



# Healthy Sexual Development In Those With Autism Spectrum Disorder

By

Kevin T. Blake, Ph.D., P.L.C

**In the effort to comply with the appropriate boards/associations, I declare that I do have affiliations with or financial interest in a commercial organization that could pose a conflict of interest with my presentation.**

## **Healthy Sexual Development In Those With Autism Spectrum Disorder**

**Kevin T. Blake, Ph.D., P.L.C.**

**owns shares in the following companies:**

**Amgen, Inc.**

**Johnson & Johnson, Inc.**

**Cross Country Education**  
**Leading the Way in Professional Development.**  
**[www.CrossCountryEducation.com](http://www.CrossCountryEducation.com)**

# ASD, Love, and Affection

**“Children and adolescents with ASD are often not instinctive or intuitive in expressing their liking or love for someone, or their understanding that family members and friends need affection” (p. 259)**

**Attwood, T. (2013). Expressing and Enjoying Love and Affection. In A. Scarpa, S. Williams White, and T. Attwood (Eds.), CBT for Children and Adolescents with High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders. New York, NY: Guilford.**

# Program for Love and Affection

- **Five session hour, 2 hours per session group program to teach appropriate expression of love and affection to 5 through 13 year olds with ASD.**

**Attwood, T. and Garnett, M.S. (2013). From Like to Love within Friendships and Family: Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to Understand and Express Affection. London, Great Britton: Jessica Kingsley.**

# Sexual Desire and ASD

**“Currently researchers...believe that individuals with HFASD (High Functioning ASD, Sic.) do experience sexual desire, and that many wish to have intimate relationships” (p. 278).**

**Henault, I. (2013). Understanding Relationships and Sexuality in Individuals with High-Functioning ASD. . In A. Scarpa, S. Williams White, and T. Attwood (Eds.), CBT for Children and Adolescents with High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders. New York, NY: Guilford.**

# Henault & Attwood ASD Sexuality Study

- **Derogatis Sexual Function Inventory**
- **19 males, 9 females; Mean age 32, range 18 to 64; 21 Asperger's Disorder; 5 HFA; 2 PDD: Average IQ**
- **“Although all developed an interest in sexuality around age 14, 11 of the 28 participants were still virgins.”**
- **For those who had intercourse the mean age for their first experience was 22.**

Henault, I. (2005). Asperger's Syndrome and Sexuality: From Adolescence through Adulthood. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley.

# Sexuality & ASD

**“By then he had learnt a way to escape his uneasiness of lack of communication. It was masturbating on the edge of the bed or sofa.”  
(Rajarshi (Tito) Mukhopadhyay)**

**Mukhopadhyay , T. R. (2011). The Mind Tree: A Miraculous Child Breaks the Silence of Autism. New York, NY: Arcade.**

# ASD, Sexuality and Suicide

**“The desire for a girlfriend, which goes along with sex drive was so important to this young man that his failure made him consider whether life was worth living.” (p. 13)**

Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger's & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.



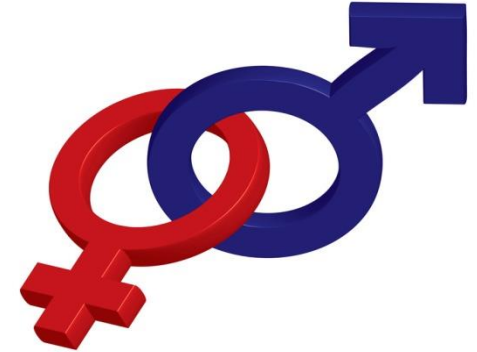
# “The Talk”



- **Watch for signs of interest in sex: signs of masturbation (usually begins in middle school); “the hidden Playboy”; “forbidden” websites, etc.**
- **Most public schools begin introducing sex education late in fifth grade and it is mostly plumbing and how to not catch STDs.**

Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger’s & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

# “The Talk”



- It is better to have the talk, “too early” than “too late.”
- Make sure you have it with you daughter prior to her first period.

Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger’s & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

# “The Talk”



- Use the signs of interests in sex as an entre to discussing sexuality.
- Find a good time and place for the discussion.
- Begin by asking them what they know.
- Tell them its OK to know these things, that sexuality is not “dirty” and correct their misinformation and/or interpretations in a kind way.
- Discuss you family’s values/ethics/morals related to sexuality.
- Go through age appropriate sex ed literature with your child.

Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger’s & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

# “The Talk”



- **What to discuss during the talk:**
  - **Human anatomy with a diagram, discuss where it is appropriate to talk about sex, birth control, STDs and prevention, hygiene, responsibility, respecting wishes of partners, being left out, not using sex as a tool, “the talk” is not a one shot affair it is a process, warn them about “locker room bragging”, etc.**

Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger’s & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

# Dating & ASD



- **Parents must help their ASD children what most learn on their own.**
  - **Social gestures, Appropriate social risk taking, How to choose appropriate dates, What is an appropriate social activity, etc.**
- **If your ASD daughter has a boyfriend watch for exploitation.**

Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger's & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

# ASD and Pornography

**“The interest becomes unacceptable when the adolescent or adult with Asperger’s syndrome considers that (pornographic, sic.) photographs are a realistic representation of typical people and sexual activities on a first date. Fortunately we now have programs specifically to inform adolescents and adults with Asperger’s syndrome about appropriate levels of intimacy and sexuality.” (p. 193)**

**Attwood, T. (2007). The Complete Guide to Asperger’s Syndrome. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley.**

# Excellent Book On Sexuality and ASD

**Attwood, S. (2008).  
Making Sense of Sex: A  
Forthright Guide to  
Puberty, Sex and  
Relationships for  
People with Asperger's  
Syndrome. London,  
Great Britton: Jessica  
Kingsley.**



# Excellent Book On Sexuality and ASD

**Henault, I. (2005).  
Asperger's  
Syndrome and  
Sexuality: From  
Adolescence  
through Adulthood.  
Philadelphia, PA:  
Jessica Kingsley.**





# Henault's Programme for the Development of Sociosexual Skills

1. Assessment & Introduction
2. Intro to Sexuality & Communication
3. Sexual Relations & Behaviors
4. Physiology of Sex
5. Sexual Relations & Behaviors
6. Emotions
7. Birth Control & STDs
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Drugs
10. Abuse & Inappropriate Sexual Behavior
11. Sexism & Violence
12. Theory of Mind, Emotions & Intimacy

Henault, I. (2005). Asperger's Syndrome and Sexuality: From Adolescence through Adulthood. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley.

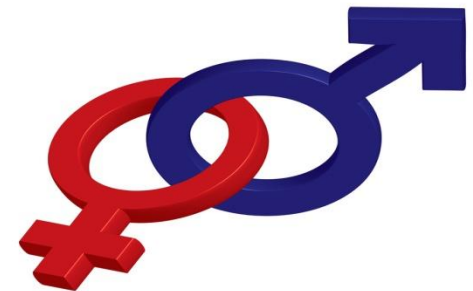
# Excellent Book on Sexuality & ASD

**Newport, J., and  
Newport, M. (2002).  
Autism-Asperger's &  
Sexuality: Puberty  
and Beyond.  
Arlington, TX: Future  
Horizons.**

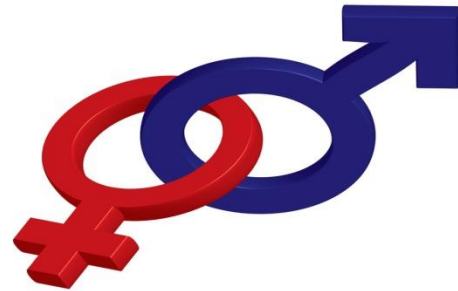


# Sexuality and Disability: A Guide for Parents

- **Author (2009). Sexuality and Disability: A Guide for Parents. Alberta, British Columbia, Canada: Alberta Health Services, Sexual and Reproductive Health Education and Health Promotion, p. 1-21.**
  - [www.teachingsexualhealth.ca/media/pdf/Sexuality\\_Developmental\\_Disability.pdf](http://www.teachingsexualhealth.ca/media/pdf/Sexuality_Developmental_Disability.pdf)



# Anti-Violence Dating Program



## Making Waves:

- <http://cbppp-pcpe.phac-aspc.gc.ca/interventions/making-waves/>
- <http://www.partnersforyouth.ca/en/programs/46-project-1>

# *Prosopagnosia of Facial Expressions*

# Prosopagnosia of Facial Expressions



**“Face perception can be subdivided into two general types – recognition of person identity via the structures of the face and recognition of internal affective states based on the shape of individual features and changes in their relative distance from one another during the expression.”  
(p. 128)**

**Schultz, R.T. (2005). Developmental Deficits in Social Perception in Autism: The Role of the Amygdala and Fusiform Face Area. International Journal of Developmental Neuroscience, 23, 125-141.**

# ASD & Face Processing

**“A range of face-processing deficits can present in ASD. Sometimes, individuals have problems recognizing facial identity, gaze direction, gender, expression and lip reading...Most importantly, nearly all individuals with ASD have problems interpreting emotional expression. For some individuals with ASD, the impairment in recognizing emotional expressions seems only to affect certain expressions, most notably fear” (p. 144).**

