

## Things to Consider When Meeting with a Student with Asperger's Syndrome

- Remember that individuals with Asperger's Syndrome view the world exclusively from their ***own viewpoint***. They have difficulty considering perspectives other than their own. This is particularly true if they feel strongly about an issue.
- Do not ***personalize*** their failure to follow the social norms of behavior that you expect. They may cut you off, interrupt, perseverate or engage in other social behaviors that might normally be considered in other circumstances to be "rude" or "arrogant". These behaviors are usually the result of difficulty processing social information, which is a key feature of the disability.
- Be mindful of ***how*** you communicate:
  - ❖ Be as concrete and literal as you can be in your communication.
  - ❖ Be clear, firm and direct.
  - ❖ Pare down your language to avoid information "overload".
  - ❖ Stick to a few main points that are clearly articulated.
  - ❖ Slow down. Allow processing time after you have provided information.
  - ❖ Avoid use of humor, metaphors, abstract and figurative language
  - ❖ If you find yourself in a disagreement or debate, ***stop***. *More information or explaining your point again or in another way likely will not help*. If the student remains "***stuck***" in debating or arguing and is not responsive to prompts to move through the conversation, end the conference in a supportive but firm manner and provide the student with another date and time to meet.
- Consider the following ***steps*** to maximize your chance for a positive meeting outcome:
  1. Have a ***written agenda*** of the goals of the meeting (3 goals maximum). The written agenda should use clear and precise language. If the student scheduled the meeting together create a written agenda.
  2. Include in the agenda a start and end time for the conference.
  3. If you scheduled the meeting begin by reviewing the agenda. It is fine to ask the student if he or she would like to add items (1 or 2 max) to the agenda.
  4. Proceed sequentially through the items. Review and summarize after each item. Check for comprehension.
  5. Refer to the written agenda after each item. Consider having the student check off items as you complete them.
  6. Writing down any additional information (additions, modifications, clarifications) that comes up during the discussion is important.
  7. End the conference by reviewing the agenda and the written action plan if one is created. Providing the student with a copy of the action plan including detailed expectations and due dates. If the plan involves multiple steps, it may be helpful to draw a visual representation or time line.