

BEHAVIOUR STRATEGIES FOR TEACHER ASSISTANTS to Support Neurodiverse Students



ONLINE ON-DEMAND COURSE




Sue Larkey
Teacher



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Notes



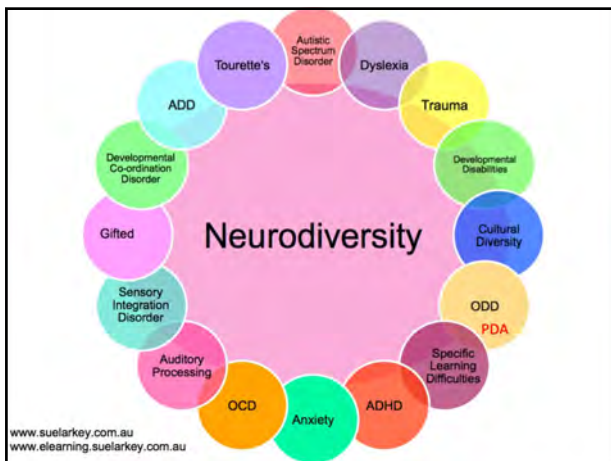
Armed with the tools of understanding and confidence much can be achieved.



1



2



3

Autism Spectrum

- Communication Skills**
 - Processing verbal language
 - Literal / Reciprocal language
 - Visual Learners
- Emotions and Emotional Control**
 - Meltdowns and Shutdowns
 - Self-regulation
- Sensory**
 - Over & Under Reactions (Hyper & Hypo)
 - All Senses PLUS proprioception & Vestibular
- Adaptation and generalisation of skills**
 - Knowing 'I do the same here as over there'
 - Learning in a new context
 - Choice making, Problem-Solving
- Behaviour**

4

4

Lesson 2

Understanding that Behaviour is a form of Communication



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5

Behaviour is a second language

May be

- Caused by sensory issues
- Lack of communication skills

Behaviour

- Always serves a purpose
- Result of interacting with the environment
- **CAN BE CHANGED**

6

6

Behaviour Books



The Red Beast Anger Workbook



The Red Beast

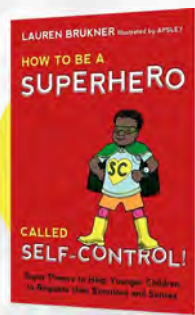


The Mindful Magician and the trip to Feelings Town

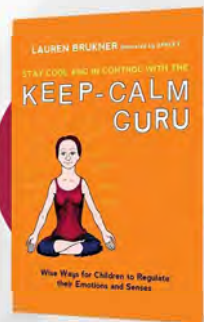
HELPING CHILDREN RECOGNISE AND REGULATE THEIR EMOTIONS



The kid's guide to staying Awesome and in control



How to be a Superhero called Self-Control

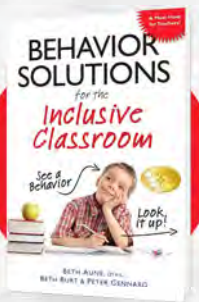


Stay cool and in control with the Keep-Calm Guru

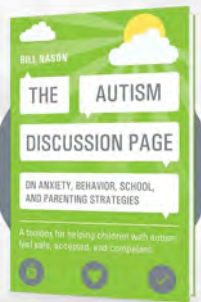


Self-Control to the Rescue!

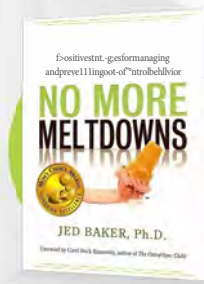
MUST HAVE BOOKS TO UNDERSTAND BEHAVIOUR



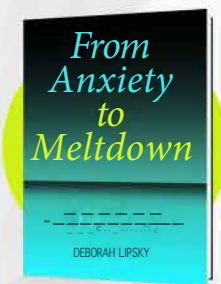
Behavior Solutions for the Inclusive Classroom



The Autism Discussion Page



No More Meltdowns: Positive strategies for managing and preventing out-of-control behavior



