








WHAT IS ASPERGER SYNDROME (AS)?

What is it?

Asperger's Syndrome (or Asperger's Disorder) is a neurobiological disorder named after a Viennese physician, Hans Asperger.

He described a pattern of behaviours in several young boys who had normal intelligence and language development, but who also exhibited autistic-like behaviours and marked deficiencies in social and communication skills.

Signs and Symptoms

-  Individuals with AS can exhibit a variety of characteristics and the disorder can range from mild to severe.
-  They may show marked deficiencies in social skills, have difficulties with transitions or changes and prefer sameness.
-  They often have obsessive routines and may be preoccupied with a particular subject of interest.
-  They have a great deal of difficulty reading non-verbal cues (body language) and very often the individual with AS has difficulty determining proper body space.
-  Often overly sensitive to sounds, tastes, smells and sights, the person with AS may prefer soft clothing, certain foods, and be bothered by sounds or lights no one else seems to hear or see. It's important to remember that the person with AS perceives the world very differently.
-  By definition, those with AS have a normal IQ and many individuals (although not all) exhibit exceptional skill or talent in a specific area.
-  While language development seems, on the surface, normal, individuals with AS often have deficits in pragmatics and prosody. Vocabularies may seem advanced for their age, but they may not actually be able to hold a good conversation with someone else in a two-way fashion.

Persons with AS can be extremely literal and have difficulty using language in a social context.