

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Department of Education and Training, Western Australia

[www.autismtraining.com.au](http://www.autismtraining.com.au)

A DEEWR funded component of the Australian Government's *Helping Children with Autism* package



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and Workplace Relations**

# Positive Partnerships...

1. *Professional Development* workshops for 2,200 teachers and other school staff by November 2011
2. Workshops and information sessions for up to 5,800 *parents/carers* of school aged children with autism by November 2011

**Strengthen partnerships between schools  
and parents/carers to improve the  
educational outcomes of school aged  
students with autism**

# Parent/Carer Workshops

- Day 1 Workshop
  - Understanding how autism impacts on your child's learning at school
  - Creating positive partnerships
  - Supporting your child's learning
- Day 2 Information Sessions
  - Positive Behaviour Support, Making Friends, Completing Work, Managing Transitions, Siblings, Communication, Sexuality, Bullying

# The Diversity of Autism

**Communication**

non-verbal

verbal

**Social Interaction**

aloof

passive

active/odd

**Repetitive behaviour  
Restricted interest**

mild

marked

**Sensory  
Processing**

hyposensitive

hypersensitive

**Learning Style**

strong visual spatial skills; visual learner; kinaesthetic;  
gestalt learner; poor executive functioning; detail-focused

**Intellectual Ability  
(IQ)**

severe

moderate

mild

average

gifted

# Introducing the Planning Matrix

	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Social Interaction</b>	<b>Rigid &amp; Repetitive Behaviours</b>	<b>Sensory Processing</b>	<b>Learning Style</b>
<b>Characteristics</b>					
<b>Impacts</b>					
<b>Strategies</b>					

# The Planning Matrix - Characteristics

	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Social Interaction</b>	<b>Rigid &amp; Repetitive Behaviours</b>	<b>Sensory Processing</b>	<b>Learning Style</b>
<b>Characteristics</b>					
<b>Impacts</b>					
<b>Strategies</b>					

# Characteristics - Communication

	Communication
Characteristics	<p><i>verbal</i></p> <p><i>non verbal</i></p> <p><i>Speaks in 'adult-like' sentences</i></p> <p><i>Limited understanding of the language of others</i></p> <p><i>Use of echolalia</i></p> <p><i>Literal interpretation of language</i></p>

# Characteristics – Social Interaction

	Social Interaction
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Limited understanding of social rules</i></li><li><i>Likes to be alone</i></li><li><i>Doesn't know how to join in with peers</i></li><li><i>Lack of awareness of the needs of others</i></li><li><i>Lack of social communication</i></li></ul>

# Characteristics – Rigid & Repetitive Behaviours

	Rigid & Repetitive Behaviours
Characteristics	<p><i>Needs routine</i></p> <p><i>Strong interests in certain subjects</i></p> <p><i>Unusual body movements</i></p> <p><i>Dislikes change</i></p> <p><i>Always obeys rules, needs others to obey rules too</i></p>

# Characteristics – Sensory Processing

	Sensory Processing
Characteristics	<p><i>Needs lots of sensory input to register it (taste, touch, hearing, vision, smell, vestibular &amp; proprioception)</i></p> <p><i>Overreacts to sensory information that others wouldn't notice (taste, touch, hearing, vision, smell, vestibular and proprioception)</i></p> <p><i>High pain threshold</i></p> <p><i>Low pain threshold</i></p>

# Characteristics – Learning Style

	Learning Style
<b>Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Difficulties with planning</i></li><li>• <i>Difficulty understanding what is important</i></li><li>• <i>Visual learners</i></li><li>• <i>Good memory</i></li><li>• <i>Detail focused</i></li><li>• <i>Strong memory for facts</i></li><li>• <i>Visual spatial strengths</i></li><li>• <i>Difficulty seeing things from others point of view</i></li></ul>

# The Planning Matrix - Impacts

	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Social Interaction</b>	<b>Rigid &amp; Repetitive Behaviours</b>	<b>Sensory Processing</b>	<b>Learning Style</b>
<b>Characteristics</b>					
<b>Impacts</b>					
<b>Strategies</b>					

# The Planning Matrix - Impacts

- The IMPACT of a child/student's characteristic of ASD will depend on the context
- The IMPACT of a characteristic of ASD may change as the child/student gets older
- A similar characteristic of ASD may have different IMPACTS for different individuals

# The Planning Matrix - Impacts

	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Social Interaction</b>	<b>Rigid &amp; Repetitive Behaviours</b>	<b>Sensory Processing</b>	<b>Learning Style</b>
<b>Characteristics</b>	<p><i>Speaks in 'adult-like' sentences</i></p> <p><i>Limited understanding of the language of others</i></p>	<p><i>Limited understanding of social rules</i></p> <p><i>Doesn't know how to join in with peers</i></p>	<p><i>Needs routine</i></p> <p><i>Strong interests in certain subjects</i></p>	<p><i>Over sensitive to smells and sounds</i></p> <p><i>Seeks sensory input for touch/taste</i></p>	<p><i>A visual learner</i></p> <p><i>Difficulties with planning</i></p> <p><i>Can't</i></p>
<b>Impacts</b>	<p><i>People over – estimate his comprehension</i></p> <p><i>Can look like he is being non-compliant, can get into trouble</i></p>	<p><i>Difficulty making &amp; keeping friendships</i></p> <p><i>Peers misunderstand and her attempts to play</i></p>	<p><i>Difficulty coping when unexpected events arise</i></p> <p><i>Others not interested in their idea of fun</i></p>	<p><i>Avoids certain activities and situations</i></p> <p><i>Mouthes inappropriate objects</i></p>	<p><i>remember instructions when given verbally</i></p> <p><i>In wrong place at wrong time with wrong equipment</i></p>

