



## Autistic Children

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### Abstract:

*Autism is a development disorder that ranges from mild to severe. Rather than being defined as one particular disorder and set of symptoms, autism is referred to as autism spectrum disorder. Every child is unique with his own particular traits and symptoms. Children with autism often react differently to being touched, resist changes to routines, and engage in repetitive activities. However, it bears repeating that children with autism spectrum disorder have various symptoms. An individual with autism does not always show every symptom, however, there are some characteristics and observed indication. Determining these indications early on is substantially important for the education early on enables individual with autism to easily adapt to life and society. Also, parents learn how to approach their children with autism and act accordingly. Autistic children face a unique set of challenges in their daily lives. The various effects of the condition can alter their perception of the world and people around them in ways that others do not always understand. This can lead to confusion and frustration on both ends, but knowledge really is power.*

*Understanding how autism impacts a person's life can help everyone improve their interaction and communication. While traits can differ from one autistic child to another.*

### 1. Characteristics of Autistic Children

No two people with autism are alike, but most experience difficulty with social skills and executive function and have sensory needs that are different from those of the neurotypical people. Autism disorder causes a person to establish repetitive behavioral patterns and often impairs their social interactions with other people. Autism is a developmental disorder that affects the normal functioning of the central nervous system, or brain. Signs of autism typically appear during early childhood—usually before a child turns three—and continue steadily throughout the course of life. Every person with autism is different. However, there are some common characteristics of individuals with autism that may occur. The characteristics of autistic children can be divided into five categories:

### 2. High Functioning Characteristics of Autistic Children

Some common characteristics of high functioning autism include:

- Average or above average intelligence, with an IQ of at least 85
- Lack of communication skills; impaired ability to understand non-verbal communication and express emotion
- Intense reactions to sensory stimuli, including sights, sounds, smells or textures
- Fascination with or obsessive interest in certain topics or categories of objects
- Delayed motor skills, poor coordination

Children with high functioning autism do not avoid social contact, as is the case with more severe forms of autism. But while they have a desire to be involved with other people, they are lacking in certain types of social skills, such as the ability to understand other people's emotions, read facial

expressions or interpret body language. They also fail to understand humor or sarcasm, and take words literally. This lack of communication skills can lead to awkward social situations, and in school they are frequently teased, rejected or bullied by other students. This rejection and failure to connect and form friendships can cause feelings of isolation, sometimes leading to anxiety or depression.

Extreme sensitivity to sensory stimuli can cause people with high functioning autism to be distracted or disturbed by sounds, sights or smells that other may not even be aware of, or can easily ignore. Sensitivity to touch may cause them to dislike being touched in any way. They may also object to wearing clothes that are made of certain types of fabrics. Obsessive interest in certain topics or objects is another one of the common characteristics of high functioning autism.

### **3. Typical Characteristics of Autistic Children**

A child with autism does not always show every symptom. However, there are some characteristics and observed indications. Determining these indications early on is substantially important for the education of the individual. Starting the education early on enables individual with autism to easily adapt to life and society. Also, parents learn how to approach their children with autism and act accordingly.

Generally, autism shows itself in terms of three different problems such as social interaction problems, communication problems, limited and recurring behaviors are three main topics that make up the categories.

#### **3.1 Social Interaction Problems**

The most attention-grabbing problem in social interaction problems is avoiding eye contact. The child either never makes eye contact or little eye contact or turns eyes away with the person. This situation may occur in many different types. For example, the child can suddenly make unexpected eye contact and then again suddenly drops the gaze. This is a behavior that can be seen as abnormal and a symptom of autism.

Autistic children struggle with communicating with their peers. They generally do not have their many friends. Things they are interested and enjoy to share are quite limited. They are also not eager to share. For this reason, they have difficulties while adapting to group activities.

Most of the time, autistic children are unresponsive when someone calls their name or someone is interested in them. They may pretend to not hear even though their names are called. Things that attract other children do not attract them and they remain indifferent to the events happening in the society.

#### **3.2 Communication Problems**

Autistic Children may have problems with speech phase. Their language development falls far behind from their peers. When children reach two years of age and have not said any words, this should be seen as indication. Children older than three years old should normally be able to build two-word sentences easily. However, if the child does not do this, there is a problem, If they are autism children who start talking make grammar errors and repeats them.

They are insufficient in terms of communicating with talking. It is hard for autistic children to start a talk. They also have difficulties with advancing the talk that is going on. During conversation, talking turns into talking to oneself and the interest in the other party diminish.

The games they play are weaker and more limited compared to what their peers play. For instance, they cannot play games that require imagination like playing house. Most of the time, they cannot figure out

how to play with toys. They generally incline to hit the toy to a certain place or hit the toys with their hands.

### ***3.3 Limited and Recurring Behavior***

Fields of interest of Autistic Children are substantially limited. On the other hand, they overreact to things they are interested in. It would only be possible to get their attention in such situation. They create a routine in their daily life and want to repeat it constantly. When this routine is interrupted, they become upset. They think about the things they may interrupt their routines beforehand and act accordingly, besides, taking and observing the thing they are interested in detail can be considered as a symptom.

## **4. Physical Characteristics of Autistic Children**

The physical characteristics of children with autism, at first glance, are such that they do not show any outward manifestation of the condition. The autistic children do not exhibit any unique outward, physical characteristics and deviation from their non-autistic peers. While behavioral characteristic and deviations are more pronounced in autistic children, they do not typically show any physical characteristics indicating autism.

