Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder
Prevalence

• CDC estimates that 1 in 68 children has been identified with an ASD.
• ASD is almost 5 times more common among boys (1 in 42) than among girls (1 in 189).
• ASD occurs in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups

*Surveillance Summaries, March 30, 2012 / 61(SS03);1-19
*This data comes from the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network, which estimated the number of 8-year-old children with ASDs living in 14 communities
Autism Spectrum Disorder: What We Know

- Complex developmental brain disorder
- Approximately 20-25% develop seizures
  

- May occur along with other disabilities
Autism Spectrum Disorder: What We Know (continued)

• Autism & IQ:
  – A wide range of IQ scores are reported (Chakrabarti, 2001)
  – Uneven development in skills/abilities

• ASD is a disorder with a wide range of skills
Autism Spectrum Disorder: What We Know (continued)

- Significantly impacts social skills and communication
- No medical test for diagnosis
- Diagnosis is based on observed behavior and social history
- There is currently no known cure
Social Communication Domain

Social-emotional reciprocity
- Initiating
- Back and forth
- Sharing emotions
- Affect and response

Nonverbal Communication
- Eye contact
- Body language
- Facial expressions
- Gestures

Maintaining Relationships
- Sharing
- Imaginative play
- Making friends
- Absence of interest in people

(DSM-5, 2013, American Psychiatric Association)
Restricted Interests and Repetitive Behaviors Domain

- Stereotyped or repetitive speech, motor movements, or use of objects
  - Echolalia
  - Idiosyncratic phrases
  - Hand flapping
  - Rocking
  - Lining up objects
  - Spinning objects
  - Playing with parts (wheels)

- Excessive adherence to routines
  - Resistant to change
  - Motoric rituals
  - Insistent on same routine or food
  - Repetitive questioning
  - Extreme distress at small change

- Highly restricted, fixated interests
  - Strong attachment to unusual objects
  - Abnormal intensity or focus
  - Excessive or perseverative interest

- Hyper- or Hypo-reactivity to sensory input
  - Indifference to pain/heat/cold
  - Adverse response to sounds or textures
  - Excessive smelling or touching of objects
  - Fascination with lights or spinning objects

(DSM-5, 2013, American Psychiatric Association)
Additional Criteria

C. Symptoms must be present in early childhood (but may not become fully manifest until social demands exceed limited capacities).

D. Symptoms together limit and impair everyday social, occupational or other important areas of functioning.

E. Symptoms are not better explained by intellectual disability or global developmental delay.

(DSM-5, 2013, American Psychiatric Association)
Characteristics That *May* Be Seen

- Unusual mood or affect
- Problems eating or sleeping
- Challenging behavior
- Hyperlexia
Summary

• Children with ASD are children first
• Building a relationship and engaging the child will lead to positive learning
• There are many strategies to build skills and enhance social interactions and communication
• Contact your CARD office to request more information, training or resources
Contact Information

Center for Autism and Related Disabilities
University of South Florida

http://card-usf.fmhi.usf.edu
813-974-2535
1-800-333-4530