

Autism is often referred to as 'autism spectrum disorder' or 'ASD'. It is a lifelong condition that is often referred to as a spectrum disorder. It is a diverse group of conditions related to development of the brain.

It affects about 1 in 100 children.

Often characteristics may be detected in early childhood but often will not be diagnosed for some time.

People who have Autism will not necessarily have a learning disability.

There are 3 common features of ASD, these are:

- How someone can interact with others in a social setting/ situation.
- How someone can communicate with others.
- How someone can experience the world around them.

#### Causes of Autism.

It is unknown why someone may have Autism; however it is believed that there are many factors that can make it more likely for a child to be diagnosed with ASD, such as environmental and genetic factors.

#### Signs of Autism.

Due to Autism being a spectrum condition, people will be differ significantly. Things can change dependant on the environment around the child.

Some signs of Autism might be;

- The child might find it difficult to interpret both verbal and non-verbal language. (They might struggle to process what is being said to them).
- Children with ASD might find it difficult to read other people's emotions/ body language.
- The child may struggle to express their emotions, and this might lead to the child becoming frustrated and having meltdowns.
- The child might have sensory sensitivity, for example really struggle with loud noises or being touched.
- They might become highly focussed or obsessed with certain things.
- The child might display repetitive behaviours and have rigid routines.
- They might display behaviours that challenge, such as meltdowns and violent outbursts.

#### Getting a diagnosis.

If you think your son or daughter has Autism, the first point of help can be your GP or your Health Visitor. You can discuss your concerns with either of these.

Others that can help you get a diagnosis:

- Psychologist.
- Psychiatrist.

- The child's teacher/ SENCO

### Where to get support?

- National Autistic Society- National Autistic Society  
393 City Road  
London  
EC1V 1NG  
Telephone: 0207 833 2299  
Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk)
- Mencap
- Kent Autistic Trust
- For Us Too