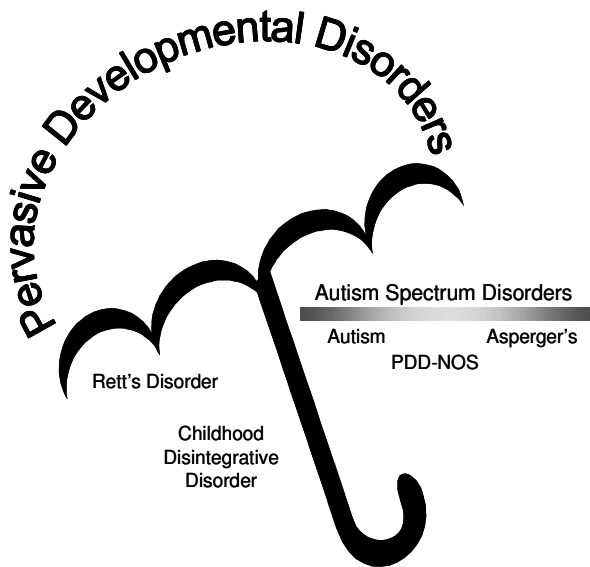


Fact Sheet

Autism Spectrum Disorder: Now What?

“If you have met one person with autism, you have met one person with autism.” -- Stephen Shore



Roadmap

Autism, PDD-NOS, and Asperger’s Syndrome are developmental disorders collectively known as Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). After a diagnosis, parents often wonder how involved their child’s disorder is or how their child’s abilities and challenges compare to those of other children with ASDs. This is a question without a good answer because children with ASDs have uneven development which results in relative strengths in some areas of life and learning and great needs in others. There is no way to meaningfully represent this range of abilities with a point on a continuum or compare one child’s characteristics with another’s.

A diagnosis does not determine a child’s future. There are many ways to create a positive and productive future, regardless of the current level of challenges and needs.

To different degrees and in differing ways, all people with ASD’s experience challenges in the areas of language and communication skills, social interaction, and repetitive activities.

Most Involved

Least Involved

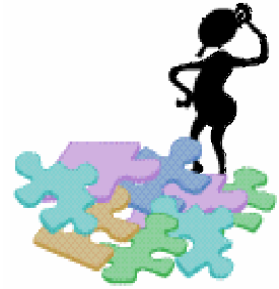
Language Skills			
No language, No gestures	Echolalic, Limited	Unusual use of words/phrases	Advanced vocab, Repetitive, Literal
Communication Skills			
No overt communication	Communicates needs only	Replies if approached	Spontaneous communication
Social Interactions			
Aloof and indifferent	Approaches for physical needs only	Passively accepts approaches	Makes odd, one-sided approaches
Repetitive Activities & Restricted Interests			
Simple, Bodily-directed (face-tapping, self-injury)	Simple, Object-directed (flipping switches, spinning objects)	Complex routines, Manipulation of objects/movements (bedtime rituals, lining up objects)	Verbal, Abstract (movement of planets, calendars, repeat questions)

Adapted from Wing, L. (1991). The relationship between Asperger’s syndrome and Kanner’s autism in U. Frith (Ed.) *Autism and Asperger Syndrome* (pp 122-146). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

The Next Step

Services

- Children with special needs may receive Early Intervention services from birth until age three. Call 1-800-323-4769 or check www.wiu.edu/ProviderConnections/links/index.php
- The needs of children between the ages of three and twenty one are served by the school district in which they reside. Call the special education (special services) department of your neighborhood school to refer your child for an evaluation.
- To apply for services needed now or anticipated in the future, children with ASDs living in Illinois should be registered in the IL DHS Prioritization of Unmet Needs and Services (PUNS) database. Call DHS/Developmental Disabilities at 1-888-DD-PLANS or check www.dd.illinois.gov/SignUp.cfm for more information.



Information

- Illinois Autism/PDD Training and Technical Assistance Project (IATTAP) maintains lending libraries of books on autism throughout the state, provides information including fact sheets on its website and supports a network of Family Resource Specialists across the state. For more information on resources available through IATTAP, call 1-630-889-7398 or visit www.illinoisautismproject.org
- Some trusted sites with free, reliable information include:
Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE): www.isbe.net
Interactive Collaborative Autism Network (ICAN): www.autismnetwork.org
Autism Help: www.autismhelp.info
Wrightslaw: www.wrightslaw.com
Autism Society of America: www.autism-society.org
Tony Attwood: <http://www.tonyattwood.com.au>
Indiana Resource Center on Autism: www.iidc.indiana.edu/irca/

Community Resources

- The Autism Society of Illinois provides online resources, chapter locator, legislative leadership and an information referral service. (866) 691-5553/www.autismillinois.org
- Local resource directories may be available from autism or disability groups in various parts of the state. You may also find autism or developmental disability specific online discussion groups or listservs for your area by searching sites such as Yahoo Groups, Google Groups and AOL Groups.
- Other parents of children with ASDs are the best source of information for local resources. Connect with parents through school, therapy and recreation programs.