**Bate, S. (2013). Face Recognition & Its Disorders. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.**

# ASD and Facial Decoding

**“Deficits in facial emotion recognition have been found in individuals with ASD, possibly due to decreased functional connectivity among multiple brain regions in response to emotional faces” (p. 35).**

**Attwood, T, and Scarpa, A. (2013). Modifications of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Children and Adolescents with High-Functioning ASD and their Common Difficulties. In A Scarpa, S.W. White, and T. Attwood (Eds.), CBT for Children and Adolescents with High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders. New York, NY: Guilford.**



# Problems Making the Appropriate Facial Expression to Match How One Feels and What is Appropriate to The Situation



❖ **Attwood's (2007) story of the boy with ASD who saw his mother crying and asked, "What face do I make?" (p. 134)**

Attwood, T. (2007). The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley, p. 135.

# ***Assessment for Face Perception***

## ***Simon Baron-Cohen's Tests:***

- **Faces Test**
- **Eyes Test (Adult)**
- **Eyes Test (Child)**
- **Cambridge Mindreading (CAM) Face-Voice Battery**
- **Empathy Quotient (EQ) (Adult)**
- **Empathy/Systemizing (EQ-SQ) (Child)**
- **And many others...**

**Downloadable from:**

**[www.autismresearchcentre.com/tests/default.asp](http://www.autismresearchcentre.com/tests/default.asp)**

# ***FACE READING ASSESSMENT***

## **Comprehensive Affect Testing System (CATS)**

**“This ensemble of tests enables clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, neurologists, educators, speech therapists and other related disciplines to assess dysfunctional processing of affect expressed by the human face and voice.” (p. 1 of 4)**

**Froming, K., Levy, M. and Ekman, P. (2003).  
[www.psychologysoftware.com/CATS.html](http://www.psychologysoftware.com/CATS.html).**

# Computer Programs to Treat Prosopagnosia (WEBSITE: 146)



- Baron-Cohen, S. (2003). Mind Reading: An Interactive Guide To Emotions. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley.

“Harry Potter” teaches facial expressions.

- Baron-Cohen, S., Drori, J., Harcup, C. (2009). The Transporters (USA Version). London, England: Changing Media Development: [www.thetransporter.com](http://www.thetransporter.com)

“Thomas the Tank-Engine” teaches faces.



# Computer Programs to Treat Prosopagnosia



- “Gaining Face”: [www.StoneMountainSoftware.com](http://www.StoneMountainSoftware.com)
- Paul Ekman, Ph.D. (“Lie to Me”/SPOT – Surveying Passengers by Observational Techniques) CD ROMS:
  - Micro Expression Training Tool (METT)
  - Subtle Expression Training Tool (SETT)
  - Repeated presentations of METT & SETT to those with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Available from: [www.paulekman.com](http://www.paulekman.com)



# Improving Facial Recognition in ASD

**“Attempts to improve both facial identity and facial expression recognition deficits in ASD using computerized intervention programmes have met with much success” (p. 196).**

**Bate, S. (2013). Face Recognition & Its Disorders. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.**

# ***Treating Problems Making & Reading Facial Expressions***

- **Cognitive Affective Training-Faces and Feeling Words: [www.CAT-kit.com](http://www.CAT-kit.com)**
- **Student Handout: Emotions and Facial Expressions – From: McAfee, J. (2002). Navigating the Social World. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, pp 83-84.**
- **Ekman, P., & Friesen, W.M. (2003). Unmasking The Face: A Guide To Recognizing Emotions From Facial Cues. Cambridge, MA: Malor Books.**
- **Ekman, P. (2003). Emotions Revealed: Recognizing Faces and Feelings to Improve Communication and Emotional Life. New York, NY: Time Books.**



# Oxytocin and Prosopagnosia



**“Very recently research has indicated an alternative manner in which face-processing skills can temporarily be improved: Using Intranasal inhalation of the hormone oxytocin. Oxytocin is naturally produced and broken down within the human body, and is involved in regulation of basic social and reproductive behaviors, such as cohabitation, gestation and breastfeeding...”**



# Oxytocin and Prosopagnosia



**“...Recently, synthetic forms of oxytocin have been manufactured that can be nasally inhaled, and these sprays have been used in studies that have examined whether oxytocin can improve face-processing abilities in both health and impaired patients” (p. 195).**

**Bate, S. (2013). Face Recognition & Its Disorders. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.**

# The “Resting Face”



- **75% of the population has an emotionally neutral face.**
- **25% of the population have a resting face that is interpreted negatively.**
- **The older you are the more at risk you are for this.**
- **This can cause a very negative first impression.**
- **Some people resort to surgery to “correct” this (Bell’s Palsy, etc.).**

Nowicki, S. and Duke, M. (2002). Will I Ever Fit In? New York, NY: Free Press.

