



Autism Spectrum Disorders

"Autism is a developmental disorder that appears in the first 3 years of life, and affects the brain's normal development of social and communication skills"





Children with Autism Typically Have Difficulties In


- **Pretend play**
 - Doesn't imitate the actions of others
 - Prefers solitary or ritualistic play
 - Shows little pretend or imaginative play
- **Social interactions**
 - Does not make friends
 - Does not play interactive games
 - Is withdrawn
 - May not respond to eye contact or smiles, or may avoid eye contact
 - May treat others as if they are objects
 - Prefers to spend time alone, rather than with others
 - Shows a lack of empathy



Children with Autism Typically Have Difficulties In


- **Verbal and nonverbal communication**
 - Cannot start or maintain a social conversation
 - Communicates with gestures instead of words
 - Develops language slowly or not at all
 - Does not adjust gaze to look at objects that others are looking at
 - Does not refer to self correctly (for example, says "you want water" when the child means "I want water")
 - Does not point to direct others' attention to objects (occurs in the first 14 months of life)
 - Repeats words or memorized passages, such as commercials






People with Autism May


- Be overly sensitive in sight, hearing, touch, smell, or taste (for example, they may refuse to wear "itchy" clothes and become distressed if they are forced to wear the clothes)
- Have unusual distress when routines are changed
- Perform repeated body movements
- Show unusual attachments to objects






A Person with an ASD Might

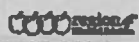
- Not respond to his or her name by 12 months of age (e.g., appear to not hear).
- Not point at objects to show interest by 14 months of age (e.g., not point at an airplane flying over).
- Not play "pretend" games by 18 months of age (e.g., pretend to "feed" a doll).
- Avoid eye contact and want to be alone.
- Have trouble understanding other people's feelings or talking about his or her own feelings.
- Have delayed speech and language skills (e.g., use words much later than siblings or peers).






A Person with an ASD Might


- Repeat words or phrases over and over.
- Give unrelated answers to questions.
- Get upset by minor changes in routine (e.g., getting a new toothbrush).
- Have obsessive interests (e.g., get "stuck" on ideas).
- Flap his or her hands, rock his or her body, or spin in circles.
- Have unusual reactions to the way things sound, smell, taste, look, or feel.






New Data: 2012


- One in 88 eight-year old children in multiple areas of the United States have ASDs
- Some doctors believe the increased incidence in autism is due to newer definitions of autism
- Scientists believe that both genes and the environment play a role in ASDs
- Parents who have a child with ASD have a 2%-19% chance of having a second child who is also affected
- Males are four times more likely to have an ASD than females






Every Child on the Autism Spectrum Has Problems in the Following Three Areas


- Communicating verbally and non-verbally
- Relating to others and the world around them
- Thinking and behaving flexibly






Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Autism
- Asperger's Syndrome
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)




From the Center for Disease Control

- [http://www.cdc.gov/NCBDDD/actearly/documents/Amazing Me Final Version 508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/NCBDDD/actearly/documents/Amazing%20Me%20Final%20Version%20508.pdf)
- http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/MilestoneMementosEng508.pdf
- <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/documents/ADM-2012-Community-Report.pdf>
- **Free Resources:**
- <http://www.cdc.gov/NCBDDD/autism/freematerials.html>




Book Review: Educating Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Barton & Harn)


- **My Favorites**
 - Each chapter begins with a series of bulleted items that highlight the essential understandings contained in that chapter
 - Each chapter ends with thought-provoking future directions, learning activities, and resources (including many useful websites)
 - Interspersed throughout are concise and informative tables. For example:
 - 9.1 (page 174)—Phases and Objectives of the Picture Exchange System
 - 9.2 (p. 184)—Comparison of Specific Strategies for Teaching Communication to Students with Autism



One Question

- **“There is a significant gap between research and the methods employed in most school systems, despite the plethora of research demonstrating the relation between interventions and positive outcomes for children with autism” (p. 107).**
- *What can we do to encourage systematic implementation of evidence-based practices for children with autism?*





For Discussion

- How will you share the information in this book with your district?

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