



Teaching Tips for Students with Autism

As with all learners, students with Autism have their individual set of strengths and needs. Their strengths may include: a good memory for facts, logical thinking, and attention to detail. Their needs may reflect difficulties in communication and social skills, and difficulties with comprehension of abstract concepts. The following are a few strategies to help children with Autism learn:

- ❖ Gather information from caregivers regarding what helps learning.
- ❖ Keep the learning setting quiet and visually uncluttered.
- ❖ Plan concrete and real-life learning activities.
- ❖ Use visual and tactile aids: pictures, flash cards, puppets, touch & feel books.
- ❖ Speak with simple directions framed in a positive manner.
- ❖ Facilitate interactions with peers of all abilities.
- ❖ Alternate active group activities with quiet work time.
- ❖ Keep class schedule structured and consistent.
- ❖ When changes in the routine occur, try to give advanced notice.
- ❖ Plan activities to fill waiting time.
- ❖ Reinforce good behavior in meaningful ways.
- ❖ Recognize misbehavior as a means of communication.
- ❖ Maintain open communication with parents, school teachers, and catechists to share best practices between home, school and church.

For fact sheets on Autism, visit these websites:
<http://www.exceptionalparents.org/autism.html>
<http://nichcy.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/fs1.pdf>

For more information on ministering to children with Autism contact Marsha Rivas, Equal Access Ministries, Diocese of Toledo, 419-244-6711, mrivas@toledodiocese.org.

