



FAQ SHEET

GUEST SPEAKER TOPICS FOR AUTISM SUPPORT GROUPS (Ages 17+)

In a support group, attendees may be interested in joining a group for information and learning opportunities. Guest speakers are often invited to speak to attendees about a variety of topics related to ASD. If you are involved in a support group or would like to start your own, this resource will provide a few ideas for topics to discuss at your support group.

Bureau of Autism Services Programs

Contact ASERT to schedule a training on the Bureau of Autism Services' programs available for adults with autism.

ASERT

Contact ASERT to schedule a training to learn about ASERT, learn about utilizing the Resource Center, and discuss resources that are available in your local area.

Medicaid/Medical Access

Invite someone from HealthChoices to talk about the benefits of utilizing Medicaid/Medical Access benefits for those who qualify.

Social Security/Supplemental Security Income

Contact the Social Security Administration to request more information and get in contact with your local office. They can provide info on: Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – Children Under 18 and SSI Redetermination at age 18

Pennsylvania County Legislators

Invite your local legislators to talk to your group about their focuses and initiatives. This will also give your group members a chance to have their voices heard.

Employment

Invite someone from your local Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) office to speak about how to apply and make the most of their services.

Recognizing Mental Illness—How to Get Help

An informative talk about relationships from an experienced clinician could spark some interest! Invite a local psychiatrist or psychologist who specializes in treating individuals with autism to talk about the signs and symptoms of mental illness, such as anxiety and depression. A psychiatrist can also talk about medication management, side effects, and the importance of using medications regularly.

Relationships and Social Expectations

Invite someone who the group feels comfortable with to outline the social expectations of various social environments. Here are some examples:

- Holiday traditions
- Workplace
- Amusement Parks
- Weddings
- Funerals
- Travel
- Environments (plane, bus, train, carpool)
- Romantic relationships
- Adult friendships
- Family relationships

Life Skills

Contact a local organization or professional that provides life skills to adults with autism. This topic could branch into many different speaker presentations, such as organization, personal hygiene, laundry, cooking, cleaning, shopping, visiting the doctor, and many more. This can also include gender-specific topics, such as hygiene, dating, fashion, and safety.

Emergency Personnel

Invite a police officer or firefighter to help members of your group feel more comfortable with them so that they are able to ask for help or self-advocate if a situation arises.

Specialized interests shared by group members

From Pokémon, history, or weather to trains, Star Trek, or My Little Pony, finding someone to present to the group about any specialized interest of a member can help other members to understand more about each other and keep interest in the group meetings high.

*This information sheet was developed by the Autism Services, Education, Resources, and Training Collaborative (ASERT).
For more information, please contact ASERT at 877-231-4244 or info@PAautism.org.
ASERT is funded through the Office of Developmental Programs, PA Department of Human Services.*

