Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Autism Spectrum Disorder is defined by the United States Department of Education as “Autism, as defined under IDEA, is a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three that adversely affects a child’s educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a child’s educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance. (IDEA 34 C.F.R §300.8(c)(1)(i)” (United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), 2014).

The cause of Autism is still a mystery. There have been studies that have linked environmental, biologic and genetic factors but nothing can be said for sure. It is also thought that 1 in about 68 children are affected by autism. (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2015) Autism is not something that can cure. It is something that the person is going to have to live with for the rest of their lives. If the person receives treatment early on, they can learn strategies and skills to lessen the effects of Autism. Some people might say that their child “out grew it” or parts of it but that is not true. They were just able to learn how to deal with it in their everyday life. Some symptoms of autism are: “have trouble relating to others or not have an interest in other people at all, avoid eye contact and want to be alone, have trouble understanding other people’s feelings or talking about their own feelings, prefer not to be held or cuddled, or might cuddle only when they want to, appear to be unaware when people talk to them, but respond to other sounds, repeat or echo words or phrases said to them, or repeat words or phrases in place of normal language, repeat actions over and over again, have trouble adapting when a routine changes” (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2015).

There are several different things that you can do for students who have Autism Spectrum Disorders. It really depends on the child and how server they are. The most common way to help students in the educational setting would be too create a schedule and sticking with it. Structure helps them cope with everyday life. Changing the schedule could cause that student to go spin out of control. As an educator, you should work on their language skills because this is an area that they lack. Also, the student might need some time to cool down. This can be done by having them sit in a chair that cradles them back or a weighted vest. You can also cover the lights with something so they aren’t as bright. Also by giving them head phones, they can get away for a little bit. Sounds, lights, and smells can set them off. Sometimes they just need a break so going on a walk can help them. I have seen all of these things done at a school. The last thing that you should do as a teacher is to include them in the regular education room as much as possible. It is an easy way for them to learn lessons and see the modeling. They don’t notice what everyone else is doing so it needs to be pointed out to them. A peer buddy is an easy way to achieve this. But as I was saying before, if you know one autistic kid, you only know one. Not one kid is the same.

Work Cited

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