# Golden Ratio

**“...We found that although different faces have varying attractiveness, individual attractiveness is optimized when the face’s vertical distance between the eyes and mouth is approximately 36% of its length and the horizontal distance between the eyes is approximately 46% of the face’s width...”  
(p. 149)**

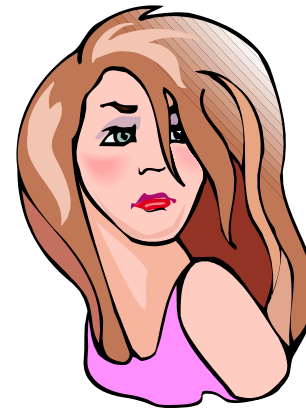
**Pallett, P.M., Link, S., and Lee, K. (January 2010). New “Golden Ratios for Beauty. Vision Research, 50 (2), pp. 149-154.**

# *Facial Symmetry and “Beauty”*

**“Two prominently studied traits are symmetry and sexual dimorphism, which, for many animals, are proposed cues to heritable fitness benefits. These traits are associated with other potential benefits, such as fertility. In humans, the face has been extensively studied in terms of attractiveness. Faces have the potential to be advertisements of mate quality and both symmetry and sexual dimorphism have been linked to the attractiveness of human face shape.”**

**Little, A., Jones, B.C., Waite, C., Tiddeman, B.P., Fienberg, D.R., Perrett, D.I., Apicella, C.L., and Marlowe, F.W. (July 9, 2008). Symmetry Is Related to Sexual Dimorphism in Faces: Data Across Culture and Species, PLoS One,3 (5): e2106.**

# Flirting and Social Abilities



- "...a flirting plan is wired into us, and that it has been embedded in our genes and in our brain's operating system the same way and for the same reasons that every other sexual trait has been - by trial and error, with conservation of what works best." (Rodgers, 1999, p. 38)

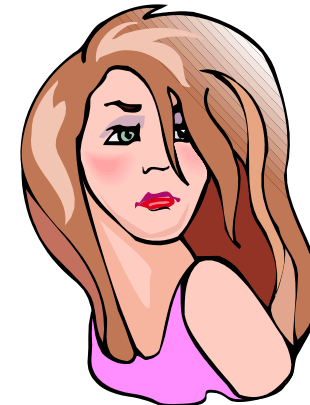
Rodgers, J.E. (February, 1999). Fascinating Flirting. Psychology Today, 32 (1), 36-41, 64-65, 67, 69-70

# Flirting and Social Abilities



- “Enter creativity, humor and intelligence. Deployed in flirting they disclose more about an individual person than all the antlers do about leaching animals...They act as an honest signal that we’ve got a reasonably well put together nervous system.” (p. 70)

Rodgers, J.E. (February, 1999). Fascinating Flirting. Psychology Today, 32 (1), 36-41, 64-65, 67, 69-70.

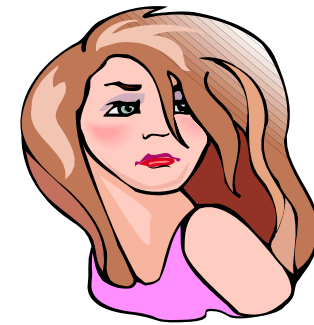


# Flirting and Social Abilities

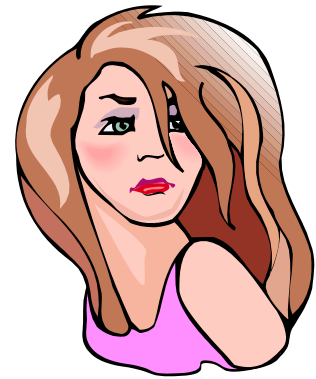


- **“The moment of attraction, in fact, mimics a kind of brain damage...In attraction, we don’t stop and think, we react, operating on a ‘gut’ feeling, with butterflies, giddiness, sweaty palms and flushed faces brought on by the reactivity of the emotional brain. We suspend intellect at least long enough to propel us to the next step in the mating game-flirtation.” (p.5)**

Ellison-Rogers, J. (January/February, 1999). Flirtation Fascination. Psychology Today, (Document ID: 575),  
From website: [www.psychologytoday.com/articles/index.php?term+pto19990101-000033&print=1](http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/index.php?term+pto19990101-000033&print=1) .



