Our Agenda

- What are Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs)?
- The Library Environment and ASDs
- Customer Service and ASDs
- Easy Adjustments
- Where to Go for More Information
- Q & A

What are Autism Spectrum Disorders?

[Graph showing the spectrum of Autism conditions]
Autism Spectrum Disorders

A popular adage among people who work with youth with ASDs is “If you know one child with autism, you know one child with autism.”

Library Services for Youth With Autism (2013)
Lesley S. J. Farmer

Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Difficulty with communication
- Difficulty with social interactions
- Unusual or obsessive interest(s)
- May have difficulties with sensory integration and processing

Communication

- May not be verbal
- May talk at you rather than converse
- May repeat what you say (echolalia)
- May be too loud
- May interrupt others
- May not understand figures of speech or jokes
- May be unable to follow multi-part instructions
Social Interactions

- May lack ability to read body language or other social cues
- May not be aware of socially appropriate behavior:
  - turn taking
  - personal space
  - eye contact
  - appropriate touch

Unusual or Obsessive Interest(s)

- Preoccupation with certain objects or subjects
- Inflexible adherence to specific routines or rituals

Sensory Issues

- Ambient (background) noise
- Flickering / harsh lighting
- Certain colors and textures
- Smells
Rise of Autism Spectrum Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surveillance Year</th>
<th>Birth Year</th>
<th>Number of ADDM Sites Reporting</th>
<th>Prevalence per 1,000 Children (Range)</th>
<th>This is about 1 in X children...</th>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.7 (4.2-9.5)</td>
<td>1 in 150</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.6 (5.3-10.9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0 (7.0-9.3)</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.0 (6.2-12.1)</td>
<td>1 in 110</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.3 (9.0-12.2)</td>
<td>1 in 68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rise of Autism Spectrum Disorders

The National Autistic Society:

Repetitive/Compulsive Behavior

- Can be an attempt to GAIN sensory input or REDUCE sensory input
- Hand-flapping
- Rocking
- Sound generation
The Library Environment and ASDs

Environmental Considerations

- Lighting
- Noise
- Odors
- Room layout and design
- Color


Environmental Safety Concerns

- Running away
- Electrical and heat generating equipment
- Sharp / small objects
- Water
- People
- Animals

Customer Service and ASDs

SPELL Framework

- Structure
- Positive (approaches & expectations)
- Empathy
- Low Arousal
- Linking

The National Autistic Society

SPELL Customer Service
Structure, Positive, Empathy, Low arousal, Linking

- Be mindful and non-judgmental
- Address the individual by first name
- Speak directly and simply; use concrete language
- Avoid idioms and multi-part directions
- Ask simple questions
- Try to make eye contact
- Determine the preferred method of communication
Positive Expectations
(not to be ignored!)

- Curiosity
- Wonder
- Awe
- Honesty
- Intelligence
- Focus
- Kindness
- Innocence

Negative Behaviors
(also not to be ignored)

- Destructive activities
- Self-hurt
- Disruption
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Bullying

How to Intervene

- Ask caregiver if they need help
- Be empathetic
- Sit next to the person
- Redirect their attention
- Offer to relocate patron
Sensory Spot

Inclusive Programming

Social Story

Going to the library

Autism-Friendly Sign

Proud to Be an Autism-Friendly Library!
Ask about our fidget basket and sensory spot

Libraries and Autism
We’re Connected.

http://www.librariesandautism.org/
http://www.autism.org.uk/

Where to Go for More Information

ASCLA

People with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD): What You Need to Know
Library Accessibility Tip Sheet 6

http://www.ala.org/ascla/sites/ala.org.ascla/files/content/asclaprotools/accessibilitytipsheets/tipsheets/6-ASD.pdf

http://www.librariesandautism.org/

http://www.autism.org.uk/

Questions?