From Anxiety to Meltdown

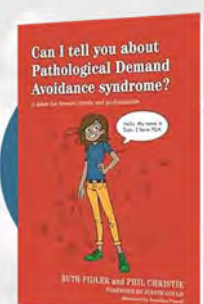
PATHOLOGICAL DEMAND AVOIDANCE (PDA)



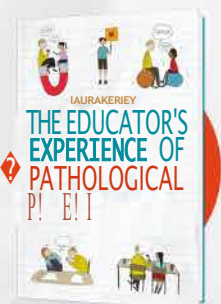
Can't Not Won't: A story about a child who couldn't go to school



Super Shamlal



Can I tell you about Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome?



The Educator's Experience of Pathological Demand Avoidance: An Illustrated Guide to Pathological Demand Avoidance and Learning

Lesson 3
**Generalisation,
Adaptability &
Choice Making**

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7

Generalisation & Adaptability
Why this causes behaviour

- Visual learner
- Social skills
 - Classroom to the playground

Strategies to try

- Put into context
- Show them what to do
- Be explicit

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Choice Making
Why this causes behaviour

- Limited problem solving
- Fear of making a mistake
- Fear of making the wrong choice

Strategies to try

- Make choices clear
- Make the choices visual
- Show them what to do if they change their mind or make a mistake

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9

Lesson 4
The Impact of Executive Functioning on Behaviour

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The Hidden Reason Behind Behaviour

Executive Functioning Skills
– Are skills required to 'execute' or perform everyday tasks.

Strategies to try

- Visuals
- Timers
- Reducing choices

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11

Fluctuations – Good and Bad days

- Don't take behaviours personally
- Some days the child can adapt, generalise and make choices
- Other days they struggle

Strategies to try

- Teach about spoons
- Low and slow – teach self-regulation

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12



THE ONE THING I WISH I KNEW YEARS AGO...

Was the **IMPORTANCE** of executive functioning and **HOW** to improve it as it underpins everything from behaviour to social to engagement. Executive functioning refers to the part of your brain that organises, prioritises and regulates emotions. However, I prefer to refer to it as the 'Air Traffic Control,' as just like air traffic control has to manage thousands of planes on countless runways with perfect timing, students have to manage information and distractions.

Impaired Executive Function can impact significantly on children with autism spectrum disorder's ability to learn and engage in busy learning environments.

Students may not struggle with all areas of Executive Functioning to the same degree. It is important to identify which areas the child needs supports, and put in place strategies to support and develop this skill. I find that if the child has had an assessment by a psychologist it is worth checking which areas were identified as impaired and then using these results to help guide the strategies used to improve their executive functioning.

I find that strategies to address Executive Functioning are often helpful for **ALL** students but are particularly **VITAL** for students with ASD/ADHD in making a difference to their learning, behaviour and social skills.

Fortunately, **we can improve executive functioning** skills through a range of strategies, below are some examples.



1. Emotional Control

This is where they have difficulty with behavior and emotional control. This can look like difficulty waiting for a turn, getting frustrated easily, off task behaviours, overreaction to the smallest things (e.g. not being first), becoming overwhelmed or meltdowns.

How to Improve Emotional Control

- ✔ Sensory tools, break cards, take a break tables,
- ✔ Emotion Cards that communicate how they are feeling and what to do to repair emotions.
- ✔ Resources like "The Kids Guide to Being Awesome and in Control" are full of great strategies for teaching emotional regulation
Available at www.suelarkey.com.au
- ✔ Social Scripts that help students with turn taking, waiting, putting hand up to wait for a turn.



2. Impulse Control

This can be calling out, distracting others, aggression / fighting, rushing through activities without checking or inconsistency with following rules.

