City of Bradford MDC

0-25 Specialist Teaching & Support Services

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SCIL (Social, Communication, Interaction and Learning) Team

Support for Transition to Adulthood

Please find below some areas that autistic young people may need support with. Some are strategies that can be put in place once the young person is in work/at university. Others are specific areas that should be looked at prior to the event to support the person to gain independence and life skills. Some of the suggestions are things that they will need someone else to help them with, and some of the suggestions they could do by themselves.

Please note:

- It may be beneficial for the young person to have a mentor, both at University or in the Workplace. This person could be someone whom they can share any worries or concerns with, but also someone who can help to find solutions and implement any reasonable adjustments, as necessary.
- An important thing to consider is whether they want people to know about their diagnosis. This is their decision. The National Autistic Society gives some helpful pointers on their website: Talking about and disclosing your autism diagnosis
- Remember, everyone is an individual: This information sheet generalises. Please always keep in mind the young person that you are working with and what is appropriate for them.

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Communication		
Areas to work on, prior to Work/University	Norms of a conversation	Teach, and provide opportunities to practise skills such as: • Turn taking • Listening • Talking about a variety of topics • Asking questions. Etc.
	Vocalising thoughts	• Help them to develop strategies such as waiting for a few seconds before speaking so they can think about what they are saying. • Help them to develop strategies to think of things from another perspective. Etc.
	Autistic young people may have difficulty in imagining what it would be like at university, or in a particular job.	Provide them with opportunities for different experiences, so that they can really get a feel for what something will be like: • Visiting places • Watching films • Talking to someone who is there/doing the job. • Work Experience. Etc.
	Everyone communicates in different ways.	Find out the young person's preferred method of communication and ensure that they have opportunities to express their views and ask questions using this method.
At University or in the Workplace	Autistic young people are often visual learners.	Help them to learn how to advocate for themselves: • Ask for information to be written down. • If tasks are not already broken down into smaller steps, break down each activity into smaller manageable chunks. • If having a conversation with someone, teach them to ask that person to follow up the conversation with a brief email, highlighting the key points of the conversation to help them remember. Etc.

	Language can be confusing, especially non-literal language, banter etc.	Help them to learn how to advocate for themselves:
		• Asking people to use literal language.
		• Learning the rules of workplace in regard to banter.
		   For example:
		      ○ What you can say and things you really can't say.
		      ○ Who you can have banter with.
		      ○ When you can have banter.
		              Etc.

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Interaction		
Areas to work on, prior to Work/University	What makes a good friend?	Do work on areas such as: • What is a friend? • What makes a good friend? • What makes a bad friend? • How is a friend different from a colleague? • What do friends do together? • How often do you contact friends? • How many friends can you have? Etc. This may need to be taught individually or as part of a larger group.
At University or in the Workplace	How to make new friends?	Encourage the young person to: • Know themselves – what do they like doing? What's important to them? • Join a club/group where they will meet like-minded people. Etc.
	Sometimes, misunderstandings may arise	Help the young person to know who they can talk to if they need some help with a situation.

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Thought Processes		
Areas to work on, prior to Work/University	Differences in Executive Functioning	Help them to develop strategies such as: • Ensuring that instructions are written down or emailed • Ensuring that tasks are broken down into small chunks • Learning how to plan a day/week • Working out how to get to lectures/work on time • Planning how/when/where they will be doing private studying. Etc.
	Knowing what to do in different scenarios	It may be beneficial to go through different scenarios and create small 'help sheets for what to do. For example, • What to do if my bus doesn't turn up • What to do if I meet a friend at the pub and they don't turn up • What to do if I feel ill Etc.
At University or in the Workplace	Plan your day / write a timetable	Help them to develop strategies to help their planning, such as: • Having a weekly timetable • Making a daily timetable if necessary • Planning what they are going to eat each day and therefore what food they need to buy • Planning when assignments are due in and when they need to start working on them. Etc.
	There are many 'Hidden rules' in a workplace which can be confusing.	Talk about the potential 'Hidden rules' in a workplace. For example: • Where to sit – do you always sit in the same place? Do you move around? Can you sit anywhere? Etc. • Who can use the fridge – what do you put in there? What do you write on your things? Can anyone use anything? Etc. • Can you make refreshments at any time? Do you have to offer to make other people a drink? Do you contribute to buying tea/coffee/milk? Etc.

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Sensory Differences		
Areas to work on, prior to Work/University	Sensory Differences	Support them to learn about 'self': What sensory experiences do they seek? What do they avoid? Once known, then investigate different strategies. For example: • Regular movement breaks to help with concentration • Using Fiddle Toys to aid with concentration in a lecture or in a meeting. • Using 'noise cancelling earbuds' or listening to music through headphones when in an open-plan office or when trying to study somewhere. • Wearing sunglasses if the lights are bright. Etc.
At University or in the Workplace	Will sensory differences have any impact on living arrangements?	Consider the following with them: • Have a clear understanding of any sensory differences. • Look into different options for living. • Look into different adjustments that could be made in the house. Etc.
	Will sensory differences have any impact on what course or job?	Consider the following with them: • Have a clear understanding of sensory differences. • Look into different options for courses/jobs. Really investigate what it will be like before starting. Visit? Watch films? Talk to someone? • Are there any reasonable adjustments that could be made? Etc.

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Other		
Areas to work on, prior to Work/University	Teach independence and life skills	Teach independence and life skills, such as: • Getting public transport • Cooking • Ordering food in a café • Shopping • Clothes washing <p align=center>Etc.</p>
	Managing emotions	• Help them to recognise their own emotions (how they are feeling in different situations etc.) • Help them to understand their emotions (what an emotion means, how their body feels etc). • Help them to develop positive strategies to regulate their emotions. • Help them to recognise and understand the emotions of others.
At University or in the Workplace	Find a mentor or someone to go to when necessary.	Find someone at university/in the workplace who can provide them with further support if needed.