

# Communication challenges

## Concern

Difficulty interacting and communicating with others, characterized by being overly literal, misunderstanding directions, nonstop talking, or talking with repetition yet inattentive when others talk, missing non-verbal and verbal social cues.

## Description

These are a range of problems that make it difficult to pick up clues from other people and respond appropriately. Many of them fall under the broad heading of “Autism Spectrum Disorders,” which can present very differently from person to person.

Empathy is a common challenge for these students. They struggle to get inside others’ hearts and minds, making it difficult to take someone else’s point of view. This can then interfere with the socialization process. These kids also may miss jokes and expressions because they’re too literal. They can be rigid and easily upset with change. Frustration as a result of these things can lead to aggression, compulsive behavior, or simply shutting down. These communication challenges can result in doing poorly in school, even though the academics may not be a problem.

## Goals of intervention - students will:

- Become more comfortable with change
- Understand instructions
- Develop social skills that enable them to participate in conversation
- Develop empathy
- Reduce anxiety

## **A suggested scope and sequence - Teens**

Temperament	Expressing sympathy	Assertive eyes
Learning style	Compliments - giving	Compulsive
Obsessing	Apologies	Controlling impulses
Instructions - following	Paraphrasing	Managing feelings
Change - normal	Asking questions	Teased
Change - unplanned	Making space	Anxiety
Problem solving	Perspective-taking	Frustration
Conversations	Joining a group	Relaxing
Communication skills	Group discussions	Breathing
Introducing yourself	Group skills	ASD/Autism
Inviting someone	Ignoring	Isolated
Thanking someone	Asserting yourself	

## **A suggested scope and sequence - Kids**

Learning style	Teased	Thanking someone
Empathy	Assertive body	Compliments
Instructions following	Assertive message	Apologies
Changes - normal	Assertive voice	Ignoring
Problem solving	Controlling impulses	ASD/Autism
Conversations	Managing feelings	Motives - understanding
Asking questions	Ignoring	Point of view
Assertiveness	Group - joining	
Introducing	Inviting	