How to Improve Impulse Control

- ✔ Redirection - telling them "what to do" instead of "what not to do" i.e. "Put your hand up" rather than "No calling out"
- ✔ Social Scripts that explain how to put up hand, rules for playground and group work
Warn about rules and expectations in specific
- ✔ situations - use visuals where possible



3. Planning and Prioritising

This is where they have difficulty deciding the steps needed to reach a goal order of importance. As a result they may get no work done, be easily distracted, avoid tasks and may be easily overwhelmed. They may also have trouble seeing the main idea and easily go off topic

How to Improve Planning & Prioritising

- ✔ Visual Planning Supports such as: Mindmaps, Rubrics,
- ✔ Support Staff spending individual time with the student to help break down tasks down, prioritise & plan
- ✔ Using Calendars, Diaries (make sure have set times to write in and check)
- ✔ Break Tasks into set up small achievable steps, tick off each step when complete



4. Organising

This includes ability to keep track of information and things.

How to improve Organisation

- ✔ Systems in place for organization i.e. own hook in bag area away from busy areas
- ✔ Minimising equipment and books i.e. one book/folder or limiting the size of pencil case and its contents
- ✔ Take Photos of how desk/locker/bag should look so remind them where things go
- ✔ Help write down plans and thoughts and organize logically.



5. Task Initiation

This often looks like a student sitting doing nothing, being oppositional "I am not doing it" or procrastinating (need toilet etc.). When in actual fact they are often just so overwhelmed they don't know how to start.

How to Improve Task Initiation

- ✔ Give a Partner to work with, who can model what to do
- ✔ Limit and write down instructions where possible
- ✔ Simplify Worksheets
- ✔ Traffic Light Strategy





6. Flexibility

They often don't like to change or stop in the middle of an activity. They don't see other options or solutions and often don't understand what is being asked of them. This can result in arguing, getting frustrated /angry and meltdowns. Often take things literally.

How to improve Flexibility

- ✔ Timers to warn when to finish.
- ✔ Routines/Schedules- Understand their need to know what is happening when.
- ✔ Warn about changes (people and events) Explain WHY changing and WHAT replacement i.e. Mum is picking you up today as Grandma is at the Doctor
- ✔ Use Social Scripts that give clear descriptions of what is going to change/new and what I need to do.



7. Working Memory

This is the inability to hold information in their mind and use it to complete a task. Struggle with multi-step tasks, remembering directions, taking notes or understanding something you've just explained to them.

How to Improve Working Memory

- ✔ Visuals -The more visuals the better
- ✔ Model - SHOW what you want, Don't Tell
- ✔ Co-actively do activities: learn best BY DOING and being involved in learning ie hand over hand for handwriting .
- ✔ Slow it down, Break it Down (instructions etc)
- ✔ Get them to repeat in own words instructions/direction