# The Planning Matrix - Strategies

	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Social Interaction</b>	<b>Rigid &amp; Repetitive Behaviours</b>	<b>Sensory Processing</b>	<b>Learning Style</b>
<b>Characteristics</b>					
<b>Impacts</b>					
<b>Strategies</b>					

# The Planning Matrix - Strategies

- When linked to a specific characteristic, and its impact on learning for a specific child/student, then STRATEGIES selected are likely to be:
  - Well thought through
  - Appropriate to the child/student
  - Individually tailored to the child/student's level and need
  - Understood and used by all of the community surrounding the child/student

	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Social Interaction</b>	<b>Rigid &amp; Repetitive Behaviours</b>	<b>Sensory Processing</b>	<b>Learning Style</b>
<b>Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Speaks in 'adult like' sentences</li> <li>•Limited understanding of the language of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited understanding of social rules</li> <li>• Doesn't know how to join in with peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Needs routine</li> <li>•Strong interests in certain subjects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Over sensitive to smells and sounds</li> <li>•Seeks sensory input for touch/taste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•A visual learner</li> <li>•Difficulties with planning</li> </ul>
<b>Impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•People over – estimate his comprehension</li> <li>•Can look like he is being non-compliant, can get into trouble</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty making &amp; keeping friendships</li> <li>• Peers misunderstand and her attempts to play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Difficulty coping when unexpected events arise</li> <li>•Others not interested in their idea of fun</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Avoids certain activities and situations</li> <li>•Mouthes inappropriate objects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•In wrong place at wrong time with wrong equipment</li> <li>•Can't remember instructions when given verbally</li> </ul>
<b>Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Keep language simple</li> <li>•Give processing time</li> <li>•Support language understanding with visuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Explicitly teach hidden social rules</li> <li>•Explain to peers how to support their friend</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Use interests where possible to support learning and motivation</li> <li>•Try to give warning when changes to day occur</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Provide a break card and teach/reward its use</li> <li>•Schedule opportunities to access sensory activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Use checklists and visual reminders</li> <li>•Support instructions visually</li> <li>•Use reward systems</li> </ul>

# Feedback about the Planning Matrix

## – from Parents

- *Filling out the matrix helped me to put my energy into the best resources for my and my son's needs. Helped me have confidence in what to say to principal/ teachers.*
- *At Program Support Group meetings..... I have found that whatever else is going on... when we use the Matrix the focus is totally on the child. The swapping of information and development of understanding has been invaluable.*

# Feedback about the Planning Matrix

## – from Educators

- *'The most powerful tool is the matrix with the focus on the characteristics and impact - then the strategies*
- *The planning matrix has been used at both a whole school and classroom level to:*
  - *assist with profiling students in classroom and across the whole school and campuses*
  - *inform whole school professional learning*
  - *identify strategies to support students with autism and other disabilities.*

# Creative Use of the Planning Matrix

- ***From a system point of view we have used the matrix as a tool to review students with paediatricians and psychologists..... In supporting one of our secondary schools with 18 students with an ASD it has provided a starting point with parents and leadership***
- ***The matrix has re-established a partnership between parents and schools. The matrix allows partners to see what is happening, what we need to do and put in place to support the student'***

# Accessing the Planning Matrix

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Positive Partnerships Online Learning Portal. The browser's address bar shows the URL: <http://www.autismtraining.com.au/public/index.cfm?returnTo=%2Findex%2Edcfm>. The website header features the logo for "positive partnerships" and the text "Supporting school aged students on the Autism Spectrum". A navigation menu includes links for Home, Parents/Carers, Teachers & Schools, About AAETC, Useful Links, and Site Map. On the right side, there are links for Contact Us, Online Learning Portal, New User? Register Now!, and Already a Member? Login.

The main content area contains the following text:

The *Positive Partnerships*, supporting school aged students on the autism spectrum project delivers two components of the *Helping Children with Autism* package being implemented by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The aim of both components is to improve the educational outcomes for school aged children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

The two components are:

1. professional development for teachers and other school staff who are working with students with ASD (Professional Development Component); and
2. workshops and information sessions for parents and carers of school aged children with ASD (Parent/Carer Component).

Both components are delivered nationally by the Australian Autism Education and Training Consortium (AAETC).

Below the text, there is a graphic of a child pointing at a green chalkboard. The chalkboard contains the text: "Click here to register for Workshops for Parents & Carers" and "Click here for Workshops for Teachers".

At the bottom of the page, there is a "NEW" banner with a small image of a child's head.

The browser's status bar at the bottom shows the URL: [Waiting for http://www.autismtraining.com.au/public/index.cfm?action=login&returnTo=/...](http://www.autismtraining.com.au/public/index.cfm?action=login&returnTo=/...) and the system tray shows the time as 5:03 PM.

# Accessing the Planning Matrix

1. Go to [www.autismtraining.com.au](http://www.autismtraining.com.au)
2. Login or register as a new user
3. Click on Learning Resources on the top menu bar
4. Click on Planning Tools on the left selection menu
5. Find Planning Matrix in the list of tools

# Future Positive Partnerships Parent Workshops - Victoria

- August 17/18 Narre Warren (SMR)
- August 31/September 1 Geelong
- September 7/8 Echuca
- October 12/13 Bundoora (NMR)
- October 19/20 Portland
- October 26/27 Shepparton
- In 2011 6 more workshops (TBA)

Go to [www.autismtraining.com.au](http://www.autismtraining.com.au)

for information and registration

# QUESTIONS

