



# SEND NEWSLETTER

## April 2025



### What is Demand Avoidance?

'Demand avoidance' involves not being able to do certain things at certain times, either for yourself or others, and also refers to the things we do in order to avoid demands.

It's a natural human trait – avoiding demands is something we all do to different degrees and for different reasons.

When demand avoidance is more significant there can be many possible reasons for this – it could be situational; relate to physical or mental health; or relate to a developmental or personality condition. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish underlying causes, but a PDA profile isn't necessarily always the best explanation for extreme demand avoidance. It's also important to remember that marked demand avoidance is the most significant, but not the only, trait in a PDA profile. For a detailed exploration of other explanations for marked demand avoidance, please visit

<https://www.pdasociety.org.uk/about-pda/what-is-demand-avoidance/>

# NEWS

## Positive Measure

Monday 19th May 2025

7:30 - 9:00 pm

Eynsham Baptist Church Hall

Register your interest to attend on Eventbrite

Special Guest Speaker

Anna Lawrence  
PDA Advocate



Oxford Neurodiversity Education



Anna is a late identified neurodivergent PDA adult, parenting neurodivergent PDA teenagers.

As a former secondary school teacher, Anna uses her teaching and presentation skills, together with her lived experience, to deliver up-to-date and engaging education around Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA). She will be giving a talk to introduce what PDA is and how best to support PDA young people as a parent. She has lived experience of parenting young people through Autistic PDA burnout and supporting them with barriers to education.

### 5 Observable

#### Characteristics of a PDA Child

- Survival drive for autonomy that consistently overrides other survival instincts** – E.g. Eating, sleeping, hygiene, safety, toileting in the moment or cumulatively (burnout)
- Equalizing behavior** – Looks like controlling or defiant behavior & why PDA is often mistaken for ODD or OCD
- High masking** – Often appears like two versions of oneself in different contexts at one point in life
- Constant need for nervous system coregulation** – Looks like constant need for undivided attention
- Cumulative nature of nervous system activation** – This is why many parents learn about PDA when their child reaches burnout and why dysregulation is unpredictable

–Casey Ehrlich, PhD  
@atpeaceparents

@learnplaythrive

### THE POSSIBLE REASONS BEHIND SCHOOL AVOIDANCE



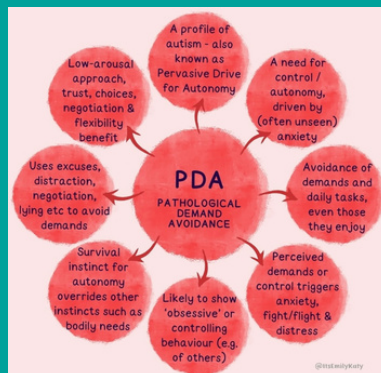
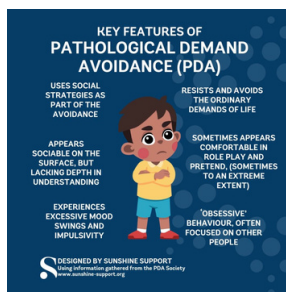
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### ONE OF MY BIGGEST PDA TRIGGERS... IS SOMEONE TELLING ME HOW I FEEL



OR DIMINISHING MY EMOTIONS.

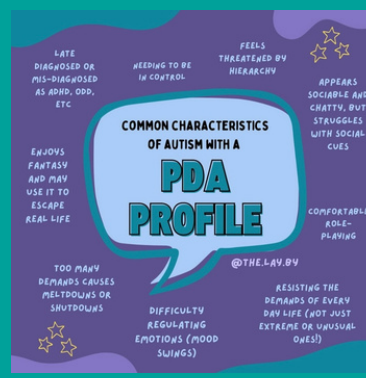
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### THE SCHOOL 'REFUSAL' ICEBERG



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### PDA trigger

Receiving uninvited judgement  
E.g. unexpected praise, compliments, corrections, or opinions on them.



NeuroWild