



Autism Spectrum

Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)



Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)



Classroom-based tips (focus on instructional methods)

1. Conduct a disability awareness training at the beginning of the school year
2. Provide activities promoting acceptance and support
3. Assign specific student roles during group collaborative work
4. Ensure that each pupil has a role in class activities
5. Provide pupils with 2-3 short breaks during classroom periods
6. Use task analysis, modelling, guided practice and role playing to maximise pupils' active participation in class
7. Include all types of activities to favour the PDD-NOS pupils' participation
8. Implement social stories and peer-mediated learning strategies (e.g., peer-tutoring)
9. Implement a class-wide or individual reinforcement system (e.g., token economy)
10. Implement social skills training
11. Use response cards (pre-printed, write-on) to allow pupil additional practice opportunities



School-based practical tips (focus on instructional methods)

Class Divisions / Arrangements

Reduce the level of stress and anxiety in the school environment by developing new learning habits without disturbing the PDD-NOS pupil's routine. Repeat instructions, and explain concepts by turn-taking, sharing or entering into play situations. Reduce anxiety regarding expectations of tasks, to support routine and to introduce new, or a change in, tasks

[Reference: <https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/diagnoses/pervasive-developmental-disorder-not-otherwise-specified-pdd-nos/>]

Community

1. **Campaign for support to increase the level of awareness of the teachers, pupils and parents** of what PDD-NOS means. Involve the parents and school community to support inclusion of a PDD-NOS pupil in the class.

[Reference: <https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/diagnoses/pervasive-developmental-disorder-not-otherwise-specified-pdd-nos/>]

2. **Work with families to use a consistent approach to manage behaviour.** For example, if the child finds that every time they are given a direction, the same response is expected, or that every time they react in a certain way, the same consequence follows, they will learn the appropriate behaviour far more quickly.

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Curricular Adaptations

1. **Reduce the level of stress and anxiety in the school environment** by developing new learning habits without disturbing the PDD-NOS pupil's routine. Repeat instructions, and explain concepts by turn-taking, sharing or entering into play situations. Reduce anxiety regarding expectations of tasks, to support routine and to introduce new, or a change in, tasks

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2. **Develop literacy skills** in order to cope with completing tests, and taking exams in the academic environment.

[Reference: <https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/diagnoses/pervasive-developmental-disorder-not-otherwise-specified-pdd-nos/>]

Discipline

Have a policy and strategies to protect against bullying and aggressive situations that target the PDD-NOS pupil.

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Homework

Reduce the level of stress and anxiety in the school environment by developing new learning habits without disturbing the PDD-NOS pupil's routine. Repeat instructions, and

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Parents / Parents' Associations

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School Projects

Develop literacy skills in order to cope with completing tests, and taking exams in the academic environment.

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Pupils Support

1. **Organise the inclusion of the pupil in your class activities by developing forms of communication** such as gestural systems or picture-based systems.

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Teacher Professional Development

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2. **Help the child to understand and use richer language and to use language more spontaneously**, developing conversation skills, and **enhancing verbal and non-verbal communication** including natural gestures, speech, signs, pictures and written words.

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Technology

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Supportive Literature

Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS) “refers to a group of disorders characterised by impairment in the development of social interaction, verbal and non-verbal communication, imaginative activity and a limited number of interests and activities that tend to be repetitive” (<https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/diagnoses/pervasive-developmental-disorder-not-otherwise-specified-pdd-nos/>). In other and very succinct words, PDD-NOS refers to persons who “show only some autistic characteristics” (Delfos, Atwood, p. 20).

“PDD-NOS is often incorrectly referred to as simply ‘PDD’ The term PDD refers to the class of conditions to which autism belongs. PDD is not itself a diagnosis, while PDD-NOS is a diagnosis.” (European Commission, *Some elements about the prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in the European Union*).

An individual is diagnosed with PDD-NOS if he/she does not fully meet the criteria for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Asperger's Syndrome, Rett Syndrome or Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, but has several of the characteristics.

Children are generally 3-4 years old before they exhibit enough symptoms for a diagnosis. There is no set pattern of symptoms or signs in children with PDD-NOS. Children with PDD-NOS may exhibit some of the following features:

Social and emotional

- Poor social skills
- Reluctance to make eye contact.
- Experience difficulties interacting meaningfully.

- Appear to lack desire to share activities with others, prefers to be alone.
- May be willing to make friends, but do not know how. May be unintentionally aggressive in an attempt to be social.
- Lack social empathy.
- Difficulty in understanding that other people have their own beliefs, desires and intentions which guide their behaviour
- Difficulty in taking turns and/or sharing with peers.
- Difficulty differentiating between familiar and unfamiliar people.
- Limited in their play skills and may become fixated on only playing with specific toys in a particular way.
- Have poor imaginative play skills.

Language and communication

- Difficulty in understanding or using appropriate forms of communication, such as verbal language, body language, facial expression, tone of voice and gestures.
- Difficulty in developing and understanding other forms of communication, such as, picture-based systems.
- Limited or no speech and/or lack of typical communicative gestures.
- Literal understanding of language; they do not understand when someone is joking, for instance.

Adaptation

- Find it very difficult to interpret and process new pieces of information.
- Have difficulty coping with change.
- May feel stress because of small changes to routine, activity or unfamiliar surroundings.
- May avoid strangers or new activities because of fear and anxiety.
- Want to do work perfectly and may become unwilling to attempt work that they feel they cannot do perfectly.
- May want to be in control of situations and may become very successful at manipulating people in order to maintain control.

Cognitive

- May have learning difficulties due to poor memory and attention.
- Requires repetition of instructions/directions and may require time to process before responding or acting.
- May have difficulty understanding concepts such as turn-taking, sharing or how to enter into play situations [Reference: <https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/diagnoses/pervasive-developmental-disorder-not-otherwise-specified-pdd-nos/>]

Websites and EU Reports

European Union public health actions in the field of ASD

http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/autistic_en#fragment2

European Union research actions in the field of ASD

http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/autistic_en#fragment3

The EU's strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)

<http://bcscd.com/autism/resources/pdd/>

<http://childstudycenter.yale.edu/autism/information/pddnos.aspx>

<https://www.brainbalancecenters.com/blog/2012/02/signs-and-symptoms-of-pdd-nos/>

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/pdd-nos>

<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/asd1/#content>

References

Delfos, Martine F, Attwood, Tone, 2005, *A Strange World: Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, and PDD-NOS: A Guide for Parents, Partners, Professional Carers, and People with ASDs*, Jessica Kingsley Publishers

<https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/diagnoses/pervasive-developmental-disorder-not-otherwise-specified-pdd-nos/>

Prevalence and early detection of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in the EU

https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/major_chronic_diseases/docs/asds_eu_en.pdf