



## Understanding Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome in Children: A Guide for Parents, Teachers and Other Professionals (JKP Essentials)

*By Margaret Duncan, Zara Healy, Ruth Fidler, Phil Christie*

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Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome (PDA) is a developmental disorder that is being increasingly recognised as part of the autism spectrum. The main characteristic is a continued resistance to the ordinary demands of life through strategies of social manipulation, which originates from an anxiety-driven need to be in control.

This straightforward guide is written collaboratively by professionals and parents to give a complete overview of PDA. Starting with an exploration into the syndrome, it goes on to answer the immediate questions triggered when a child is first diagnosed, and uses case examples throughout to illustrate the impact of the condition on different areas of the child's life. Early intervention options and workable strategies for managing PDA positively will make day-to-day life easier for the child, their family and peers. New problems faced in the teenage years and how to assist a successful transition from adolescence to adulthood are also tackled. The book concludes with a valuable resources list.

Full of helpful guidance and support, this user-friendly introductory handbook is essential reading for families, carers and anyone who knows a child with PDA.

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

[This book] written by professionals and parents, it is highly accessible, illustrated by a wealth of case studies and provides practical strategies and approaches covering both the home and school context for managing children with PDA. In terms of addressing the underlying anxiety-driven need of these children, there is a useful section on developing emotional well-being and self-awareness in children with PDA. This book provides a very useful overview and practical resource which all educational psychologists should find helpful -- Debate This book is a useful addition to the literature available on understanding and managing PDA in children and will be an excellent resource for those working and living with children with PDA on a daily basis. -- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Professionals working with children presenting PDA behaviour would be able to use the book as a "bible", since the sub-headings allow access to information quickly and easily... This book offers good guidance, understanding, advice and solutions to parents, teachers and everyone involved with a child presenting PDA. -- Special Children This book is full of helpful guidance and support for anyone caring for, or working with, children with Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome (PDS)... This is a comprehensive, user-friendly introductory handbook that offers practical advice for overcoming difficulties from diagnosis through to adulthood. -- Cerebra Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome, as a sub-group on the autism spectrum, is now recognised, as are the implications for management and support, particularly in education settings. This book is invaluable in helping parents and professionals identify, understand and support this very complex group. -- Dr Jacqui Ashton Smith, Principal, Helen Allison School, National Autistic Society

### **Review**

[This book] written by professionals and parents, it is highly accessible, illustrated by a wealth of case studies and provides practical strategies and approaches covering both the home and school context for managing children with PDA. In terms of addressing the underlying anxiety-driven need of these children, there is a useful section on developing emotional well-being and self-awareness in children with PDA. This book provides a very useful overview and practical resource which all educational psychologists should find helpful (Debate)

This book is a useful addition to the literature available on understanding and managing PDA in children and will be an excellent resource for those working and living with children with PDA on a daily basis. (Child and Adolescent Mental Health)

Professionals working with children presenting PDA behaviour would be able to use the book as a "bible", since the sub-headings allow access to information quickly and easily... This book offers good guidance, understanding, advice and solutions to parents, teachers and everyone involved with a child presenting PDA. (Special Children)

This book is full of helpful guidance and support for anyone caring for, or working with, children with Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome (PDS)... This is a comprehensive, user-friendly introductory handbook that offers practical advice for overcoming difficulties from diagnosis through to adulthood. (Cerebra)

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are the implications for management and support, particularly in education settings. This book is invaluable in helping parents and professionals identify, understand and support this very complex group. (Dr Jacqui Ashton Smith, Principal, Helen Allison School, National Autistic Society)

#### About the Author

Phil Christie is Director of Sutherland House Children's Services, run by autism charity NORSACA ([www.norsaca.org.uk](http://www.norsaca.org.uk)), and leads a team of Consultant Child Psychologists at the Elizabeth Newson Centre. The centre carries out training and research activities and has particular expertise in PDA. He is also Associate Editor of 'Good Autism Practice', and became Chair of the Advisory Council of the Autism Education Trust in 2009. Margaret Duncan is a GP and is a parent to a child with PDA. She coordinates the PDA Contact Group (part of Contact-A-Family), an internet based group providing information and support for parents and professionals. Ruth Fidler is Assistant Head Teacher at Sutherland House School run by the autism charity NORSACA. She works throughout the school (aged 3-19) developing whole school approaches to working interactively with children across the autism spectrum, with a particular focus on social and emotional well being. Zara Healy is a parent of a child with PDA. She trained as a journalist and worked for the BBC for nearly a decade as a radio and television reporter.

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