

*What is an
Autism
Spectrum
Disorder?*

*What are the
signs or
red flags?*

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Early detection of Autism is the first step in designing effective interventions to support successful participation in home, school, and community environments.

Areas to look at are impairment in social interaction and communication; and incidence of repetitive behaviors and restricted interests. Possible red flags:

- Does not respond to name by 12 months of age
- Does not gesture (point or wave)
- Does not play "pretend" games (for example, pretend to "feed" a doll) by 18 months
- Lacks appropriate eye gaze and avoid eye contact; wants to be alone
- Has repetitive movements or posturing of any parts of the body
- Has delayed speech and language skills at any age
- Repeats words or phrases over and over (echolalia)
- Gets upset by minor changes
- Has obsessive interests
- Avoids or resists physical contact

Autism is a diagnoses identified in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-5, American Psychiatric Manual of Mental Disorders, 2013).

When we talk about Autism, we often hear the phrase, Autism Spectrum Disorders which describes a range of diagnoses and disorders.

Previously regarded in this range as ASD include:

- Autistic disorder
- Rett Syndrome
- Childhood disintegrative disorder,
- Asperger's disorder
- Pervasive developmental disorders (PDD),
- Pervasive developmental disorder, not otherwise specified (PDD.NOS).

The DSM-5 eliminated the subgroups of ASD defined in the DSM-IV. Instead, all persons on the spectrum will be given a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Discuss your concerns with your child's pediatrician who can do a screening for Autism; then refer you to a developmental pediatrician to conduct an evaluation.



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Who should you talk to and where should parents go for an evaluation?

For children birth to 3 years of age, contact Children's Integrated Services CIS.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), each school district is responsible for evaluating children ages 3-21 that are suspected of having a disability. Some children may also be eligible for special education. Schools are responsible through Child Find to locate, identify and serve children with disabilities. Contact the local school for the name and number of the Special Education Coordinator.

What will happen during the evaluation process?

A professional from CIS or the school will meet with the family to gather information about the child. In addition, information may come from the child's pediatrician and teachers, as well as standardized or other assessments. The results of the evaluation will indicate whether the child is eligible for early intervention services or in need of special education or specific accommodations or a 504 plan. If the child is eligible for special education, the parents will meet with the team to develop an individualized education plan (IEP) to support the child's continued development.

Resources

[Agency of Human Services](#)

Autism Support Services
Oversees the health of all Vermonters.
802-241-2863

[Autism Assessment Clinic at Vermont Center for Children, Youth, & Families](#)

Contact list of Developmental pediatricians.
802-847-4563

[Autism Society](#)

Improving the lives of all affected by autism.
800-328-8476

[Autism Speaks](#)

It's time to listen.
888-288-4762

[Center for Disease Prevention](#)

Saving lives, protecting people.
800-232-4636

[Child Development Clinic](#)

Children with Special Health Needs
Contact list of Developmental pediatricians.
802-863-7338

[Children's Integrated Services CIS](#)

Child Development Division
Where to call for an evaluation for your child.
800-649-2642

[National Institute of Child Health and Human Development](#)

Studies the complex process of human development from conception to old age.
800-370-2943

[Vermont Agency of Education](#)

Help with special education issues for schools
802-479-1030