



Autism Spectrum Disorders Information Sheet

What is autism? Autism is a developmental disability that affects a child's communication (verbal and nonverbal) and language, socialization (how the individual interacts with others), and behavior (restricted, repetitive, and/or stereotyped behavior).

Areas that individuals on the autism spectrum generally have challenges in:

- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Social Aspect
- ✓ Behavior
- ✓ Sensory Integration (how the body interprets information received through the senses)

Here are some milestones that children with autism spectrum disorders may not meet:

- ✓ Does not respond to name (approx 12 months)
- ✓ Does not point to things or people (approx 14 months)
- ✓ Does not look at people when interacting (atypical eye contact)
- ✓ No pretend play, such as sweeping the floor or feeding a baby (approx 18 months)
- ✓ Plays alongside peers, but does not interact to trade toys or show a toy
- ✓ Speech delays like not having any or many words to communicate or repeating what is said to him/her as a way to respond to others.
- ✓ Repetitive behaviors such as lining up toys
- ✓ Intense interests such as letters in the alphabet, cities/states, or baseball stats
- ✓ Strong attachment to specific objects

In a preschool or school setting, the following challenges may be noticed:

- ✓ Communication/language
 - Trouble with some or all of the following: conversations, answering questions, telling about past/future events, following directions that involve 2+ steps
- ✓ Playing with friends
 - Trouble with some or all of the following: taking turns, sharing, imaginative play, and making friends

Who should the parents contact if they suspect their child may have a developmental disability or an autism spectrum disorder: Pediatrician, First Steps (birth to 3), Public school (3+), and Jackson Autism Center www.jacksonautismcenter.com