

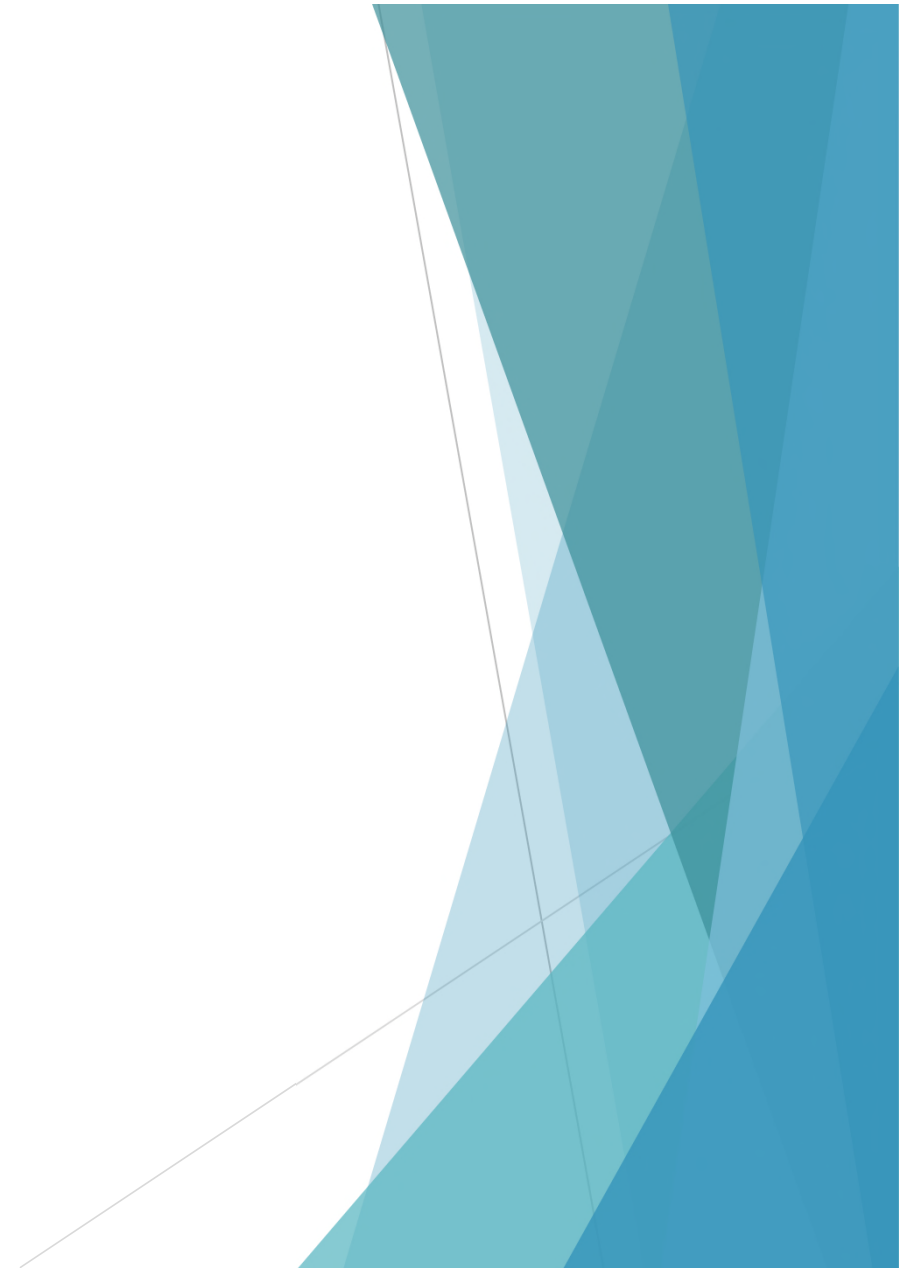


# An Insight into Family Life with PDA

Written by Becky Giles

# Our Family

- ▶ Emily
- ▶ Sophie
- ▶ Me
- ▶ Networks



# Emily's SEN

- ▶ Early Years -Multi Disciplinary Assessment
- ▶ Speech and Language difficulties and Dyspraxia
- ▶ Primary School -Learning difficulties

