



Autism Society
Inland Empire



Teaching Autism Acceptance in Schools



K-2ND GRADE

2023

5 tips for teaching about Autism



START THE CONVERSATION

Think about how everyone is different and how nice it feels when people accept and include each other.

EXPLAIN IT

We have a PowerPoint, a recommended video and books that can help. You want to use simple terms children can understand. By talking about Autism, you help correct common myths and misconceptions, give students the why behind the behavior, and help them connect with their classmates.

FOCUS ON ABILITIES OVER DISABILITIES

Whichever way you define and explain Autism to your students, make sure to focus on abilities rather than deficits. Find something these children have in common with the other kids to help them relate to them better, and give them suggestions on how to include them throughout the school day – games they enjoy, topics they like to discuss.

ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

Children are curious by nature, and they will probably have many questions about Autism, but they may not feel comfortable asking everything on their minds for fear of being rude or looking silly. A great way to encourage open and honest communication is to ask everyone to write a question down on paper and leave it in a box so you can do an anonymous Q&A session.



TEACH EMPATHY

While we don't want the world to feel sorry for children with Autism, students can empathize with others. Encouraging them to imagine what it would be like to walk in another child's shoes may make them stop and think before excluding or teasing them.



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LEARN MORE



IEAutism.org

Your local Autism connection

Autism Acceptance Lesson Plans

K-2nd Grade

Kindness

Objective

To raise awareness of the ways we are all similar and different. Talk about the word "kindness" and "acceptance." Students will list words of what kindness means to them.

Vocabulary:

- Kindness
- Acceptance

Supplies for Lesson Plan

- Attached worksheets,
- Recommended books
- Linked video

Supplies Bubbles of Kindness (Optional)

- Magazines
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Pencil

INTRODUCTION

Tell students acceptance means being OK with people the way they are.

ACTIVITY

1. Tell the students that April is Autism Acceptance Month. Autism is something that is different, just like having different colored hair, wearing glasses, or having different skin colors.
2. Choose a resource
 - a. Read a book from our suggested reading list
 - b. watch the video
 - c. or use our Powerpoint presentation. These resources can be found on <https://ieautism.org/autism-acceptance-in-the-schools/>
3. Ask the students to:
 - a. Name some ways we are all the same
 - b. Name some ways we are all different
 - c. Name things that show kindness to everyone.
4. Ask the students the following question and write ideas on the board. Because children with Autism may feel the world differently than we do and communicate differently, how can we show them kindness and acceptance? You can use the included handout "How to be a Friend to Someone with Autism."
5. Have students complete the Bubbles of Kindness template by writing, drawing or using a picture of one way to show someone else kindness. Cut out the bubbles to make a display in your classroom. See Bubbles of Kindness Display.

Bubbles of Kindness Display

Create an interactive classroom or school display, "Bubbles of Kindness," depicting actions we can take to be kind. Please feel free to use the enclosed template or create your own. Students can write, draw, or cut out a picture showing how to be kind and inclusive to others. Using different colors and types of communication (writing, drawing, and photographs) reinforces the "Spectrum of Autism" and the importance of diversity.

**One student wrote, "Always be kind to everyone.
That is what our school is made of."**



THE GREATEST IMPACT
on our world
= DOESN'T COME FROM A TEST SCORE. =
it comes from simply
choosing to be kind

Thank you to [SLP Talk with Desiree](#)
for this idea

Elementary K-2nd Grade

Resources



We are all Special and Unique. This presentation can be used as part of a health/life skills lesson, tutor time, and/or for assemblies. The presentation focuses on our differences, similarities, and our feelings. Subjects: Language Arts, Social Studies, Life Skills.

Choose a resource:

- Autism Society Inland Empire's Powerpoint
- Video: Amazing Things Happen - by Alexander Amelines - <https://youtu.be/RbwRrVw-CRo>
- Books:
 - [A Day with No Words](#) (release date May 2023) This colorful and engaging picture book for young readers shares what life can look like for families who use nonverbal communication, utilizing tools to embrace their unique method of "speaking."
 - [A Friend for Henry \(Preschool-Elementary\)](#): A heartwarming picture book that explores the experience of autism and the power of friendship. A 2020 Schneider Family Honor Book
 - [A Friend Like Simon \(Preschool – 3rd grade\)](#) This book introduces Autism to children and is a great picture book to read to a class that may have a new student with Autism.
 - [Charlie Makes a Splash! \(Preschool – 3rd grade\)](#) Charlie is a young African American boy who has Autism. Through his adventures and discoveries, he shows the world that even though he has Autism, Autism doesn't have him.

Bubbles of Kindness Template

Write, draw or use a picture of one way to show someone else kindness.
Cut out the bubble to make a display in your classroom.

My Bubble of Kindness



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IEAutism.org

How to be a friend to someone with Autism.



Do not stare. If you have questions – ask an adult.



Use your normal voice to talk. Don't talk like a baby to them.



Take Initiative to include them.



Find a common interest.



Remember sensory sensitivities.



Ask questions and give them time to answer.



Stand up for him or her.



Don't be afraid.

