



## CREATING SUCCESSFUL PLAYGROUNDS

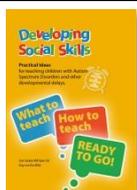
Playgrounds are unstructured, unpredictable places where children with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) struggle to follow and join in the numerous social interactions surrounding them. Children with Autism Spectrum Condition frequently return to class from the playground in a high state of anxiety. In addition, their self-esteem frequently takes a battering. Up to 70% of children experience bullying.

### 10 Top Tips to Support Children in Playground

1. Observe and then teach current playground language to children with ASC. Remember to revisit this every term as games and language changes rapidly in playgrounds.
2. Ensure that children with ASC and their parents are aware of the current playground games and activities. Allocate a staff member to teach the rules to the child with ASC so that he/she only has to concentrate on the social aspects of the game as he/she already knows the rules.
3. Offer supervised activities on the playground; e.g. ball games with a few children, 'What's the Time Mr Wolf?', nature history group.
4. Give child with ASC a map of in-bounds and out-of-bounds areas. The child could then colour the appropriate areas green and red. If play equipment has set days make sure you write the days on the map.
5. Have games equipment available for loan at break times – the child with ASC can assist in giving this out.
6. Have a basket of books available on the playground for children to read while outside.
7. Create a quiet area (no games, no play, just an escape).
8. Use a portable schedule to create a routine of what activities they will do in the playground and for how long.
9. Create a Playtime Plan. The plan provides children with ASC the structure that they need to organise themselves before going out onto the playground. This can be adapted for weekends and holidays too!
10. Support social skills with Social Stories/Scripts, e.g. 'Can I Play Please', 'What to do if children say NO'. (Great range available in *How to Stop Your Words from Bumping*, and *Developing Social Skills*)
11. Provide the children with key rings of laminated visuals of activities they can do during recess and lunch-times. Having the visuals (climbing equipment, sand-pit, library, computer lab etc) will remind the children of their options.

**Recommended Resources (available online at [www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)):**

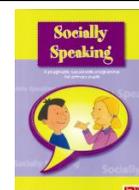
**Developing Social Skills**  
By Sue Larkey and Gay  
von Ess



**How To Stop Your  
Words From Bumping  
Into Someone Else's**  
By Rhonda Dixon and  
Anna Tullemans



**Socially Speaking Book  
and Board Game**  
By Alison Schroeder



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[www.suelarkey.com](http://www.suelarkey.com)