BackChat.....

My life with Asperger's syndrome

My name is Mark Whitenstall. I am 9 years old and I have Asperger's syndrome. This means that I have trouble with social skills and communication. Because I have a Statement (SSEN) I go to special classes at school with my support teacher who helps me with my conversation skills and my handwriting. I am not very good at some things in PE either and get help with this as well and am monitored during break times. However I am quite good at learning other things like spelling. I love to read all kinds of information books and fiction and I can write good stories for my class work.

There are other children in my school who have different disorders than mine but we are all quite similar when it comes to learning because we all find some things hard to do.

When I go out to play with my friends I have trouble knowing what is the right thing to do or say and it's the same at school.

I am sometimes bullied at school and by others outside of school. They call me names and take advantage of me because I think having Asperger's syndrome makes me an easy target for bullies.

When I am getting washed in the mornings (which is also hard to do) I have sensitivities to water temperature (i.e. I think tepid water is hot). I also find that when other people touch me I can experience big amounts of pain (i.e. like going to the hairdressers and getting my nails cut).

I get lots of headaches which I think is because I have to think things through more than other people.

I always have to get things right first time or it usually annoys me.

When I am out shopping with my family or am playing out I don't always recognise where I am and can get lost easily—I recently went down one aisle in the shop to get my comic and came back up a different aisle and couldn't find my mum.

My parents give me supplements every day called Eye Q which we think helps me with my eye and brain function. I used to take Effalex but then we heard that Eye Q was better and changed to this one.

I would like doctors to research more into autism and especially Asperger's syndrome and learning difficulties in general because there are so many people who have these problems which affect your life a lot. It is also important to get help in school.

I hope you find this helpful and can do more to help people with Asperger's syndrome.

This is a poem I wrote for a school project:

Blizzard

I struggle to set up camp on the mountainous ground,
but the blizzard destroys everything
for miles around.

When I got inside the tent I heard
piercing screams,
the screams of those who came with
no rights or means.

Yeti are the only things for miles
around,
no one else could live on higher
ground.

At the top there are bones of those
who got lost,
killed in the blizzards and huge
showers of frost.

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The playground (on a "normal" day)

I stand alone in the playground...
Looking.
Looking, at all the people
Laughing and poking fun, and usually a
punch or two,
It's "normal".

One of them walks past me...
Staring.
Staring, as if I'm from another planet,
"Three pounds fifty at Harry's on a night
get an 'air cot',
It's "normal".

My friend comes, says hi...
Talking.
Talking, though we already know the
conversation,
Same old rubbishy jokes, same clichéd
words exchanged.
It's "normal".

The rusty old bell rings...
Droning.
Droning, as if we can't hear it
Of to the same stinky lessons we have
past heard of,
It's "normal".

What's normal?...
Normal.
Free from any mental illness; sane,
Relating to or characterised by average
intelligence or development,
Fitting in with everyone else.

Do you really want to be the same as
everyone else?
I mean... why?
You be you and I'll be me.
Why not just break the rules for a
change?
I don't want to be anyone else!