

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

ASD is a lifelong neuro-developmental disorder that involves challenges with social-communication, restricted interests, and repetitive behaviors. ASD is considered a spectrum because the degree of impairment of these characteristics varies between each autistic individual.

According to the CDC, it is estimated that 1 out of every 31 8-year-old children is on the autism spectrum.

Common Characteristics of ASD

Social & Communication:

- Aversion to or limited eye-contact
- Absence of, stilted, or scripted speech (echolalia)
- Trouble interpreting their own or others' emotions and body language, including facial expressions
- Struggle in initiating and managing relationships
- Difficulty in shared interest with others
- Difficulty in communicating wants or needs

Repetitive and Restricted Interest & Behaviors:

- Extreme difficulty with change – routine dependent
- Difficulty in regulating emotions
- Overly focused on specific and personal interest
- Arrangement of objects in a very particular manner or order
- Stimming: hand flapping, rocking, jumping, making repetitive sounds
- Hyper/hypo sensitive to sounds, lighting, taste, and textures
- Limited diet
- Elopement

*Autistic individuals may show some or all of these characteristics in varying degrees. Levels and methods of support will vary from person to person.