THE
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PODCAST

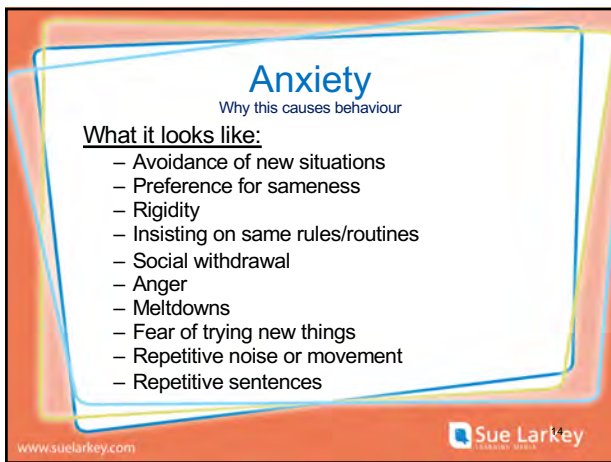
> *Episode 5:* Executive Functioning

AVAILABLE ON
ALL PODCAST
PLATFORMS





13



14



15

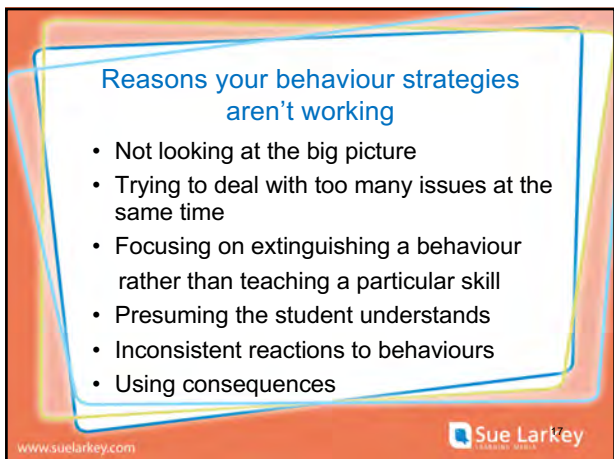


Lesson 6
Behaviour Strategies

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16



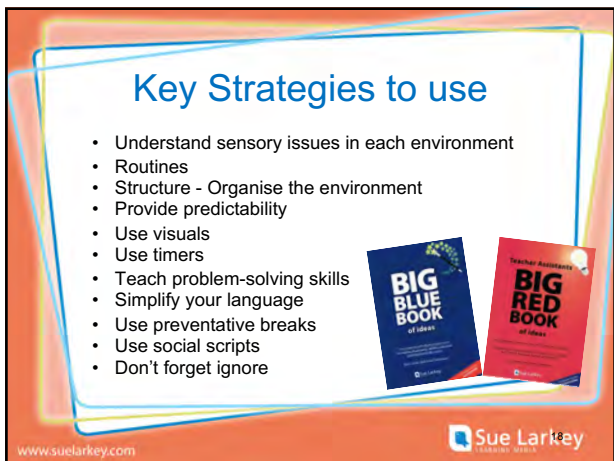
Reasons your behaviour strategies aren't working

- Not looking at the big picture
- Trying to deal with too many issues at the same time
- Focusing on extinguishing a behaviour rather than teaching a particular skill
- Presuming the student understands
- Inconsistent reactions to behaviours
- Using consequences

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17



Key Strategies to use

- Understand sensory issues in each environment
- Routines
- Structure - Organise the environment
- Provide predictability
- Use visuals
- Use timers
- Teach problem-solving skills
- Simplify your language
- Use preventative breaks
- Use social scripts
- Don't forget ignore

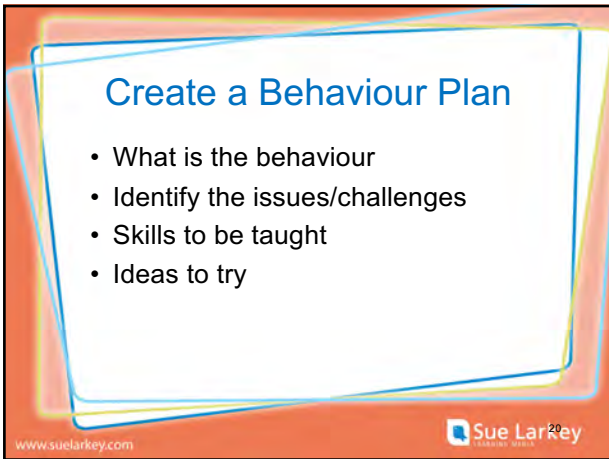
www.suelarkey.com Sue Larkey

This slide has a white background with a blue border. It contains a bulleted list of key strategies. Two book covers, 'BIG BLUE BOOK' and 'BIG RED BOOK', are shown at the bottom right. The Sue Larkey logo is in the bottom right corner.

18



19



20



21



Example

Marty is a keen soccer player and plays club soccer on the weekends. However he has difficulty playing soccer at lunchtime with the other students.

The behaviours observed were:

- Picking up the ball and running away
- Picking up the ball and throwing it away
- Screaming loudly in children's faces

The issues were:

- The other students breaking the rules
- There was no authoritative / unbiased umpire (as on the weekends) to give a free kick

Skill to be taught

- The skill that needs to be taught is that school soccer is different to club soccer and that some of the rules are more relaxed.

Ideas to Try

- Tell Social stories
- Video the game in the playground and then discuss the differences between club soccer and school soccer
- Discuss what to do when a rule is broken in the playground
- Teach not to "dob" on other students, but to resolve the issue amongst themselves
 - This is ongoing in all areas of the playground and will need to retaught, re-visited, and revised regularly
- Use photo schedules of all activities
- **Teach the other students how to interact and react with the ASD student.** For example when he throws the ball, go and get the ball and ask what is the problem. The student may be too anxious to identify the issue. Ask other students what happened.

