



Autism Training



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land

Breakaway is located on Darkinjung country, which extends from the Hawkesbury River in the south, to Lake Macquarie in the north, from The McDonald River and Wollombi up to Mt Yengo in the west, to the Pacific Ocean in the east, and we wish to acknowledge them as Traditional Owners.

We would also like to pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and to Aboriginal Elders of all nations.

By completing this training session you will

- Achieve a basic understanding of the causes of Autism.
- Understand the difference between a sensory meltdown and a behaviour meltdown.
- Be equipped with practical skills to respond appropriately to a person with Autism.

**This online training session should take approximately
40 minutes to complete**

Our Mission Statement

Camp Breakaway is a non-profit, charitable organization committed to enhancing the lives of all people with a disability, at the same time allowing respite for families and carers

Please take the time to read this important document

(Click on each link for access)

Link to NDIS Code of Conduct

<https://www.nwss.org.au/support/wp-content/uploads/NDIS-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

What causes Autism?

Autism has no single, known cause. Given the complexity of the condition, and the fact that symptoms and severity vary, there are probably many causes. Both **genetics** and **environment** may play a role. There is no evidence that autism is caused by a child's upbringing or social circumstances. *

* Source: <http://www.autismspectrum.org.au/>

“Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew”

by Ellen Notbohm

1. **Behaviour is communication.** All behaviour occurs for a reason. Look beyond the behaviour to find the source of my resistance.
2. **Never assume anything.** Without factual backup, an assumption is only a guess. I may not know or understand the rules. I may have heard the instructions but not understood them. Maybe I knew it yesterday but can't retrieve it today.
3. **Look for sensory issues first.** A lot of my resistant behaviours come from sensory discomfort. One example is fluorescent lighting.

Continued ➔

6. **Keep your expectations reasonable.**
7. **Help me transition between activities.** It takes me a little longer to motor plan moving from one activity to the next. Give me a five-minute warning and a two-minute warning before an activity changes, and build a few extra minutes in on your end to compensate.

A simple clock face or timer on my desk gives me a visual cue as to the time of the next transition and helps me handle it more independently.

Continued ➔

4. Provide me a break to allow for self-regulation before I need it.

A quiet, carpeted corner of the room with some pillows, books and headphones allows me a place to go to re-group when I feel overwhelmed, but isn't so far physically removed that I won't be able to re-join the activity flow of the classroom smoothly.

5. Tell me what you want me to do in the positive rather than the imperative. “You left a mess by the sink!” is merely a statement of fact to me. I'm not able to infer that what you really mean is “Please rinse out your paint cup and put the paper towels in the trash.” Don't make me guess or have to figure out what I should do.

Continued ➔

8. Don't make a bad situation worse. I know that even though you are a mature adult, you can sometimes make bad decisions in the heat of the moment. I truly don't mean to melt down, show anger or otherwise disrupt your classroom.

You can help me get over it more quickly by not responding with inflammatory behaviour of your own.

Beware of these responses that prolong rather than resolve a crisis, for example: raising pitch or volume of your voice - I hear the yelling and shrieking, but not the words.

Continued ➔

9. **Criticize gently.** Be honest – how good are you at accepting ‘constructive’ criticism? The maturity and self-confidence to be able to do that may be far beyond my abilities right now.

10. **Offer real choices – and only real choices.**

Sensory Meltdown -vs- Behaviour Meltdown *

Do you know the difference?

Understanding the difference between a sensory meltdown and a behaviour meltdown is **vital** as the strategies to resolve are very different. You will need two very different plans.

Let's take two situations and compare.

* *Source: <http://suelarkey.com.au>*

Situation One

Joshua arrives at school and he has a relief teacher for the day and his desk has been moved. These unscheduled changes are likely to cause a behaviour meltdown as they heighten anxiety.

This is a behavioural meltdown

The solutions to this situation could include showing a visual that his teacher is away, moving his desk back or preventative break strategies.

Situation Two

Joshua leaves home happy, walks into school and children are playing recorder in the classroom. He covers his ears, screams and runs away.

This is a sensory meltdown.

Sensory meltdowns are not always obvious. Often it can be a change of perfume, chair scrapping on floor and many other subtle sensory issues that we are unaware of.

The solutions to this situation could include removing the cause from near the child, or the child from near the cause.

