

# SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

It is very important we start preparing student for post school options. A great starting point is getting teenagers involved in volunteer work. The school holidays are a great time to volunteer, checkout the volunteer websites as they have many options available. Jeanette Purkis has written a fantastic book *The Wonderful World of Work* and has kindly written a tip sheet for this Newsletter.

- ✔ **Start the conversation** around employment with the young person early. Ideally, this should happen when they are 13 to 15 years old. That way, the transition from education to work will be less scary and unpredictable.
- ✔ **Ascertain the young person's anxieties** around working and address them. Once again, the earlier this happens, the better.
- ✔ **Focus on the young person's potential and strengths** rather than their problems and deficits.
- ✔ **Work on building** the young person's sense of self-esteem and self-worth.
- ✔ **Education is very important in terms of success in the workplace.** Try not to view education as a trajectory from school to university to professional job. Instead, see it as a journey, encourage the young person throughout their education journey, whatever they decide to study.
- ✔ **Help the young person find a mentor.** A good candidate might be an employed person with ASD that the young person admires and/or enjoys spending time with.
- ✔ **Encourage a positive view of employment.** Give some examples of employed and influential autistic people such as Temple Grandin or Anita Lesko.
- ✔ **Have a 'career day'** where the young person can talk to different people about their jobs. People could be drawn from your own friends and relatives.
- ✔ **Think about what kinds of jobs your child or student might be good at and enjoy.** You can approach businesses and create a job for them based on their strengths rather than having them apply for advertised jobs which may be inappropriate.
- ✔ **Talk about workplace communication.** Practice using role plays if you like.
- ✔ **Do some research** about disability employment service providers in your local area. Be proactive and encourage the employment service to engage with your child/student.
- ✔ **You can work through *The Wonderful World of Work: A Workbook for Asperiteens* with the young person.**



Check out Yenn's Book - *The Wonderful World of Work*

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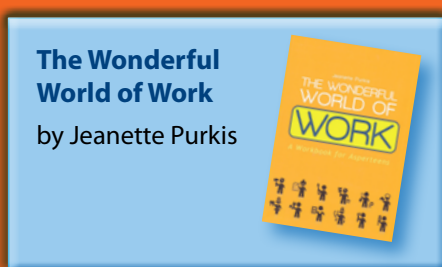
# Success in Employment – Tips for Aspertheens

Sue Larkey  
**TOP TIPS**



1. Being employed is fantastic! It gives you money and independence. It gives you something constructive to fill your time with, it helps you feel proud of yourself and it gives you a sense of purpose.
2. Ask parents and trusted adults anything you want to know about being at work. If you are worried about something, they might be able to put your mind at rest.
3. Focus on your strengths, not your weaknesses. Think about all those good things which make you who you are and how an employer could benefit from having you in their workplace.
4. Think about some of the things you can do which you might use in a job. Skills like using the internet for research, writing a blog or journal or looking after pets can translate into useful work skills.
5. Take every opportunity you can to gain work skills. This can be through volunteering at a local community group, doing work experience placements through school or doing some work for a relative or family friend who owns a business.
6. Find out what different jobs and industries there are. You can ask parents or trusted adults to tell you about different jobs and you can do some research on the internet. Make a note of any jobs which interest you and if there are any which you have skills or interests in already.
7. Write a resume. This could be tricky at first because you might not have had a job yet. You can use the information and résumé template in *The Wonderful World of Work: A Workbook for Aspertheens* to help you if you like.
8. If you apply for a number of jobs and are unsuccessful, don't worry. Keep trying! You can learn from each interview and each application you write. There will be a job for you.
9. The first job you get might not be one that you enjoy the most. Try to see your career like a journey and each job as a stepping stone along the way. See each job as a way to gain new skills which you can use to apply for jobs you would prefer to do.
10. See your Aspieness as a positive. People with ASD/Asperger's often have some great work skills already. These include things like attention to detail, the ability to focus on a task and honesty and loyalty.
11. Go out there and get that job! You will be amazing.

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



For more tip sheets, to sign up for a free newsletter or request a free catalogue, visit: [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)

NEW  
BOOK

# A MANUAL TO PROVIDE SUPPORT AND CARE FOR ADULTS *with Autism Spectrum*

**AUTHORS: SUE LARKEY & ANNA TULLEMANS**

This is a guide to help support workers to individualise support for each participant in order to help them gain independence, self-reliance and community inclusion.

## *What is in it for me?*

- Over 80 pages
- Over 500 Tips & Strategies to provide guidance for adaptations, modifications and understanding to meet the goals of participants.
- Build your expertise to encourage participants to make decisions, find their strengths and use them as building blocks to develop skills.

## *What is in the Book? Topics Include:*

- Principles of Individualised Support and How to Provide
- How to Develop a Person-Centred Approach
- Over 22 Important Tips for Supporting participants on the Autism Spectrum
- Important Guidelines for Support Workers to provide individualised support and empowerment of participants
- 20 Tips Building a Strong Relationships with participants with Autism Spectrum
- Tips and Strategies to Encourage Independence
- Using Visuals, Schedules & Checklists
- How to Support and Accommodate Sensory Processing Difficulties
- How to Expand Areas of Interest
- How to Decide on Leisure Activities
- What are Functional Skills & Effective Ways to Teach
- How to Build Capacity
- Proformas for participants and support staff
- Strategies to Support and Accommodate Executive Functioning



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**Anna Tullemans** works with teachers, parents and professionals to support children, adolescents and adults with Autism Spectrum. Her work includes assisting to implement many practical strategies for students in mainstream primary and secondary schools as well as adults with supported living arrangements. She is also a mother of a son with Autism Spectrum who leads a successful and rewarding life and is in gainful employment. She holds a University Certificate from the University of Birmingham, England, as well as a Diploma of Education Support. She is passionate about providing opportunities for people on the Autism Spectrum to achieve their goals and encourage an independent life and involvement in the community.

**Sue Larkey** completed a Diploma in Applied Science (Developmental Disabilities) and worked as a Support Worker of all ages and stages. Sue is uniquely positioned as she first started working in Institutions in South Australia and was involved in De-Institutionalisation of people with a range of Developmental Disabilities. She then worked as a Support Worker in both Supported Accommodation (Group Homes) as well as Supported Employment.