

Autism sharing: how much do you know about autism?

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自閉症兒童主要在社交、溝通及行為模式三方面有明顯的障礙。專家仍未能確定自閉症真正的成因，但近年研究推論，自閉症是由於大腦的中樞神經系統裡，部份神經組織異常所造成的，因為他們腦功能的異常，他們的行為、感觀和思考方式都可能和我們不一樣。

Children with autism display difficulties in three areas: social, communication and pattern of behaviour. Although the question of causation remains unclear, recent researches suggest autism is caused by abnormality in the brain. For children with autism, because of their abnormal functioning of the brain, their behaviour, perceptions and ways of thinking may be different from us.

較早期，人們主要從局外人的角度理解自閉症兒童所呈現的行為特徵，而輔助的考慮主要著重改善他們所呈現的不恰當行為。隨著人們對自閉症認識的增加，輔助的考慮逐漸走向從局內人的角度理解自閉症兒童的行為特徵，除了考慮他們在社交、溝通及情緒方面的差異，還考慮他們在動作及感覺方面的差異，並透過教導他們社交技巧、溝通技巧、情緒技巧，及提供動作技能和感覺統合的訓練來協助他們適應社會。

In earlier days, people tended to understand the behaviour of children with autism from an outsider approach, while provision of support to these children tended to focus on changing their inappropriate behaviour. With people's increasing understanding in autism, consideration about how these children should be supported gradually moves from outsider approach to insider approach. Other than considering the social, communicative and emotional differences of these children, their motor and sensory differences are considered. While social skills, communication skills and emotional skills, as well as motor skills and sensory integration training are considered as means to help these children develop better adjustment in social situation.

基於上述考慮，黎博士嘗試於講座的前半插入情境為本的個案討論，讓參加者嘗試運用「透視局內人想法」的方式去理解一些他們可能不曾理會或忽視了的事情。但對於自閉症兒童所面對的適應困難，輔助的考慮除了從自閉症兒童本身著手，還須從自閉症兒童身處的環境及所接觸的人著手。因此，黎博士進一步提出輔助自閉症兒童的多元介入模式，並強調推動共融文化及自我倡導的重要性，因為一般人對自閉症兒童的了解和體諒能大大降低他們於社交處境可能產生的焦慮，而自我倡導則能幫助一般人了解和體諒自閉症兒童所呈現的行為特徵。

Based on the above consideration, Dr. Lai tried to include scenario based case discussion in the first half of the sharing in order to provide participants an opportunity to understand the difficulties children with autism face through an insider approach. With regard to the adjustment difficulty these children face, provision of support focusing on these children is inadequate. There should be more concern on the environment and people these children encounter. Therefore, Dr. Lai further suggested the multi intervention model as a means to consider the provision of support for these children. She emphasized the importance of promoting an inclusive culture and self advocacy, because people's understanding and acceptance of these children will minimize their level of anxiety in social situation, whereas self advocacy will help people better understand and accept the behaviour they display.