



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

*Prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders — Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 14 Sites, United States, 2008

*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

Canitano, R. (2007). Epilepsy in autism spectrum disorders. European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 16(1), 61-66.

- 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

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