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Shaul's "The ASD and me picture book: A visual guide to understanding challenges and strengths for children on the autism spectrum" (book review)

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Book Review



Shaul, J. (2021). *The ASD and me picture book: A visual guide to understanding challenges and strengths for children on the autism spectrum*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 95 pp. \$27.95. 9781787759879

The author, Joel Shaul, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who provides services to at least one school that specializes in dealing with children on the autism spectrum. He also has an organization called Autism Teaching Strategies (www.autismteachingstrategies.com).

This book states that all people are different, and that all people have both strengths and challenges. Many practical examples are shown about these strengths (for example, making things, learning, working and showing you care) and weaknesses (for example, talking too much or too little, upsetting feelings and getting along with others). People can use insight to determine what they are good at, and what they struggle with, and can even quantify these areas with the help of a number line. Insight can also be used to become better at thinking about challenges and working on these challenges. The author also stresses the importance of avoiding thinking that one doesn't have any problems, or that one's problems are too numerous and too big.

Pages 60-95 are learning activities such as games, and examples of the strengths and challenge number lines that are referenced elsewhere in the book.

The book has been purposefully created so that strengths are depicted in the color green, while difficulties are depicted in the color blue. While this contrast is a good idea on the surface, it may not be a helpful distinction to those who experience color blindness or other vision problems.

Outside of the title of the book and the introduction to the book, the word autism is not used in the book. This makes it more widely applicable to other children who may have social skills challenges but are not on the autism spectrum.

This book would be a valuable addition to any library that has an education or psychology collection, but could also be highly advantageous for a children's non-fiction collection or included with parenting resources.

Reviewer

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