

CHILDREN ON THE AUTISTIC SPECTRUM WITHIN THE EARLY YEARS

Introduction

Willis (2009) has stated that autism is a spectrum disorder that last throughout a persons life and it affects how they see the world and interact with others. . It is a spectrum condition meaning that all people with autism share similarities in the difficulties they may face but it will also affect them in many ways such as social interacting, communication, flexible thinking, and sensory processing. (NAS, 2017)

Conclusion

Overall, Children on the Autistic spectrum need specific strategies put in place to help them over come barriers that they may face through the early years. Both ABA and multi-sensory approaches are beneficial in mainstream and specialised education that will help autistic children with their development.

Applied Behavioural Analysis

Within an early years setting autistic children can face many barriers whether they are in mainstream or specialised education. There can be a lack of knowledge and understanding from staff members within a setting as they may not understand the different behaviours that display and comparing to the other children in the classroom when they have specific needs and requirements (Morrier et al ,2010). It is a structure approach between the child and a specialist practitioner who led the intervention. It breaks down the child's behaviour into smaller parts that will hopefully allow them to complete task successfully. ABA focuses on the key aspects that explain how learning takes place such a positive reinforcement which can be seen by Skinner. Skybound (2016) Applied Behaviour Analysis offers a more modern approach as it is conducted in a natural environment based in Pembrokeshire with a variety of programmes depending if it is suitable to that individual child. Skybound (2016) also offer courses to groups of individuals including parents, teachers and other professional who would like to know more information within this field of work. This can be beneficial as this strategy can be conducted within the child's home giving them more comfort and routine to their day.



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(Lighthouse Autism Centre, 2016)

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(Montessori4autism, 2012)



Multi-sensory approach

Multi-sensory is the idea that learning experienced through all senses will give children a richer and more motivating experience. It refers to any learning activity that has two or more sensory approaches to take in or allow children to express information (Gov Wales, 2008). This approach is mostly beneficial in literacy and language learning which is key for autistic children as it will help them with their word recognition, the relationships between sound and symbol the use of writing (Gov Wales, 2008). This is seen by Montessori, as most children on the autistic spectrum learn best through visual or multi-sensory presentations and may not succeed well in a mainstream classroom (McTiernan et al, 2011). Within the Montessori environment there are gentle rules for the children which protect their work from disruption by other children and the freedom for children to work with activities for as long as they want, this will enable an autistic child to concentrate more until they are fully satisfied (McTiernan et al, 2011). A multi-sensory approach is one of the most beneficial approaches to use with autistic children as it is not giving them any restrictions and keeps them in their daily routine and comfort.

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