

OTHER EARLY SIGNS

- Experiences a significant loss of language or social skills that he or she once had
- Echoes what others say (echolalia) without regular spontaneous speech
- Demonstrates speech that sounds mechanical, almost robotic
- Uses limited or atypical facial expressions
- Prefers to play alone or does not show interest in other children
- May not enjoy cuddling or being touched, unless it is on his or her own terms
- Displays repetitive body movements (hand flapping, spinning)
- Fixates upon a single object, such as a spoon or book
- Cannot tolerate change in routine or environment, such as a new toothbrush or a replacement for a lost toy
- Increased or decreased sensitivity to sensory experiences (light, texture, sound, taste, smell, movement)
- Lines items up or puts things in order repeatedly
- Has excessive tantrums and is difficult to console
- Walks on tiptoes
- Unusual eating & sleeping habits
- Gives unrelated answers to questions

The presence of any one or a combination of these early signs does not necessarily mean that your child has an autism spectrum disorder. If your child demonstrates any of these signs, please discuss your concerns with your pediatrician and ask for an autism screening.

The Help Group is grateful to its community of friends and supporters who share its commitment to helping children with autism fully realize their potential.

For more information visit

www.thehelpgroup.org or 877.943.5747

The Help Group  because every child deserves a great future

Founded in 1975, The Help Group is the largest, most innovative and comprehensive nonprofit of its kind in the United States serving children, adolescents and young adults with special needs related to autism spectrum disorder, learning disabilities, ADHD, developmental delays, abuse and emotional challenges.

The Help Group's nine specialized day schools offer pre-K through high school programs for more than 1,500 students. Its broad range of mental health and therapy services and residential programs extends its reach to more than 6,000 children and their families each year. With more than 1,000 staff members, The Help Group's state-of-the-art schools and programs are located on five campuses in the Los Angeles area.

The Help Group is widely regarded for its high standards of excellence and unique scope and breadth of services. Through its public awareness and outreach programs, university partnerships, applied research, graduate and postgraduate professional training, conferences and seminars, parent education programs, publications, and public policy efforts, The Help Group touches the lives of children with special needs and their families throughout the United States and in other parts of the world.

At the heart of its efforts is the commitment to helping young people fulfill their potential to lead positive, productive and rewarding lives.

Schools

Village Glen School · Bridgeport School · Bridgeport Vocational Education Center
Sunrise School · Young Learners Preschool · STEM² Academy
Summit View School · Westview School of Arts and Technology · North Hills Prep

Programs

The Help Group - UCLA Autism Alliance
The Help Group - UCLA Neuropsychology Program
The Help Group - USC Occupational Science Initiative · Advance LA
Project Six/The Commons · Kids Like Me Recreational Programs & Camps
club I.a./club I.a. TEEN · Paws and Pals for Kids with Autism
The Help Group Child & Family Center
The Help Group Center for Autism Spectrum Disorder

Campuses

CULVER CITY · SHERMAN OAKS EAST · SHERMAN OAKS WEST
VALLEY GLEN · VAN NUYS

www.thehelpgroup.org  

Autism Affects 1 in Every 59 Children

Learn the Facts



The Help Group  building brighter futures
for young people with Autism

www.thehelpgroup.org  

AUTISM - Learn the Facts

EARLY SIGNS OF AUTISM



Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), commonly referred to as autism, is a brain-based developmental disability characterized by impaired social communication and interaction, and restricted, repetitive behaviors, interests or activities.

- ♦ Autism is estimated to affect 1 in every 59 children in the United States; 1 in every 37 boys; 1 in every 151 girls.
- ♦ Autism occurs in children of all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- ♦ No two individuals with autism are the same. There is a wide spectrum of symptoms that range from mild to severe.
- ♦ Autism may be accompanied by language impairment and/or intellectual disability. Some children on the spectrum possess average to above average intellectual abilities.
- ♦ The causes of autism are unclear. Research suggests that the causes are complex and may include genetic, biological, and environmental risk factors.
- ♦ Increased prevalence in autism has been influenced by greater awareness, improved expertise in diagnosis, and an expanded definition. It is unclear that these factors totally account for the increase.

- ♦ Symptoms of autism can often be detected at 18 months or earlier, and some of the early signs may even be recognizable within the first year of life.
- ♦ When parents first suspect their child is developing differently, they should discuss their concerns with their pediatrician and ask for an autism screening, or referral to a qualified autism professional.
- ♦ Early identification and intensive early intervention can result in significant positive outcomes for many children with autism.
- ♦ Individuals with autism can make gains with the support of evidence-based educational and therapeutic programs tailored to meet their challenges and strengths. Gains can be made throughout childhood, adolescence and adulthood.
- ♦ 84% of individuals with autism in California are under the age of 22. There is a significant need for services to help young people successfully transition to adulthood with the greatest levels of independence possible.

■ BY 4 MONTHS OF AGE

- Does not make eye contact or makes little eye contact
- Does not seem interested in other people
- Does not show as much interest in people as objects
- Does not react by looking at people when they are making "social sounds," such as humming or clapping
- Does not have a social smile (does not smile back at someone who smiles at them)
- Does not show interest in watching people's faces

■ BY 12 MONTHS OF AGE

- Does not combine eye contact with smiling
- Does not babble (or the babble doesn't sound like "talking")
- Does not look where another person is pointing
- Does not try to engage other people in what he or she is looking at or doing
- Does not engage in interactive gestures, such as giving, showing or reaching for parents
- Does not respond when his or her name is called
- Does not show a caring or concerned reaction to other people crying or in distress
- Does not use gestures, such as waving "hi" or "bye," or use the index finger to point

■ BY 24 MONTHS OF AGE

- Does not look toward an object that is pointed to
- Does not point to share interests with others, such as pointing to an appealing toy
- Does not imitate common activities of others, such as sweeping the floor
- Does not learn simple, new interactive routines
- Does not develop pretend or make-believe play, such as feeding a doll
- Does not use single words by 16 months
- Does not spontaneously use meaningful two-word phrases ("go car" or "look doggie") by 24 months