"The Development of Autism- a Self-regulatory Perspective," it is not uncommon to describe autistic children as being exceptionally beautiful. Some autistic children, however, may display minor anomalies in their physical form and characteristics are:

### ***4.1 Large Head Size***

Head size is a distinguishing feature of autistic children. While children may have normal-ranged head size at birth, its size accelerates considerably later. Whereas the average head-size of autistic children is approximately 10 percent larger than that of non-autistic children.

### ***4.2 Excessive Hand Gestures***

Autism affects the ability of a child to communicate effectively and to make him or herself understood. Autistic children commonly gesture or point to objects of interest instead of using words. It is often difficult for them to express their desires or needs, leading to frustration and tantrums.

### ***4.3 Over-Activity and Under***

Autistic children also exhibit periods of extremely low levels of activity. It is not uncommon for an autistic child to run back and forth, or in circles, for hours and then suddenly sit down and stare into space.

### ***4.4 Uneven Motor Skills***

Autistic children exhibit uneven motor skills. Some may not be able to perform even the simplest of tasks, such as hop or stand still on one leg, use a spoon or fork, or dress themselves. However, the same children may exhibit gifted characteristics, such as drawing, playing music or arranging toys in a complicated manner. Their motor skills follow no set developmental pattern, and while they may perform exceptionally well in certain areas, their performance in other, more common areas is often grossly inadequate. Other physical characteristic that may be indicative of children with autism are:

- Seeming disinterest in people and toys
- Unresponsive when called
- Hand flapping
- Head banging or head shaking
- Laughing for no reason
- Pale skin tone
- Large eyes and large ears

- Low muscle tone
- Repetitive behavior
- Aggression
- Uneven gait
- Lack of eye contact
- Crying fits

## **5. Social Characteristics of Autistic Children**

Typically-developing infants are social beings. Early in life, they gaze at people, turn toward voices, grasp at fingers, and smile. In contrast, most autistic children do not show special interest in faces and seem to have tremendous difficulty learning to engage in everyday human interaction. Even in the first few months of life, many autistic children seem indifferent to other people, lacking the eye contact and interaction with others that non-autistic children are expected to exhibit. Some infants with autism may appear very calm – they may cry less often because they do not seek parental attention or ministrations. Some social characteristics of these children are:

### **5.1 Lack of Empathy**

According to Simon Baron-Cohen, many autistic children appear to lack a “theory of mind.” which is the ability to see things from another person’s perspective. Typical five-year-olds can usually develop insights into other people’s knowledge, feelings, and intentions based on social cues such as gestures and facial expressions. Autistic children may lack these interpretation skills, leaving them unable to predict or understand other people’s actions or intentions.

### **5.2 Friendships and Affection**

Children with autism often experience social alienation during their school-age years. As a response to this, or perhaps because their social surroundings simply do not “fit” them, many report inventing imaginary friends, worlds, or scenarios. Making friends in real life and maintaining those friendships often proves to be difficult for those with autism.

Autistic children often seem to prefer being alone and may passively accept such things as hugs and cuddling without reciprocating, or resist attention altogether. Later, they seldom seek comfort from others or respond to parents’ displays of anger or affection in a typical way. Research has suggested that although autistic children are attached to their parents, their expression of this attachment may be unusual and difficult to interpret.

## **6. Behavioral Characteristics of Autistic Children**

Although not universal, it is common for children with autism to have difficulty regulating their behavior, resulting in crying, verbal outbursts, or self-injurious behaviors that seem inappropriate or without cause. Those who have autism generally prefer consistent routines and environments, and they may react negatively to changes in their surroundings. It is not uncommon for these individuals to exhibit aggression, increased levels of self-stimulatory behavior, self-injury, or extensive withdrawal in overwhelming situations. However, as the child matures and receives education, he can gradually learn to control such behaviors and cope with difficult changes in other ways.

### **6.1 Characteristics of Social Relationship**

- As a baby, does not reach out to be held by mother or seek cuddling
- Uses adult as a means to get wanted object, without interaction with adult as a person
- Does not develop age-appropriate peer relationship
- Lack of spontaneous sharing of interests with others
- Difficulty in mixing with others
- Little or no eye contact

- Detached from feeling of others

### **6.2 Characteristics of Social Communication**

- Does not develop speech or develop an alternative method of communication such as pointing and gesture
- Has speech, and then loses it
- Repeats words or phrases instead of using normal language
- Speaks on very narrowly focused topics
- Difficulty in talking about abstract concepts
- Lack or impairment of conversational skills

### **6.3 Characteristics of Imaginative Thought**

- Inappropriate attachment to objects
- Obsessive add play with toys or objects (lines up or spins continually)
- Does not like change in routine or environment (going to a different place, furniture moved in house)
- Will eat only certain foods
- Will use only the same object (same plate or cup, same clothes)
- Repetitive motor movements (rocking, hand flapping)

## **7. Some other characteristics of Autistic Children**

- Problems with social interaction with others. This may include problems talking back and forth, working or playing with others.
- Unusual interest in objects
- Need for sameness
- Under or over reaction to one or more of the five senses: sight, touch, taste, smell or hearing
- Repeated actions or body movement
- Unusual emotional reactions and expressions
- Children with autism often have difficulty with social interaction
- Children with autism may have an unusual interest in objects
- Children with autism often have difficulty with change in routine.
- Children with autism may have great ability in one area and great difficulty in another.
- Children with autism may have unusually strong reactions to one or more of their five senses.
- Children with autism may do the same thing over and over again or talk constantly about specific things that interest them.
- Children with autism may have unusually intense and prolonged emotional reactions.

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