Observation of Behaviour

What is the behaviour

Identify Issues

Skills to be Taught


Ideas to try

Swearing and Bad Language

Identify the issue
Are they swearing at an adult/peer
Are they swearing cause of frustration
Do they realise it is swearing
To fit in socially

Skill to be taught
Where/when/why you can swear
What is a swear word/bad language

Ideas to try
- Social scripts
- Showing how to fix up swearing eg apologise

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22

Hiding & Running Away

Identify the issue
Is it a flight response?
Anxiety/ anger/ or sensory response
Unable to solve an emotional build up

Skill to be taught
Ask for a break
Choice making
Recognising their emotion and what to do

Ideas to try
- If hiding - give time and space
- Use a preventative break

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23

Not leaving activity they like doing

Identify the issue
Activity makes them happy and they don't want to leave
Not knowing when they are going to it
Time has disappeared – hyper focus

Skill to be taught
How to finish
How to watch the time
How to use the visual
How to self – regulate

Ideas to try
Use timers
Use "now, next later"
- Pre warn
- Consistency in time limit

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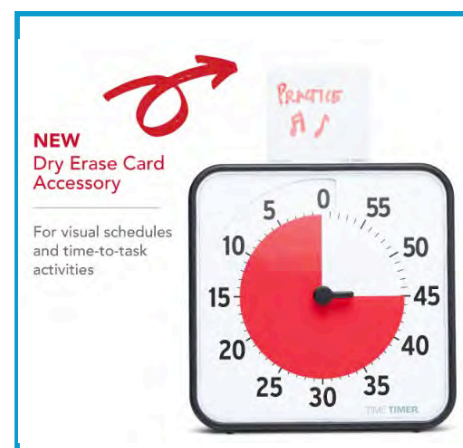
24

TIME TIMERS CAN SUPPORT STUDENTS TO:

- ✔ **Ease stressful transitions** by showing “how much longer” and “here’s what ‘5 more minutes’ really means.”
- ✔ **Show when challenging activities will end:** “Let’s go shopping for 30 minutes.” “Handwriting for 30 minutes”
- ✔ **Help everyone** (especially new staff or visitors) stick to the routine.
- ✔ **Reduce anxiety** by creating predictability & consistency
- ✔ **Help develop a reliable internal clock** (especially for ADHD students)
- ✔ **Help with organisation & time management** so don’t get ‘caught up’ in preferred activities
- ✔ **See at a glance how much time is left**
- ✔ **Keep lessons/activities focused and on track**
- ✔ **Effectively manage small groups** for differentiated instruction
- ✔ **Provide focus for individual work** (help self manage time)
- ✔ **Tests / Exams** (Fantastic for Time Management in Naplan)
- ✔ **Know how long to speak** in presentations (News, Debates, Class Presentations)
- ✔ **Empower students to manage their own time in ALL activities**
- ✔ **Ensure equal time** for taking turns
- ✔ **Break Times** (Help self regulate break times, know when they are going to occur and for how long so they return to work etc)
 - Use timer to have set Toilet /Drink and Snack Breaks
- ✔ **Break larger challenges into smaller tasks** or amounts of time
- ✔ **Rotate learning stations**
- ✔ **Manage Screen Time** or “Special Interests”

Help students ‘slow’ down and not rush OR
- ✔ **‘speed up’**

Many students lose track of time when they are doing something they love. Often they do not have an end point or they want to repeat the activity. **Timers create a finish point.**



Top Tip: Add Visuals to your time timers by using velcro and Visuals.



MINIMISING STRESS AROUND TIMERS

Although timers can provide a timeframe for the student to work within, **helping them keep focused and on track**, for some students, timers can be a source of stress. Worries can include; finishing too soon, not finishing within the given time and the sound of the timer going off. In order to minimise this stressor, talking about time as much as possible can be very helpful.


