

**The mission** of aspire - The Asperger Syndrome Association of Ireland, is to assist people with Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism to lead full and independent lives.

The Association undertakes and supports research into the condition and works to raise awareness of the syndrome among parents, professionals and the general public.

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aspire is a registered Charity - Charity Number CHY 11438.

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If you would like to contact us for advice, support or would like to learn more about the organisation and our activities, please contact:

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# aspire - The Asperger Syndrome Association of Ireland

Information Leaflet



**Asperger Syndrome (AS)** is a pervasive developmental disorder at the high functioning end of the Autistic Spectrum. Individuals with the syndrome experience significant difficulties with social interaction, communication and flexible thinking.

People with the syndrome are characterised by their impairments in social situations as well as having stereotyped patterns of behaviour and obsessional interests.

Many people with the syndrome have average intelligence or above but lack social and communication skills as well as the ability to empathise and relate to others. It has been suggested that the root of their problems lies in their inability to read emotions in others and to understand their own feelings.

People with AS are usually socially inept and can become the victim of bullying.

## aspire

### The Asperger Syndrome Association of Ireland

aspire was established by a group of parents in 1995 to provide support for those with the syndrome and their families, and to encourage and undertake research into the condition. Over the years the Association has developed support, educational and training services for people affected by the syndrome and their families.

#### Our services include:

- aspire has been operating a Helpline since it was set up to provide information on Asperger Syndrome to families, siblings, employers and others interested in the condition.
- aspire organises Conferences, Seminars, Courses and Workshops on a regular basis. We also offer a reduction on conference fees to members.
- aspire provides Respite Care grants for families affected by the condition, when funding is available.
- aspire has assisted in the setting up and development of support groups across Ireland to better serve people and the families of those with this condition.
- aspire regularly gives talks to schools, associated groups and parents meetings to spread awareness of the condition.
- aspire encourages, supports and undertakes research into Asperger Syndrome.
- aspire produces pamphlets, leaflets, a quarterly newsletter and runs a website which provides members with valuable data and support information on AS. We also send out regular email bulletins to our members regarding important events.
- aspire runs a residential unit and has assisted in the management of a supported employment service.
- aspire, in conjunction with Trinity College Dublin, has been running Educational Drama classes for children and adolescents (6 to 20+ years) with AS for several years to improve their social skills.
- aspire lobbies government departments and other organisations on behalf of members and we fundraise in order to maintain and expand our services.
- aspire employs a Family Support Officer whose main focus is to provide advice and support to families affected by AS and also to work with support groups around the country.