

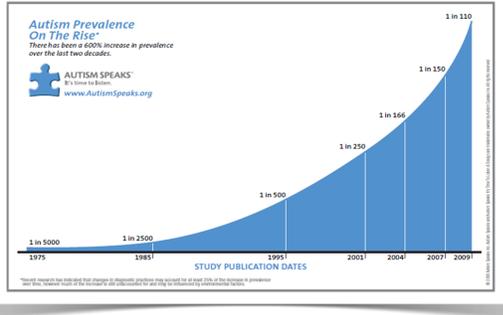
Early Understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Statistics and Prevalence

1 in 88

For every 88 children born in the US, one of them has Autism

1 in 54 boys, 1 in 252 girls

What is autism?

Autism/ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder(s) of unknown genetic origin where symptoms unfold over the first years of life. Autism/ASD is a life long condition that may affect cognition and adaptive development.

The 3 Areas Always Affected:

- Impairments in Socialization
- Impairments in Communication & Language
- Repetitive Behaviors & Restricted Interests

Intervention has the greatest impact on autism if... it begins before 3 years of age

Yet the average age of diagnosis ranges between 4.5 and 5.5 years.

Immunizations....What we know:

There is no causal relationship between childhood vaccine types and autism.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Concerns/Autism/antigens.html>

<http://jpedds.com/webfiles/images/journals/ympd/IPEDSDeStefano.pdf>

ASD Red Flags

- Social Interaction:**
- Lack of response to name by 12 months
 - Lack of appropriate eye gaze
 - Lack of sharing interest or enjoyment
 - Lack of warm, joyful expressions
 - Difficult to elicit a social smile
- Communication: & Language**
- Lack of showing gestures or meaningful gestures by 12 months
 - Lack of pretend play by 18 months
 - Lack of coordination of nonverbal communication
 - Unusual prosody (little variation in pitch, odd intonation, irregular rhythm, unusual voice quality)

- Repetitive Behaviors & Restricted Interests:**
- Repetitive movements with objects
 - Repetitive movements or posturing of body, arms, hands, or fingers



Role of the Early Educator

Early Educators are often the first professional to observe ASD red flags and share concerns with parents.

Early identification activities:

- Monitor development
- Develop educational plans
- Implement classroom strategies
- Coordinate services

- Collaborate with other professionals
- Assess family resources, priorities, and concerns
- Plan and support implementation of services for families
- Coordinate with interagency services
- Serve as an advocate for children & families



<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/ccp/index.html>

Resources

Websites

Autism Institute - First Words Project - Which Children Should We Be Concerned About
<http://firstwords.fsu.edu/index.php/for-healthcare-and-childcare-providers/10-concernchildren>

Autism Science Foundation
www.autismsciencefoundation.org

Autism Speaks
www.autismspeaks.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/autism

Do2Learn – see autism characteristics and strategies
www.do2learn.com

Books

Millbourne, S.A. & Campbell, P.H. *Cara's Kit/Cara's Kit for Toddlers: Creating Adaptations for Routines and Activities*

Notbohm, E. & Zysk, V. (2012) *Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew.*

Sher, Barbara. (2013) *The Whole Spectrum of Social, Motor and Sensory Games*

Willis, Clarissa. (2011) *Teaching Young Children with Autism*



<http://www.marcus.org/>



<http://dec.al.ga.gov/>

Interventions & Classroom Strategies

Evidence Based Practices

- Applied Behavior Analysis
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Early Start Denver Model
- Parent training methods
- Peer-mediated interventions
- Pivotal Response Treatment
- SCERTS Model
- Social Scripts
- Social Stories
- Video modeling



Strategies

- Be clear with your expectations
- Provide structure, routine, visual supports
- Provide choice-making & reinforcement
- Attend to individual's area of interest
- Alternate difficult tasks with easier tasks
- Make tasks meaningful/functional/purposeful
- Introduce unfamiliar tasks in familiar environments
- Appropriate level of prompting (allow time for response)
- Use short simple language (communicate at the child's level of understanding)
- Redirect and remain calm when doing so
- Give transition warnings and cues (timers are great for this)
- Specifically teach student how to make choices
- Build opportunities to generalize

Parent Resources

CDC: Learn the Signs. Act Early - <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html>

Autism Speaks Tool Kits - <http://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits/100-day-kit>

Autism Neighborhood - <http://www.autismneighborhood.org>

First Words Project - <http://firstwords.fsu.edu/index.php/for-parents>

Language & Communication

Communication is the exchange of information, thoughts, ideas and emotions.
 Communication is a process that involves a sender and a receiver.

- Speech & Language Development is a primary area of delay in **early** autism
- Communication deficits continue throughout development
- Assessment should be ongoing

Prelinguistic Communication

Typical Development	Early Red Flags in Autism
Eye gaze, gaze shifting	Gaze aversion
Response to name	Lack of response to name
Orientation to speech	Limited response to adult speech
Pointing	Lack of Pointing
Affect sharing	Object focused
Caregiver referencing	Lack of/limited caregiver referencing
Imitation	Lack of imitation
Joint attention, response and initiation	Lack of/limited skills across these areas
Symbolic play	Lack of symbolic play after 18 mos

The resources included in this document are provided for informational purposes and do not constitute an endorsement by the Department of Early Care and Learning or the Marcus Autism Center.