# Why was diagnosis Important?

- ▶ Autism
- ▶ PDA
- ▶ Team Approach

# Mummy 'Why can't I say yes?'

- ▶ How does PDA effect Emily?
- ▶ Avoidance
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Control



# Every Day Life Demands

- ▶ Getting out of Bed
- ▶ Getting washed
- ▶ Dressed
- ▶ Eating
- ▶ Toileting
- ▶ Leaving the house
- ▶ Leaving the car
- ▶ School
- ▶ Coming Home
- ▶ Cleaning Teeth
- ▶ Bedtime

# What behaviours do we see at home/school?

- ▶ Refusal to physically move -sitting on the floor, not leaving the car, on a chair, in school, at home, at the shops .....
- ▶ Lots of deal making and negotiating about little things
- ▶ Refusal to take part in a task. For example putting shoes on, getting dressed even if she's excited about going somewhere, refusal to eat, drink and toilet, bath or wash.
- ▶ Dominating behaviour towards siblings, parents and others.
- ▶ Ridiculous claims and lies. For example my legs won't work, I'm too tired, my arm is broken, I'm glued to the bed, I can't move.....
- ▶ Very bossy and concerned about telling other people about the rules. However not as keen to follow the rules herself. A lack of insight and understanding of boundaries. Who is in charge?

# Impacts of PDA and High Anxiety on Family Life

- ▶ Restrictions
- ▶ Morning and evening routines
- ▶ Your own Avoidance
- ▶ Your own wellbeing
- ▶ Aggression and challenging behaviour
- ▶ Controlling behaviour and avoidance
- ▶ Finding a way forwards