- 1** Make sure the task can be done **within the given timeframe** so they don't get worried, then try explaining the desired expectations and outcomes of using the timer.
 - You could even **try modeling the timer on yourself** showing them how it can be used (“I have 10 minutes left, I need to work a bit faster” or “Oh dear I ran out of time, that is ok”).
- 2** **Write social stories** on what to do if the timer finishes - remember that sometimes they can ask for 5 more minutes to finish, etc.
- 3** **Use visual schedules** to support the use of timers, so when the time is up the child knows what is next.
- 4** **Explain when/why time is important in everyday life** (Bus/Train timetables or length of TV episodes).
- 5** As many children are anxious about loud “buzzers” or sounds, the **Time Timer makes a sensory friendly beep sound** which can be turned off if necessary.
- 6** **Giving 5 minute warnings before an activity needs to finish** can make a huge difference to smooth transitions.

Calling Out

Identify the issue
Don't know how to ask for help
They are worried they will forget their good idea
They don't realise the other child hasn't finished

Skill to be taught
Waiting
How to ask for help
Teach to put their hand up

Ideas to try
- A visual signal to prompt them to wait or to put their hand up
- Social scripts

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25

Doesn't want to do their work

Identify the issue
Don't know where to start
Doesn't know what to choose
Doesn't know how much is required
Doesn't like who they are working with
Sensory overwhelmed
They don't like the subject they are doing
Anxiety

Skill to be taught
Unfortunately, it is more about us putting in place accommodations and adjustments

Ideas to try
Limit choices
Break into smaller segments
Build in breaks
Show them an example of what is required
Use their special interest
Explain why they are learning this eg driver's license test
Use timers

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26

Fear of making mistakes

Identify the issue
Is it decision-making or choice making
Perfectionism
Inability to problem-solve

Skill to be taught
What to do when they make a mistake
How to ask for help
It's ok to make mistakes

Ideas to try
Model making mistakes and fixing
CO- actively fix up the mistake together
Show other alternative ideas and opinions

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27

What if the student doesn't want to work with me

Identify the issue
Is it sensory
Is it social – peers
Rapport

Skill to be taught
Ask for help when needed
Accepting help

Ideas to try
Check your sensory issues
Work with other students first
Model helping other students – overact
Use a social script
Tell what to do
Subtle redirecting
Wait until they need help

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28

Lesson 9
Conclusion



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29

What is your student trying to convey?

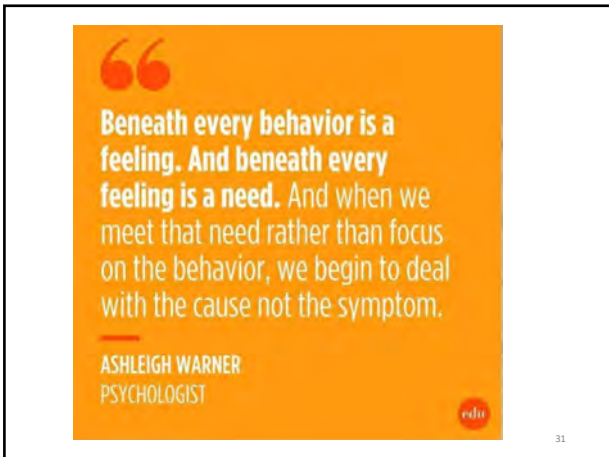
Behaviour is a second language

Behaviour

- Always serves a purpose
- Result of interacting with the environment
- **CAN BE CHANGED**

30

30



31

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- Great Books available suelarkey.com.au

32

OTHER BOOKS BY SUE LARKEY AND ANNA TULLEMANS



TEACHER'S ASSISTANT'S BIG RED BOOK OF IDEAS

...COMPANION TO THE BIG BLUE BOOK OF IDEAS

Hundreds of ideas to try. Setting up classroom, role of teacher assistant, behaviour in classroom and playground, stages of anxiety, transition, sensory tools and activities. Includes frequently asked questions and MORE!

