



Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome: A User Guide to Adolescence

By Luke Jackson

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Part of the **Reading Well** scheme. 27 books selected by young people and health professionals to provide 13 to 18 year olds with high-quality support, information and advice about common mental health issues and related conditions.

Winner of the NASEN & TES Special Educational Needs Children's Book Award 2003

Have you ever been called a freak or a geek? Have you ever felt like one? Luke Jackson is 13 years old and has Asperger Syndrome. Over the years Luke has learned to laugh at such names but there are other aspects of life which are more difficult. Adolescence and the teenage years are a minefield of emotions, transitions and decisions and when a child has Asperger Syndrome, the result is often explosive.

Luke has three sisters and one brother in various stages of their adolescent and teenage years but he is acutely aware of just how different he is and how little information is available for adolescents like himself.

Drawing from his own experiences and gaining information from his teenage brother and sisters, he wrote this enlightening, honest and witty book in an attempt to address difficult topics such as bullying, friendships, when and how to tell others about AS, school problems, dating and relationships, and morality.

Luke writes briefly about his younger autistic and AD/HD brothers, providing amusing insights into the antics of his younger years and advice for parents, carers and teachers of younger AS children. However, his main reason for writing was because "so many books are written about us, but none are written directly to adolescents with Asperger Syndrome. I thought I would write one in the hope that we could all learn together".



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Editorial Review

Review

A remarkable book from a unique boy! -- My Weekly an excellent book -- The Guardian Compelling reading...Luke has written a book that's intelligent, articulate, sensitive and funny. -- The Big Issue Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome allows the reader a glimpse into the fascinating but frustrating world of an intelligent and capable adolescent and leaves us with some understanding of his philosophy of life. Novices and experts alike will find Luke Jackson's book full of practical ideas that will enable them to make a positive difference in the lives of people with Asperger Syndrome. -- Newsmonth Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome is a cool, confident work that belies the author's youth. The experts reckon that Luke has a reading age of 18-plus, but most people that age would be hard-pressed to produce such witty, effortless prose... [his] positive - almost celebratory - view could well make this a favourite among children, AS and otherwise, who find themselves out of tune with their classmates. -- Times Educational Supplement Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome is one of those books I feel should be compulsory reading for everyone... His style is light and chirpy with a very positive view of autism: "I have what some people would call a disability but I call a gift". At the same time it has extraordinary depth and insight, guiding people along without a trace of arrogance or being simplistic. I cannot recommend this book enough. -- Inclusion Now Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome not only aims to help other youngsters live with this challenging and often misunderstood condition, but "will change attitudes and replace bleak despair with insight and laughter", according to expert Tony Attwood. -- Sesame His style of writing is incredibly accessible, especially considering his age. His combination of humour and sincerity will keep you interested all the way through and when you finish reading, you will take away an in-depth and relevant understanding of Asperger's Syndrome. -- British Journal of Healthcare Assistants I have two autistic sons and have read many books on the subject; this is one of the most useful. There should be a copy in the staffroom of every school with an AS pupil - which, at the rate things are going, means nearly every school. -- Daily Telegraph I like Jackson's advice. Give clear instructions. Avoid metaphors you can't explain. Don't presume rights and wrongs are obvious. Spell things out clearly...I like Jackson's project: to remind himself, his peers and professionals that 'different is cool', and by-the-by that our normal world is pretty weird anyway. 'When is an obsession not an obsession?' 'When it's about football'. -- Educare News I would recommend this book not only to AS adolescents and anybody associated with them but also to the public at large so that we may, through understanding Asperger syndrome better, become more tolerant and respectful of differences and also better equipped to meet their needs. -- Home Education Advisory Service Bulletin In this terrific book that is sure to inspire other adolescents with the same condition, 13 year old Jackson offers teenager's perspective on what it's like to live with Asperger's. -- Library Journal Jackson has a conversational, yet confiding, authorial style. He provides an insight into the internal world of people with Asperger Syndrome. They are not "freaks" but fascinating individuals, who examine life from a different perspective. They are subject to the same hopes and feelings as the rest of us, but find it difficult to learn our "social" ropes. Jackson's admirable effort to tell it how it is has left me gratefully enlightened. --BMJ Publishing Group

Review

A remarkable book from a unique boy! (My Weekly)

an excellent book (The Guardian)

Compelling reading...Luke has written a book that's intelligent, articulate, sensitive and funny. (The Big Issue)

Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome allows the reader a glimpse into the fascinating but frustrating world of an intelligent and capable adolescent and leaves us with some understanding of his philosophy of life. Novices and experts alike will find Luke Jackson's book full of practical ideas that will enable them to make a positive difference in the lives of people with Asperger Syndrome. (Newsmonth)

Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome is a cool, confident work that belies the author's youth. The experts reckon that Luke has a reading age of 18-plus, but most people that age would be hard-pressed to produce such witty, effortless prose... [his] positive – almost celebratory – view could well make this a favourite among children, AS and otherwise, who find themselves out of tune with their classmates. (Times Educational Supplement)

Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome is one of those books I feel should be compulsory reading for everyone... His style is light and chirpy with a very positive view of autism: "I have what some people would call a disability but I call a gift". At the same time it has extraordinary depth and insight, guiding people along without a trace of arrogance or being simplistic. I cannot recommend this book enough. (Inclusion Now)

Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome not only aims to help other youngsters live with this challenging and often misunderstood condition, but "will change attitudes and replace bleak despair with insight and laughter", according to expert Tony Attwood. (Sesame)

His style of writing is incredibly accessible, especially considering his age. His combination of humour and sincerity will keep you interested all the way through and when you finish reading, you will take away an in-depth and relevant understanding of Asperger's Syndrome. (British Journal of Healthcare Assistants)

I have two autistic sons and have read many books on the subject; this is one of the most useful. There should be a copy in the staffroom of every school with an AS pupil - which, at the rate things are going, means nearly every school. (Daily Telegraph)

I like Jackson's advice. Give clear instructions. Avoid metaphors you can't explain. Don't presume rights and wrongs are obvious. Spell things out clearly... I like Jackson's project: to remind himself, his peers and professionals that 'different is cool', and by-the-by that our normal world is pretty weird anyway. 'When is an obsession not an obsession?' 'When it's about football'. (Educare News)

I would recommend this book not only to AS adolescents and anybody associated with them but also to the public at large so that we may, through understanding Asperger syndrome better, become more tolerant and respectful of differences and also better equipped to meet their needs. (Home Education Advisory Service Bulletin)

In this terrific book that is sure to inspire other adolescents with the same condition, 13 year old Jackson offers teenager's perspective on what it's like to live with Asperger's. (Library Journal)

Jackson has a conversational, yet confiding, authorial style. He provides an insight into the internal world of people with Asperger Syndrome. They are not "freaks" but fascinating individuals, who examine life from a different perspective. They are subject to the same hopes and feelings as the rest of us, but find it difficult to learn our "social" ropes. Jackson's admirable effort to tell it how it is has left me gratefully enlightened. (BMJ Publishing Group)

'Luke is a star. It is good to know that there is a book like this that teenagers with AS would find useful and

accessible. I suspect though the market this book is aimed at is parents, and that often seemed to be who Luke was addressing... Luke explains things clearly and sensibly, and this is as good a book as any for anyone of any age to read as an introduction to Asperger syndrome or to try and gain better understanding of an other. I hope Luke continues writing as he gets older'. (Asperger Information.net)

'the title grabs you- upfront and no deference to the niceties of political correctness. The author, Luke Jackson, is 13-years-old and has Asperger's Syndrome (AS). His style of writing is jokey and engaging. His motive for writing the book was the lack of relevant publications for adolescents. The book also addresses parents, carers and professionals who, though aware of the autistic spectrum, do not necessarily understand it. The author provides a good account of the variability of autism and emphasises the importance of having the appropriate label. His arguments shame those professionals who refuse to do this...An excellent and informative book. (Bulletin)

This book is a must for those young people diagnosed as having Asperger's Syndrome, those who think that they may have it, their parents and teachers. The Special Needs department in every school needs to have a copy both for the students and the staff to read. It is brilliant to have such a book written by someone on the inside. The insights are all the more illuminating for us on the outside. (Metapsychology Online Book reviews)

This is a remarkable publication. It is written by a person diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome, and provides the reader with an insightful guide into the experiences and challenges during the difficult but profoundly important teenage years. Any and all staff, and managers, who are involved with clients with autistic spectrum disorders should gain a great deal from reading this first hand account of fascinations and fixations, language and learning, school, friendships, dating, bullying and morals... (Care and Health Magazine)

About the Author

Luke Jackson is 13 years old and has three sisters and three brothers. One of his brothers has AD/HD, one is autistic and Luke has Asperger Syndrome. He is the author of A User Guide to the GF/CF Diet for Autism, Asperger Syndrome and AD/HD, also published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Shirley Raine:

Here thing why that Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome: A User Guide to Adolescence are different and reliable to be yours. First of all reading a book is good nevertheless it depends in the content than it which is the content is as scrumptious as food or not. Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome: A User Guide to Adolescence giving you information deeper as different ways, you can find any e-book out there but there is no publication that similar with Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome: A User Guide to Adolescence. It gives you thrill reading journey, its open up your current eyes about the thing in which happened in the world which is perhaps can be happened around you. You can easily bring everywhere like in park your car, café, or even in your technique home by train. If you are having difficulties in bringing the paper book maybe the form of Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome: A User Guide to Adolescence in e-book can be your option.

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