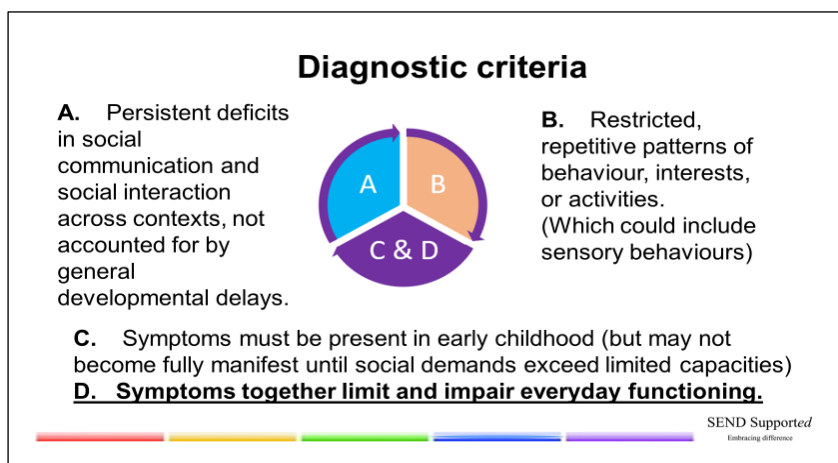


What is Autism?

Autism is a lifelong, developmental disability that affects how a person communicates with and relates to other people, and how they experience the world around them.

Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) is a term used to describe a whole range of overlapping developmental difficulties that children may have. For a diagnosis to be given, it is agreed that there must be difficulties in the following areas;



Autism is dimensional, meaning individual profiles can vary considerably depending on the combination of a person's strengths and difficulties. Most children will show a mix of features across the spectrum. The most important thing is to identify and understand the needs and strengths of each individual child, regardless of the words used to describe them.

Autistic demand avoidance

Children and young people with autism may avoid demands or situations that trigger anxiety or sensory overload, disrupt routines, involve transitioning from one activity to another, and activities/events that they don't see the point of or have any interest in.

They may refuse, withdraw, 'shutdown' or escape in order to avoid these things.

Helpful approaches include addressing sensory issues, helping individuals adjust to new situations (for instance by using visuals or social stories), keeping to a predictable routine, giving plenty of notice about any changes or accepting that avoiding some things is perfectly acceptable.

Here are some videos about receiving and understanding an autism diagnosis from some young people. It may help to watch these.

<https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/receiving-and-understanding-a-diagnosis/>

Also see [Amazing Things Happen](#) for a brilliant explanation that can be shared with people of all ages.