Sensory Processing

Sensory Processing difficulties are a key issue for many students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

It is vital to consider the possible impact of this and how to address these issues.

What is it Sensory Processing Disorder?

Sensory Processing Disorder or SPD is a neurological disorder.

It is also referred to as
Sensory Integration Disorder or Sensory Integration Dysfunction.

SPD causes difficulties with taking in, processing and responding to sensory information from the environment and within your own body (visual, auditory, tactile, olfaction, gustatory, vestibular and proprioception).

This can be Hypo Reactive or Hyper Reactive.

For example...

One child may show no sign of pain when they hurt themselves, whilst for another the slightest touch can cause pain.

People with an ASD tell us about their sensory difficulties.

Temple Grandin (in her autobiography) writes: *“Ordinary clothes itched and scratched. Behaviour Problems could have been avoided by simple clothing modifications.”*

“My eyes are sensitive to light, and I squint.”

“Although my hearing was normal, noises overwhelmed me. I covered my ears to block out sounds.”

Sensory Processing *

The great news is sensory integration activities are unbelievably fun and a necessary part of development for any child, whether they have a sensory processing disorder or not.

Let's look at some fun activities on the next slides:

* Source: <http://www.autismspectrum.org.au>

10 Sensory Activities for EVERYONE

1. Play dough: hide objects or little wobbly eyes in the dough and get the kids to find.
2. Put on shoes and socks; find big ones that are easy to put on at first.
3. Chinese Whispers: just start with one word.
4. Play with toys which have sounds, vibrate or light up.
5. Marble works.

Continued ➔

10 Sensory Activities for EVERYONE

6. Pop-up books.
7. Target games.
8. Bean bag activities: throwing, catching, carrying etc.
9. Mirror activities: dress up, make faces.
10. Put out a range of textures on the ground: sand, bubble wrap, carpet, foam pieces etc. Start with shoes on then take off shoes and socks! or even crawl over.

What does my child do?

My child often eats a particular food for a while and then stops eating it completely.



I just wish my child would eat a greater variety of food

My child only likes to eat dark coloured food like chocolates.



Feeding for children with Autism

Children who are on the Autism Spectrum frequently have feeding problems including:

- Eating a limited range of foods
- Selective eating
 - ✓ by type
 - ✓ by texture
 - ✓ by colour
- Food refusal

Examining 'Occupation'



The word 'occupation' refers to more than just a career or job.

Occupation = something that occupies our time

Think of ALL the things that you do on an EVERYDAY basis and your occupational roles

What Occupations Does a Child Have?

Self – care

Developing skills to act independently:

- Go to the toilet
- Brush teeth
- Get dressed
- Eat meals
- Shower/bath
- Wash hair
- Tie shoe laces



What are Our Senses?

Everyone interacts with their world through their senses.



What are Our Senses?

Sight (visual sense)



What are Our Senses?

Sound (auditory sense)



What are Our Senses?

Smell (olfactory sense)



What are Our Senses?

Taste (gustatory sense)



What are Our Senses?

Touch (tactile sense)



What are Our Senses?

Movement (vestibular sense)



What are Our Senses?

Body Position (proprioception)



What is Sensory Processing?

“Sensory processing is the detection, modulation, integration, and organisation of sensory stimuli from one’s own body and from the environment that can then be used to regulate behaviour and emotions”

Sensory Processing and Autism

It is estimated that more than 80% of children with Autism have sensory processing problems.





**Thank you for
completing this
online training
session.**

Any Questions?
(See following page)



For more information

Please visit our website @

www.breakaway.org.au

or visit Facebook @

<https://www.facebook.com/campbreakaway>

or contact Breakaway on

(02) 4390 7624

Please continue to next slide 

Please exit 'Slide Show' mode now

Enter your details on the following slide to certify that you have completed this training module.

Then print out the completed slide, sign it, and deliver or send it to Breakaway.

We will use this information to update your volunteer record in our database to show that you have completed this training module.

This completed form is the only evidence that the module has been completed that Breakaway is able to accept.

Certification of completion of Module #8: Autism training session

**I have read and understand the Camp Breakaway Module 8
& agree to abide by the principles as outlined in this module.**

Name: _____

Date Completed: _____

Signature: _____

Please print out this completed form, sign it, and either deliver or send it to Breakaway.

We will use this information to update your volunteer record in our database to show that you have completed this training module.