



What Autism Looks Like

What is Autism?

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges. This results in your child communicating, interacting, behaving, or learning differently than most.

Signs and Symptoms

This list gives some examples of common types of behaviors in people diagnosed with autism.

- ✖ Difficulty with social interaction
- ✖ Lack of interest in others
- ✖ Difficulty with communication
- ✖ Lack of or limited eye contact
- ✖ Not understanding nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and eye contact
- ✖ Gets upset with minor changes
- ✖ Restrictive play or interests

What Can Autism Look Like?

People with autism can have a wide range of abilities and challenges. Some children with autism may be able to communicate their needs, independently complete self-care tasks, and attend school in a regular classroom. Other children with ASD may be unable to communicate appropriately, need assistance with most tasks, and require additional support for school. Sometimes, a child with autism may also have other co-occurring conditions that impact their functioning.



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One child may not have an interest in interacting with other people and prefer to be alone. Another child may have such an intense interest in interacting that they get too close to those around them.

One child may not make any kind of eye contact. Another child may make intense eye contact and not look away.

One child may be very focused on a single toy. Another child may play with many toys in a short period of time.

One child may be unable to communicate their needs without crying or grabbing others. Another child may communicate their needs in a way that comes off as rude.

One child may hum or make other noises to themselves. Another child may recite lines from movies during conversations.

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Your child should not fit into a mold. Your child's unique strengths and needs will require different strategies, goals, and procedures.

Your child may have significant strengths in some skills areas, but struggle in others.

- ✖ Your child may be able to read paragraphs but is unable to tell you their name.
- ✖ Your child may be able to complete complex jigsaw puzzles but is unable to retrieve an item from their room.
- ✖ Your child may be able to speak in full sentences as they recite their favorite movie, but answer questions using one word



Behavioral
Framework™

CONTACT US

Email: hello@behavioralframework.com

Web: behavioralframework.com

MD: 301.444.5001

VA: 571.317.1742

Fax: 240.366.5142

