EARLY SIGNS OF AUTISM

BY 4 MONTHS OF AGE

- Does not make eye contact or makes little eye contact
- Does not seem interested in other people
- 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, babbling, or gesturing
- 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, such as showing objects
- 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," using the index finger to point, or reaching for parents

BY 24 MONTHS OF AGE

- Does not use single words by 16 months
- Does not point to share interests with others, such as pointing to an appealing toy
- Does not copy actions or words
- Does not learn simple, new interactive routines such as peek-a-boo
- Does not develop pretend or make-believe play
- Does not use meaningful two-word phrases ("go car" or "look doggie") by 24 months

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

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 1,400 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. Recently, The Help Group has launched programs to serve LGBTQ+ youth and homeschooled students. With more than 850 staff members, The Help Group's state-of-the-art schools and programs are located on six campuses in the Los Angeles area and Irvine.

The Help Group is widely regarded for its high standards of excellence and unique scope and breadth of services. 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
- 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 - Kaleidoscope
- The Help Group Learning Center
- The Help Group Center for Autism Spectrum Disorder

Campuses
- Culver City
- Sherman Oaks East
- Sherman Oaks West
- Valley Glen
- Van Nuys
- Irvine

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

For more information visit www.thehelpgroup.org or 877.943.5747

2020
Today, autism affects 1 in every 54 children in the United States. Autism is four times more common in boys than girls.

No two individuals with autism are the same. There is a wide spectrum of symptoms that range from mild to severe.

Autism occurs in children of all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Children from minority groups tend to be underdiagnosed or diagnosed later.

Autism may be accompanied by language impairment and/or intellectual disability. Some children with autism 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 younger.

Early identification and intensive early intervention can result in significant positive outcomes for many children with autism.

There is a significant need for services to help young people successfully transition to adulthood with the greatest level of independence possible.

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.

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