# Flirting and Social Abilities



- **It takes about seven seconds to form a first opinion about another person. Most of this is done non-verbally.**

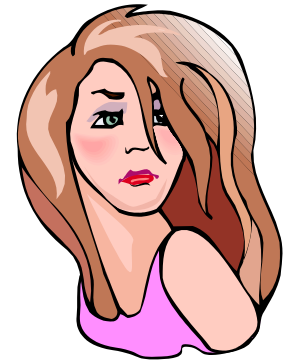
Nowicki, S. and Duke, M. (2002). Will I Ever Fit In? New York, NY: Free Press.

- **Mating and relationships would be almost impossible without facial expressions.**

Gladwell, M. (August 5, 2002). The Naked Face (Interview of Paul Ekman). The New Yorker, pp. 36-49.



# Flirting and Social Abilities



- **Attwood's (1998) story of the man with Asperger's Disorder in a singles bar.**
- **Cordoni stated you need the same behaviors to get a job as you need to get a date.**

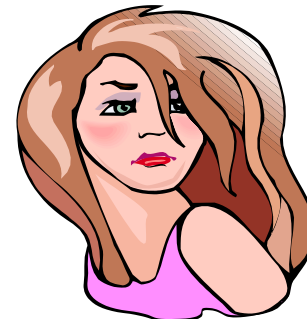
**Attwood, T. (1998). Asperger's Syndrome: A Guide for Parents and Professionals. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley.**

**Cordoni, B. (1987). Living With A Learning Disability. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.**

# *Flirting and Social Abilities*



**“Over the course of our evolution as a species, our brains have learned how to spot the healthiest mates, those who are likely to give us children, and those whose resources and commitment can help our offspring survive.” (p. 60)**



**Brizendine, L. (2006). The Female Brain. New York, NY: Morgan Road.**

# *Chimps and Polio*

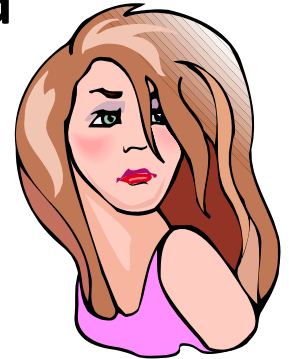


**“Finally, there are the rarely observed instances of shunning a group member whose behavior seems abnormal – the social rejection of Pepe and Old Mr. McGregor after they suffered polio.” (P. 227)**

Goodall, J. (1986). Social Rejection, Exclusion and Shunning Among Gombe Chimpanzees. *Ethnology and Sociobiology*, *7*, pp. 227-239. From Website: <http://www.bepress.com/context/gruterclassics/article/1032/viewcontent/>.

# How to Treat Flirting Difficulties

- Social Skills training by Mental Health Professionals and Speech-Language Pathologists
- Treat Neurosocial Comorbidities & lack of muscle tone
- Try an “Emotional Seeing Eye Dog” (Grandin, 1995)
- Address age appropriate dress and grooming.
- Take care of complexion, etc.
- SIRC Guide to Flirting



Grandin, T. (1995). Thinking in Pictures: And Other Reports From My Life with Autism. New York, NY: Vintage.

Grandin, T. (2006). Animals in Translation. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger's & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

Social Issues Research Centre (No date). SIRC Guide to Flirting, pages 1 to 16. [www.sirc.org/publik/flirt.html](http://www.sirc.org/publik/flirt.html).



# Nice Description of Human Flirting

**Brooks, D. (January 11, 2011). Social Animal: How The New Sciences of Human Nature Can Help Make Sense of a Life. New Yorker.**

➤ [http://newyorker.com/reporting/2011/01/17/110117fa\\_fact\\_brooks?printable=true](http://newyorker.com/reporting/2011/01/17/110117fa_fact_brooks?printable=true).

# **Social Issues Research Centre (SIRC)**

## **Guide to Flirting**

**“Flirting is a basic instinct, part of human nature. This is not surprising: if we did not initiate contact and express interest in members of the opposite sex, we would not progress to reproduction and the human species would become extinct. According to some evolutionary psychologists, flirting may even be the foundation of civilization as we know it. They argue that the large human brain – our superior intelligence, complex language, everything that distinguishes us from animals – is the equivalent to a peacock’s tail: a courtship device evolved to attract and retain sexual partners. Our achievements in everything from art to rocket science may be merely a side-effect of the essential ability to charm.”**  
**(Page 1 of 16)**

# Human Flirting Behavior

- **55% of first impressions come through appearance and body language.**
- **38% comes from your style of speaking, not the content of what you say.**
- **7% comes from the words you say**

Social Issues Research Centre (No date). SIRC Guide to Flirting,  
<http://www.sirc.org/publik/flirt.html>,  
pages 1 to 16.



# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?



- **Work on appearance and body language first**
  - Age appropriate and stylish clothing and hair
  - Good hygiene and grooming
  - Cleaning up complexion (dermatologist, etc.)
  - Work on muscle tone (OT/PT/Personal Trainer, etc.)
  - Work on Body Language (Mental Health Professional and Speech-Language Pathologist)



# Digression: ASD and Appearance



- **Those with Asperger's Disorder and High Functioning Autism have problems with Theory of Mind which can cause problems with receptive interpretation of non-verbal cues from others. It can also cause them problems in putting importance on their own non-verbal cues.**

Klin, A., Volkmar, F.R. and Sparrow, S.S. (2000). Asperger Syndrome. New York, NY: Guilford.

# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? (CONT.)

**Work on speech second (Speech-Language Pathologist):**

**“Aim for moderation in volume and tone, with enough variation in pitch and pace to hold your companion's interest. Also remember that a rising or falling intonation, especially when accompanied by a drop in volume, is a 'turn-yielding cue', whereby speakers signal that they have finished what they are saying and are ready to listen to the other person. When you hear these vocal signals, your companion is probably indicating that it is your turn to speak. When your companion hears these signals, he or she may well assume that you are 'yielding' the floor.”**

**Social Issues Research Centre (No date). [SIRC Guide to Flirting](http://www.sirc.org/publik/flirt.html),  
<http://www.sirc.org/publik/flirt.html>,  
pages 1 to 16.**

# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? (CONT.)

Work on conversational content third (Speech-Language Pathologist and Parent) (**Practice, Practice, Practice!**):

**“The 'art' of verbal flirting is really just a matter of knowing the rules of conversation, the unwritten laws of etiquette governing talking and listening. The best and most enjoyable conversations may seem entirely spontaneous, but the people involved are still obeying rules. The difference is that they are following the rules automatically, without consciously trying, just as skilled, experienced drivers do not have to think about changing gears. But understanding how the rules of conversation work – like learning how and when to change gears – will help you to converse more fluently, and flirt more successfully.”**

Social Issues Research Centre (No date). [SIRC Guide to Flirting, http://www.sirc.org/publik/flirt.html](http://www.sirc.org/publik/flirt.html), pages 1 to 16.

# Social Issues Research Centre (SIRC) Guide to Flirting (Continued)

Social Issues Research Centre (No date). SIRC  
Guide to Flirting,  
<http://www.sirc.org/publik/flirt.html>,  
pages 1 to 16.

**This offers an excellent scientific (& lay person friendly) description of human flirting behavior and can be used as a teaching tool.**

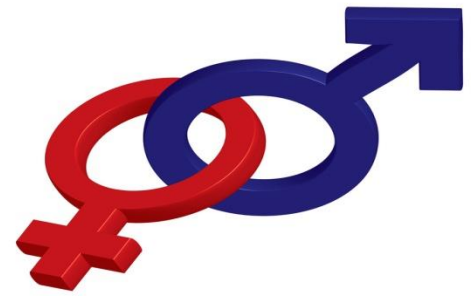
# What is a Date?



**“Going out with someone in an identified setting such as a restaurant, cinema, or cultural event with the intent of getting to know them better to see if you would be interested in developing a romantic relationship.” (p. 253)**

**Baker, J. (2005). Preparing for Life: The Complete Guide for Transitioning to Adulthood for those with Autism and Asperger’s Syndrome. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.**

# Immaturity

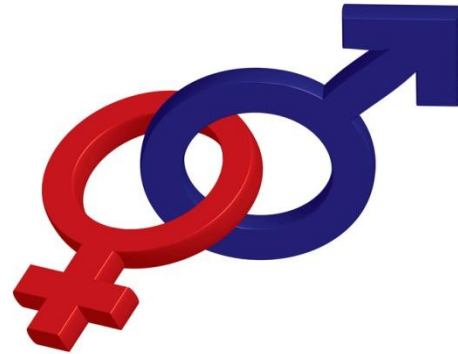


**Anne Ford wrote, “The most successful dates or boyfriend-girlfriend relationships I have seen in the LD community are between two adults with similar levels of disability who act more like best friends than lovers...When you find someone like that, other quirks and oddities of behavior don’t matter that much.” (p. 64-65)**

**Ford, A. (2007). On Their Own: Creating an Independent Future for Your Adult Child with Learning Disabilities and ADHD. New York, NY: New Market.**

# Where to Find a Date

- School & school social clubs
- Youth groups
- Places of worship and specialized clubs/groups sponsored by them
- Job training center
- Friends and family
- Internet
- Singles events
- Gym, library, dance clubs, parties, etc.



