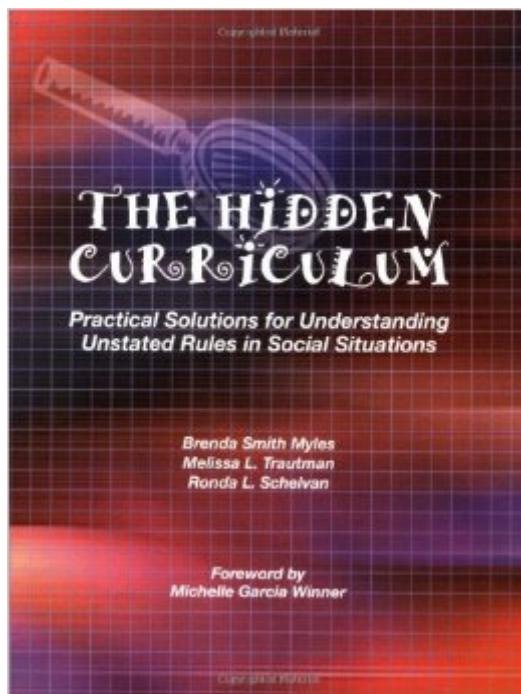


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# The Hidden Curriculum: Practical Solutions For Understanding Unstated Rules In Social Situations



## **Synopsis**

In the revised and expanded edition of this popular book, the authors narrow their target to issues common to adolescents and young adults. While many of the features of the original book have been maintained, information on evidence-based practice has been added. Further, a series of instructional strategies are provided that can be used to teach the hidden curriculum. Instructional aids include charts, forms, and templates designed to make the job of teaching and learning the hidden curriculum more effective.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

One of the missing components to the concept of teaching "social skills" to children and young adults on the autism spectrum, is that instructors focus on textbook manners instead of teaching REAL life practical knowledge. The Hidden Curriculum explains that every society has unstated rules, the things that no one explains to you, but which you are supposed to pick up somehow on your own. Remember how awkward and geeky most of us were in Jr. High? And there were always the "cool kids" who somehow knew just how to dress, just what to say and meanwhile you (and I) were clueless? It's because they understood the unstated rules, they had an unkanny ability to pick up the exact tools necessary for "coolness." As we grow up, we learn better how to adapt to social situations, we know how to behave in a variety of settings, even perhaps cross culturally. Adults grow into a sense of ease in our surroundings, we know what we are supposed to do. Now, imagine that you never got over that awkward phase, you were perpetually spending your life roaming around trying to figure out the world with little to go on. No one pulled you aside and explained, "This

is how it is, Kid." That's exactly what it's like for our kids on the spectrum. Well, here comes The Hidden Curriculum to the rescue! Not only does it explain many of these "unstated rules" (many of which are humorous--who doesn't know you should take tuna in your school lunch because it stinks? many of our AS kids!) It also goes beyond to explain how to uncover them. It highlights how crucial it is for us as parents, as educators and just as a society to literally pull our AS folks aside and say, "These are the rules." For example, "Don't pick your nose." Good advice right? But p-lease, everybody picks their nose! (Okay, not me, but everybody else! :-) What we really need to teach our kids is not, don't pick your nose, but not to pick their nose where people can see them. Sound silly? Our children and friends on the autism spectrum just need for us to teach them one little tidbit like this every day and they'll find their way with increasing ease. And wouldn't you have liked someone to pull you aside in Jr. High and done the same for you? Let's equip our kids with the real skills to make their way in the world. The Hidden Curriculum does just that! Kristi Sakai, parent of 3 with Asperger Syndrome and author of *Finding Our Way: Practical Solutions for Creating a Supportive Home and Community for the Asperger Syndrome Family*

This is another book that people on the autism/Asperger's (a/A) spectrum have been praying for! This sterling work helps decode and identify tacit Social Codes & Rules. For many people on the a/A spectrum, learning these nonverbal subtleties is a major challenge. a/A related conditions are neurobiological and affect sensory processing and integration as well as communication. People on the a/A spectrum encounter a wide range of social difficulties, many of which are addressed in this book. This work gives good advice on how to make and maintain eye contact; how to position oneself when talking to and listening to another; how to appear natural in practicing these skills. This book also gives a good explanation of how to "read" people socially and how to learn to anticipate possible seeming changes in the Tacit Social Codes & Rules. People with neurotypical (NT) brains already know these Rules and NT readers also can benefit from this book by seeing what people on the a/A spectrum contend with. Rather, people on the a/A spectrum learn these behaviors cognitively as this is not intuitive knowledge among the a/A population. Once the Rules are learned, the next step is understanding when and how and to apply them. Make a place for this book. It is every a/A navigator's best friend when it comes to improving social skills and interpreting human behavior. It is a bridge from the a/A population to the NT population and moves all, a/A and NT readers alike onto neuro-neutral ground. The information found in this book makes communicating in the NT world so much easier and so much more logical!

As an "inclusion" third grade teacher, this is the most practical book on the subject of helping young people develop better social skills that I've read. (And I've read quite a few.) It has valuable information for all students, not just Autistic Spectrum Disorder kids. Clear and simple background and discussion on the issue, followed by lists of social mores that kids might not naturally "pick up on." Eye-opening for teachers who think some kids are being purposely rude or silly...I plan to do mini-lessons daily with my class using the lists in this book.

I purchased this book a year ago and it sat on my shelf until today. I dusted it off because I am developing a community-based social skills coaching program for an adolescent with high-functioning Autism. I recalled that the book had a nice list of the hidden curriculum for a variety of social situations (e.g. eating at a restaurant, telephone skills, rules for dating, reading body language). There were a few in there that I never would have thought of. This was helpful as a jumping off point for making goals and developing a concise script for the sessions. There is a section in the book on the strategies to teach the hidden curriculum, but it is limited in content. There is a brief description of a technique, examples of worksheets one could use, but there are no blank reproducible materials of the worksheets they used as examples. I would recommend this book for those just starting out in the field and teachers or parents who want to know what words to use to explain to their child the "unwritten social rules." By the way, I would also recommend that you "do not talk about how mucus looks or feels in the throat or looks in your tissue." :)

I bought this book because a reviewer said it would teach people with Asperger's syndrome how to make and maintain eye contact. It doesn't. It just says you should make and maintain eye contact, it doesn't teach you how. This book only tells you what society expects of you, so if you already know what society expects of you, but just cannot figure out how to do it smoothly, don't buy this book. If you already know stuff like, "pull up your pants before coming out of the bathroom", don't buy this book.

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