

A From Me and My Friends to You and Yours Resources on Autism.

### **What is Autism?**

Autism is a condition that affects 35 million people globally and 70,000 in the UK. They see, hear and feel the world differently from other people.

People that have autism are often extremely introverted or extroverted. It is not an illness and can't be cured. It is a spectrum disorder, which means that nobody is affected the same way. Some people are affected more severely than others. People with autism are often imaginative and creative. I have Asperger's syndrome which is a specific type of autism. People with Asperger's struggle to "read" people or tell their emotions as well as failing to notice sarcasm or jokes. When people with Asperger's have specific interests, they don't stop talking about it. This can be problematic with relationships, therefore I like to play with younger children.

### **How it affects me...physically, mentally and life in general**

Physically: autism affects me physically as I suffer from underdeveloped fine motor skills and clumsiness, once sitting on my glasses breaking them (accidentally). I also fail to organise my things a lot and often do not find them. I struggle to tie my shoelaces and do my top buttons sometimes. When I am excited (which is often) I flap my arms. I also like to play with soft objects and bubble wrap.

Mentally: I do not listen as well due to my autism and I find confrontations and being yelled at difficult to deal with. It also means that I am introverted. I often take jokes literally too.

Life in general: I struggle to cope with being yelled at. When I want to talk about something I do it nonstop. I am also sympathetic and empathetic to a lot of people. I attend an autism group in Perth. I have made lots of friends there that I can relate to. Every time I go there, the group do fun activities that help me get away from the hustle and bustle of home life. I have been going there for 2 years and the support I get there is amazing.

### **Ways a friend can help**

- Understand I have autism
- Know that I may not listen as well

## **A friends perspective**

“It is completely normal, except he is more excitable than my other friends. Finn is my best friend because we have the same interests”

## **Resources**

- [NHS](#)
- [autism.org.uk](http://autism.org.uk)
- [healthline.org.uk](http://healthline.org.uk)
- *Dude, I’m an Aspie* (book by Matt Friedman)

## **About the author**

I am Finn Picken. I am 13 and I live in Perthshire, UK. I was diagnosed with autism when I was 9. I was diagnosed with nystagmus, an eye condition at birth. When I was less than a year old, I broke my leg. One day I hope to be a comic writer. One of my mottos is a quote from “Dude, I’m an aspie” is “I am not weird. I am just wired differently”. I hope you enjoyed reading this and learned something.