



# Autism in Your Classroom: A General Educator's Guide to Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Topics in Autism)

By Deborah Fein (Ph.D.), Michelle A. Dunn (Ph.D.)

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**Autism in Your Classroom: A General Educator's Guide to Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Topics in Autism)** By Deborah Fein (Ph.D.), Michelle A. Dunn (Ph.D.)

(2007 ForeWord Magazine Book of the Year Award: Finalist, Education)

Children with autism spectrum disorders are increasingly being educated in inclusive general education classrooms. For optimal results, teachers need to know as much as possible about autism and the teaching methods and modifications that work best for these students. This is a huge undertaking for time-crunched general education teachers, many of whom may never have had a student with autism before. Now teachers can turn to **Autism in Your Classroom** for the information and guidance they need.

Written by two neuropsychologists with extensive clinical and classroom experience, this new book is a concise, easy-to-read guide developed for primary school teachers (grades K- 6).

**Part I** provides a complete overview of the types, causes, characteristics, and treatments of autism spectrum disorders. It also explains various secondary characteristics of autism that create challenges for students, such as sensory abnormalities, behavioral issues, and limited social skills and peer interaction.

**Part II** focuses on the student in the classroom: It covers a variety of strategies to manage learning & behavior, such as:

Modifying classwork & homework;

Helping with language difficulties:

Using visual strategies;

Keeping students focused & organized;

Teaching reading & math;

Using positive reinforcement & rewards;

Handling challenging behavior;

Explaining autism to other students;

Teaching social skills in the classroom;

Balancing the needs of typical and special students.

**Part III** features two useful case studies. Both stem from the authors' hands-on work and consultation with teachers, students, and parents. The book concludes with an appendix of frequently asked questions about children with autism asked by educators.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

There are more children with autism in schools than ever before in the history of American public education. **Autism in Your Classroom**, gives educators the practical information and guidance they need to support these children with ASDs, or Autism Spectrum Disorders. **Autism in your Classroom** is a much-needed resource that gives teachers the understanding of the types, causes, characteristics, and treatments of these ASDs. Deftly written by Deborah Fein, Ph.D., a clinical and research neuropsychologist with 35 years of experience and serves as professor of Psychology at the University of Connecticut; and fellow Ph.D. Michelle A. Dunn, an Associate professor of neurology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine with 25 years of experience. The combined expertise of the two make **Autism in Your Classroom** invaluable to any educator who would hope to understand and properly handle Autistic students special needs.

--The Bookwatch, May 2008

This book focuses on the techniques that can be used by classroom teachers in order to assist students with autism spectrum disorders to be successfully integrated into the classroom to optimize their learning opportunities. The authors, both neuropsychologists who have worked extensively in the area of autism, have gathered their experience and best practices to provide basic information on autism and methods for teaching that will optimize the learning experience for each child.

Offering clear, concise information on autism spectrum disorders causes, treatments, and impact on family members, the information is presented in a conversational tone with emphasis on the positive outcomes that can occur with purposeful techniques to aid the autistic child. Written at a professional level, there is an index which redirects the reader to the appropriate definition.

Techniques discussed include the use of visual supports, adapting classroom homework, strategies to improve language, reading and math skills, and handling challenging behavior. Integrating the special needs child is also balanced with the needs of the rest of the members of the class. Special emphasis is placed on attention, memory, organization and motor skills and adaptive techniques to help the autistic child to optimize the learning experience. An inclusive book of resources including websites, books, organizations, and support groups is included. This book offers strategies for teachers as well as family members who have an autistic child to offer specific interventions that would benefit the child both socially and academically.

--*CAPHIS Consumer Connection*

### About the Author

Deborah Fein, Ph.D., is currently a Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of Connecticut. She has 35 years of clinical and research experience with children on the autism spectrum, and currently conducts NIH-funded research on early detection and recovery from autism.

Michelle Dunn, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in Neurology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and pediatric neuropsychologist and neurophysiologist who has worked with children on the autism spectrum for the past 25 years and trained staff in many New York area school districts.

## **Users Review**

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#### **Leo Rizer:**

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#### **Cathy Lantz:**

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#### **Debra Brunette:**

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