

## **Strategies for Managing Demand-Avoidance**

- Recognise & accept that children are generally not trying to get away with things or trying to be devious
- Less directive & more intuitive than would be the case with typical autism
- Avoid confrontation where possible
- Keep calm and level in emotions
- Do not be abrupt/ give a direct command
- Do not make him do it. Pick your battles/ allow for negotiation and meet half-way
- Expectations should be disguised and reduced to a minimum. Be as consistent as possible.
- Ground rules need to be reduced as far as possible but then maintained
- Say no in a yes way. Do not say no
- Avoid 'Are you ready', 'Shall we be.g.in'
- Humour/ distraction/ wonder/ excitement
- Choices:-'shoes on here or there?'
- Disguise demands 'ask without asking' e.g. cue the child in by getting equipment out that is suggestive of an activity.
- Let it be the child's idea where possible
- Go along with his fantasy world and not challenge it (i.e. don't engage but don't correct)
- Drama and role play can make use of the child's interest
- Pretend a lack of your own knowledge
- Use their own interests in teaching
- Novelty and variety are often effective
- Use IPOD/ game consoles as part of day, not just rewards
- Use creative/ therapeutic approaches (within drama/ music/ story telling)

- Visual clarification methods
- Allow more processing time
- Indirect praise to build self esteem
- Occasional bribery
- Talk of consequences may cause more anxiety and conflict
- Avoid raising anxiety
- Anxiety reducing activities e.g. exercise/ hobbies
- Be sensitive to learning style so their strengths can be maximised
- Be proactive in altering lessons if child is struggling (e.g. 'I can't find the maths worksheet so we will have to do something else')
- Use surprise rewards that may involve altering the lesson
- Give a degree of responsibility to the child for their own learning
- Try to pitch work at the right level for that day, that time and with that staff
- Use incidental learning
- Use alternative names for lessons
- Be sensitive in delivering criticism however slight
- Wait before interacting & look at body language
- Give yourself time to think of your answer- 'I'm not sure, I will find out'.  
Has favoured staff & needs rota. Favoured staff are limited to 3 sessions each week. Be aware of overdependence and the pressure on those staff
- Environmental: they should pick decor, locked cupboard he is in control of, no window on his door, no staff or children enter his room without permission, own internet computer
- Look after self
- Reduce social demands particularly when new learning is required
- Building rapport needs to be an explicit objective-reducing pressure and developing positive relationships are crucial
- Be creative in the use of structure
- Children with demand avoidance may have particular difficulties with retention so need opportunities for over learning and re-checking of learning- otherwise gains are fragile
- Reduce demands in terms of social relationships
- Remain calm and level in your emotions

- Be cautious about rewarding success
- Ignore negative behaviours as far as possible
- Consider your physical position and approach when working with the child
- Avoid confrontation where possible
- Be flexible but have definite limits that are respected
- Be imaginative and prepared to re-negotiate and re-earn the child's interest day by day (What works today may not work tomorrow but may work next week or month!)
- Have a variety of strategies to hand and don't worry if one doesn't work on a particular day
- Humour is an important tool-it can be used to reduce demands that the child may otherwise see as oppressive
- Novelty can help
- Roleplay and pretending are strengths: use them, but beware that these may become obsessions