**Baker, J. (2005). Preparing for Life: The Complete Guide for Transitioning to Adulthood for those with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.**

# Rules for Internet Dating



- **Do not give out your home address or phone number.**
- **Always meet for the first time in a public place far from home (i.e., restaurant, coffee shop, etc.).**
- **Realize everything said on the internet is not true.**
- **Use a reputable internet dating service for added security.**

**Ford, A. (2007). On Their Own: Creating an Independent Future for Your Adult Child with Learning Disabilities and ADHD. New York, NY: New Market.**



# ASD and Sexual Harassment

**“We do recognize that problems with sexual expression and experiences can lead to a person with Asperger’s syndrome being charged with a sexual offence. The charge tends to be for sexually inappropriate behaviour rather than sexually abusive or sexually violent behaviour...The person may have difficulty distinguishing between kindness and attraction, and assume a friendly act was an indication of romantic or sexual attraction.” (p. 339)**

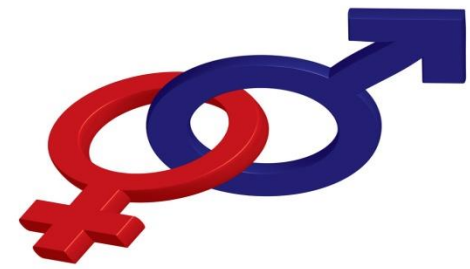
**Attwood, T. (2007). The Complete Guide to Asperger’s Syndrome. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley, p. 130.**

# Charli: An Adult on the Spectrum

**“...I often engaged in activity that today would be called ‘stalking.’ While I truly intended no harm, I experienced unbearable loneliness and if some handsome young man appeared on the periphery of my solitary life, my better judgment deserted me.” (p. 38)**

**Grandin, T. (2012). Different...Not Less: Inspiring Stories of Achievement and Successful Employment From Adults with Autism, Asperger’s and ADHD. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.**

# Sexuality and ASD



- Kids with an “invisible disability” and an aid in a mainstream class are often seen as weird and shunned.
- The more the child is seen around the school without the aid the better.
- More restrictive environment can be a dumping ground: Conduct Disorder & Victim
- Without intensive social skills training in childhood the child will not be prepared for puberty.

Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger’s & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

# Sexuality and ASD



- Have your kid assigned a “**social helper student**”:
  - The child with excellent social skills in your class, who is a “good citizen” and good student.
  - Train the helper student in how to be a helper student.

Thompson, S. (1996). Neurobehavioral Characteristics Seen in the Classroom: Developing an Educational Plan for the Student with NLD.  
From NLD on the Web: [www.nldontheweb.org/thompson-5.htm](http://www.nldontheweb.org/thompson-5.htm) .

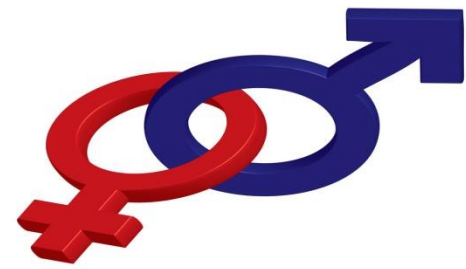
# Sexuality and ASD



- **“An associate is someone who helps you perform an activity. This is someone you can trust long enough to complete that activity...Many autistic adults who find partners report those partners entered their life as trusted associates, people who could be relied on to share necessary or even enjoyable activities. “(p. 26-27)**
- **The person with ASD should be taught that just because someone is a trusted associate does not make them a potential date!**

**Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger’s & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.**

# Sexuality and ASD



- **Often the ASD child and adolescent does not have any friends, however, forcing them to interact socially may cause more harm than good.**
- **Get them involved in after school activities, clubs etc. they might be interested in and they will find others interested in the same things.**
- **Encouraging them when they start to show interest in someone.**

**Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger's & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.**

# ASD and Sexuality



- **Sports, PE (adaptive/or not), aerobic exercise, working with a fitness instructor etc. can help with appearance, confidence and fitness if done in a way that meets the child's/teen's needs.**

Newport, J., and Newport, M. (2002). Autism-Asperger's & Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

# Examples of “The Rules”



- If someone says “no” to going on a date with you three times (with more than one week between invitations) the person is ‘saying nicely’, “no I do not want to go out with you.” Don’t ask them again.
- Don’t expect physical contact on the first several dates. Maybe hold hands on second date, kiss at door good night.
- Don’t ask him in on the first several dates.