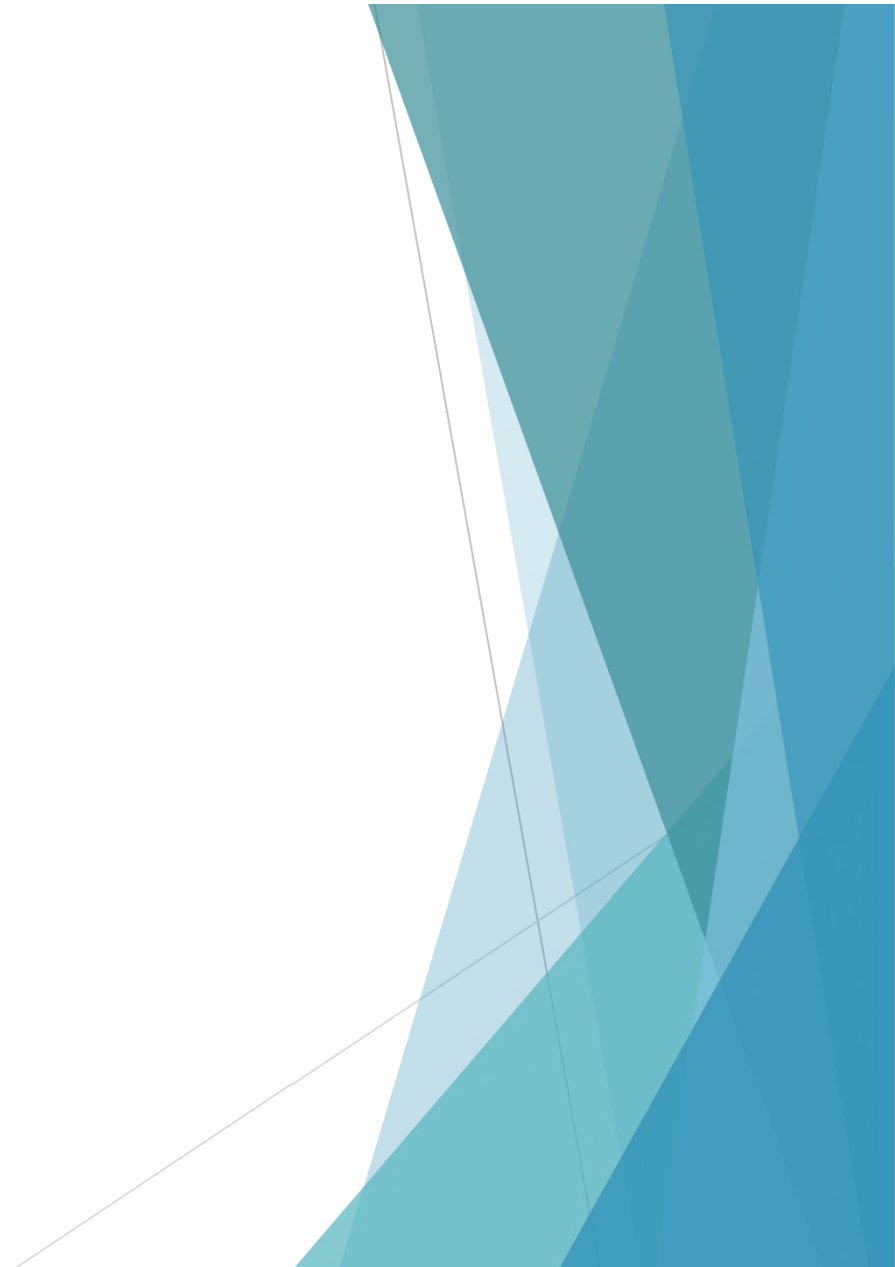


# Impact on Siblings

- ▶ Frustration
- ▶ Managing their siblings challenging behaviour
- ▶ Lower resilience



There is hope.....



# My PDA Parenting

- ▶ Reduce the demands -cleaning teeth once a day.
- ▶ Sometimes use physical prompts to put shoes on for example just tap their leg instead of directly asking them to do it.
- ▶ Ask them directly as little as possible
- ▶ Give them time to process a demand as it takes time to agree.
- ▶ Make them believe that they are helping you or there is some other reason they should be completing the task
- ▶ Pretend you don't know how to do the task and then let them take lead. -Independence boxes or setting toys out
- ▶ Be mindful of your tone of voice and body language especially in difficult situations
- ▶ Give them control where possible
- ▶ Treat their challenging moments as Panic Attacks as they are highly anxious at these times.
- ▶ Pick your battles as with all ASC children.
- ▶ Have consequences for the really challenging behaviour and stick to them.
- ▶ Take video's or photos of positive experiences to reflect on.
- ▶ Try to not worry what others think of behaviour when your out and about
- ▶ Just keep going and try different things

# Strategies at Home

- ▶ Managing Anxiety (Art, Exercise, music and enough downtime)
- ▶ Allowing time for particular obsessions
- ▶ Humour and laughing-Not taking things too personally
- ▶ Non reactive behaviour
- ▶ Patience and giving the Emily time and space to process a demand
- ▶ Reducing demands and allowing Emily some control
- ▶ Realising the impact of certain demands
- ▶ Realising the frustrations of Emily
- ▶ Negotiating
- ▶ Independence Box
- ▶ Anxiety Toolkit
- ▶ Comic strips
- ▶ Choice cards
- ▶ Puppets
- ▶ Social Stories
- ▶ Books explaining anxiety-Panicasaurus

# How a school could help?

- ▶ Kindness and Empathy
- ▶ Realising behaviour is anxiety driven
- ▶ Having good communication with parents
- ▶ Having good communication systems within your school
- ▶ Being willing to try new strategies that may seem unusual at times
- ▶ Being Flexible
- ▶ Reducing demands where necessary
- ▶ School life and home life (Holistic view of the child)
- ▶ Reasonable Adjustments