

Guardian Interview #2, Student age 11, Grade 6

1. Can you tell me about your child exceptionality (disability) background and has it been diagnosed?
The student was diagnosed around 5 or 6; ASD (Asperger's) & ADHD. After 2/3 years of "knowing" something was wrong.
2. What was your child's introduction to school like?
Initially good; however, that changed as expectations of her increased. Her behaviours & sensory issues, meltdowns etc. occurred in childcare as well but school made this outcome that much more.
3. How was 'your experience' with your child's start to school?
Good but they were on edge as time progressed. Disappointment and stress with meetings and phone calls from the school.
4. Tell me about any barriers your child has had to learning?
It can be pretty black/white when it comes to learning outcomes. The parent 2 felt there is more education needed regarding how every child learns differently but more support is always helpful.
5. Can you tell me about obstacles your child has faced in the school setting?
Exclusion.
6. What are some tools that have helped their learning?
IEPs, breaks (space for her to go when she is overwhelmed), her school support.
7. What were some positive experiences?
Her relationships she developed with the school staff/support. The school and their family worked together to keep things consistent for her daughter as much as possible.
8. What plans for learning that were in place were not successful in your child's learning and why? What could have been done differently? Different teachers had expectations of her that were not realistic. Although they want to push her academically/personally, the understanding of some barriers she faces were either not well understood or there may have been other issues.
9. What was done to overcome any challenge to their education? Meetings, discussions, insight from doctors/Specialists. For the most part, it was about trying different techniques but, what works one day doesn't always work the next.
10. Do you/child feel that your child has had enough support? What school supports are in place such as an IEP?
She does seem to require one-on-one support for the entire day. There are IEPs in place. Although some days she doesn't have support in the afternoon which is usually

when she needs it the most. The parent 2 is on board with her becoming more self-reliant, but she isn't sure how there will be balance with this.

11. Explain what peer interactions at school have been like? Friends have dwindled as you see her peers developing & maturing. Her daughter is definitely behind her peers and she can see how this would separate her. She struggles socially and it can be awkward for her. She expresses loneliness and this is a constant dialogue at home. Her family tries to discuss this and support her and what she can expect in the future.
12. What does your child's week at school look like?
Right now, she has a full week of school with all the subjects, including music which has been tough due to the noise and her sensitivities. They try to have her out doing things outside but this time of year and the covid pandemic is putting a strain on the weeks.
13. Does your child enjoy school? Her answer is yes but the parent 2 feels it is difficult for her on many levels.
14. Do they have any social emotional learning tools?
She has been attending Chris Rose since the age of 6 which helped in this department, recognizing behaviours and when she needs to self-regulate. The parent feels since she has not returned this year (previously she attended 2 days/week + school), emotions are heightened. However, she stated that she is pre-pubescent, and the covid-anxiety has not helped.
15. How have your child's teachers been successful at making your child comfortable?
Understanding, education, open mind. That would be her guess, but something best answered by the child perhaps.
16. Has your child experienced a segregated classroom, if so, what was your child's experience with this? The parent doesn't believe so.
17. As a parent of a child with an exceptionality would you recommend a segregated classroom or oppose it? The parent would say no. Most of the time they struggle regularly to be normal and fit in and this will really set them apart. The parent thinks this may hurt more than help.
18. Do you feel your child benefits more in an inclusive classroom with all learners or would do better in a classroom specifically for children with exceptionalities? She could definitely argue both ways. This is a tough question. The parent does believe inclusion is best and for others to have more of an understanding of differences and how to work with those differences. The parent thinks it may be advantageous to also have a classroom of similar behavioural struggles/similar diagnosis for kids to feel like they're not alone in their struggles.

19. Was your child excluded from social interactions with other students and if so, what do you feel was a contributing factor to this? Yes. Because her reactions/interactions can be socially awkward, missing cues etc. She is not maturing as quickly as her peers. She still has child-like tendencies.

20. Is there anything you feel that could be done differently? Push more inclusion and educating her peers of differences in children that suffer from common ailments such as ADD/ADHD, anxiety, Asperger's/Autism and what that might look like. She suggested a good book for kids is "All Dogs have ADHD". It explains behaviours to a T!!!