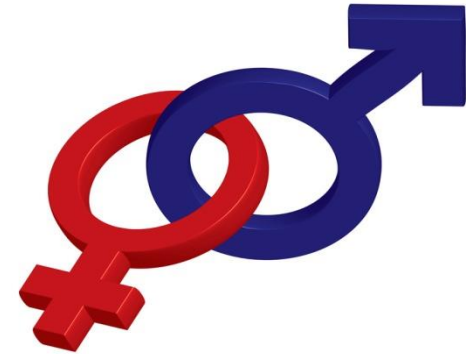


# Ask Questions



- **“Be friendly and engaging”- Ask open ended questions about them (teach this)**
- **Teach them how to respond to questions about themselves. Short, truthful, etc.**
- **Remember the best pick up line is, “Hi my name is...”**

# Be Mannerly



- Use proper table educate.
- Don't eat too fast or too slow.
- Choose activities and food your date and you would probably like.
- Avoid your “special topic”. Try to show interest in their special topic.
- The pace for all this is **SLOW!!!**

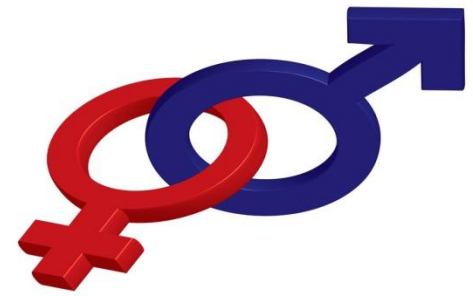
# Touching



- The first touch should be on the forearm/back of shoulder (typically non-threatening).
- If not rejected later touch hand.
- Later hold hand...
- If they say, “NO” then NO means NO!

**Social Issues Research Centre (No date). SIRC  
Guide to Flirting,  
<http://www.sirc.org/publik/flirt.html>,  
pages 1 to 16.**

# Celibacy



**“I have remained celibate because doing so helps me to avoid the many complicated social situations that are too difficult to handle. For most people with autism, physical closeness is as much a problem as not understanding social behavior.” (Dr. Temple Grandin, p. 133)**

**Grandin, T. (1995). Thinking In Pictures: And Other Reports From My Life With Autism. New York, NY: Vintage.**

# Anita Lesko: Adult on the Spectrum

- Registered nurse anesthetist & aviation photojournalist
- “I haven’t been on a date for 14 years. I realize this is shocking to most people, but it just happened this way because of all the things I’ve been doing with my time. I didn’t make a conscious decision not to date – it just happened.” (p. 201)

Grandin, T. (2012). Different...Not Less: Inspiring Stories of Achievement and Successful Employment From Adults with Autism, Asperger’s and ADHD. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

# Sex Therapists and Educators

- **American Association of Sexuality Educators and Therapists: [www.aasect.org](http://www.aasect.org)**
  - There are professionals in this organization that work with those with disabilities.



# Dr. Blake & Cross Country Education

[www.crosscountryeducation.com](http://www.crosscountryeducation.com)

- ❖ Other Seminars Dr. Blake does for Cross Country Education (6 CEUS, CDs available\*, Video DVDs available @):
  - **Social Difficulties of Learning, Attentional and Autism Spectrum Disorders: Screening and Treatment-2013 Edition\***
  - **Neurosocial Disorders: Creating a Comprehensive Treatment Plan\***
  - **Assessment and Treatment of Dyslexia in Adolescents and Adults: No Adult Left Behind\***
  - **Building a Life Skills Tool Kit: Helping Prepare the Adolescent with Autism Spectrum Disorder for Adult Life**
  - **Life-changing Interventions for the New AD/HD: Beyond the DSM-5@**
  - **Developmentally Disconnected: Evidence-Based Tools for Transforming Social Competence**

# Dr. Blake & Cross Country Education

[www.crosscountryeducation.com](http://www.crosscountryeducation.com)

❖ Webinars Dr. Blake does for Cross Country Education (1 CEU available):

- **Understanding Inattentive ADHD: Evidence-Based Screening and Treatment Strategies (Recently Updated!)**
- **Everyone is a Stranger: Face Blindness in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders**
- **“No! I Don’t Want to Give My Child a Drug to Treat Their ADHD”: Complementary and Alternative Treatments for ADHD**



# *Kevin T. Blake, Ph.D., P.L.C.*

- ***Dr. Blake's personal story seminar:***
  - **I Pulled an All-Nighter for My High School Graduation and Other Adventures of a Dyslexic, Hearing Impaired Psychologist**
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