TEACHER ASSISTANTS BIG BLUE BOOK OF IDEAS

...COMPANION TO THE BIG RED BOOK OF IDEAS

Hundreds of new strategies to try. Social skills: playgrounds, friendships, building self-esteem, bullying. In the classroom: getting on task, adapting tasks and exams, building independence. Managing anxiety and behaviour.



THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

Practical guide to secondary school This book has over 100 pages of proven ideas and strategies. Includes Proformas to photocopy and save you time. Keeping on task, motivation, exams, assignments, sports days and more. Ideas from homework, excursions, curriculum ideas and 100s of strategies to use!

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO SCHOOL AND HOME

This book provides key strategies for all ages and stages. It offers over 500 practical strategies and time savers for school and home. Everything from setting up a classroom, developing friendships, engaging disengaged students; to moving house, choosing a school and applying for a job. It is the ultimate guide for teachers, parents and all professionals supporting children with autism spectrum disorder, including Asperger's, ADD, ADHD, ODD and other developmental delays.

The Ultimate Guide to School and Home

Key strategies for all ages and stages



Supporting students with Autism, Asperger's (AS), ADHD, ODD and other developmental delays
Sue Larkey and Anna Tulleman

TEACHER ASSISTANTS* COURSES

Making a Difference to Neurodiverse Students (AS, ODD, PDA, ADHD etc)



Sue Larkey

Teaching & Support Strategies



Dean Beadle

Connection & Engagement



Anna Tullemans

Behaviour - Why & What to do

ON- DEMAND COURSES
Learn Anywhere, Any
Time, Any Device

How to Teach & Support Neurodiverse Students

Sue Larkey (Teacher)

Teaching & Support Strategies - This course is designed for Teacher Assistants* to help support students with diverse needs to engage and learn. You can select topics of interest to you and your students. This method allows you to learn at your own pace. It also included great time savers e.g. templates ready to download and cheat sheets to use immediately. Sue Larkey in her first class had a child with Autism Spectrum who inspired her to specialise in Autism Spectrum. Sue formalized her speciality by completed a Masters in Education with a Major in Autism Spectrum.

Enrol Now

Understanding & Meeting the Needs of Neurodiverse Students

Dean Beadle (Autistic Speaker & Leading UK Education Trainer) & Sue Larkey (Teacher)

Connection & Engagement - In this course Dean shares Myths and Misunderstandings about Autism, Executive Functioning and Link to Anxiety, Social Needs & Emotions, Transformative impact Teacher Assistants can Make, How to Disclose Diagnosis, Important of Autistic Joy & More. Dean Beadle uses his lived experience, as Autistic, and knowledge training 1000s of school staff to provide strategies and ideas to meet the needs and Neurodiverse of students.

Enrol Now

Behaviour Strategies for Teacher Assistants to Support Neurodiverse Students

Anna Tullemans (Teacher Assistant, Parent, Consultant) & Sue Larkey (Teacher)

Behaviour - Why & What to do - In this course Anna & Sue share tips and strategies to understand why you often get behaviour and what to do. This course will help you know what to do when you see a behaviour and why. Providing proven strategies and tips. Everything from: Why you see good and bad days in Neurodiverse Students, Understanding Anxiety, Why your current strategies might not be working as well as Common Questions on Behaviour and What to Do. Includes template to create a Behaviour Plan & Case Study. Anna Tullemans passion for Autism Spectrum stems from her personal experience when her now adult son was diagnosed at the age of six. Her work includes helping implement many practical strategies for students in mainstream primary and secondary schools.

Enrol Now

Who Should do the Courses:

*Teacher Assistants are called different names depending on where you are eg Teacher Aides, SSO, ESO, Teaching Assistants, Educational Assistants, Classroom Assistants, Instructional Aides, Paraprofessionals, Paraeducators

Register & More Information:

- elearning.suelarkey.com.au
- Email support@suelarkey.com.au
- Group Discounts Available email support@suelarkey.com.au

All Courses

- 2 Hours
- 6 weeks to complete
- Handout includes Additional Templates and Tips
- IT Support
- Certificate Issued on Completion of Course