

# Do You Know The Early Signs of Autism Spectrum Disorders?

Knowing the early signs of autism is important for both pediatricians and caregivers. Identifying autism early helps children get access to early intervention services that are clinically proven help them develop to their full potential.



## Potential Signs of Autism:

- Limited interest in interactive games such as Peek-A-Boo
- Doesn't show "stranger danger"
- Limited response to others (smiling, making a sound, or gesturing)
- Very inconsistent response to their name
- Limited babbling
  
- Few to no words used
- Limited pretend play (pretending to be superheroes, playing dress up)
- Lack of pointing to show interest
- Limited social integration/ more engaged in parallel play
  
- Sensitive to noises and how things feel (like clothing)
- Difficulty transitioning (tantrums, argues, etc)
- Picky Eater
- Language delay
- Doesn't engage in symbolic play (pretending a block is a car)
- Lack of interest in peers
- Doesn't initiate social interactions except to get needs met

## What to do if you suspect a child has Autism:

Getting a diagnosis of autism from a psychologist is often the first step towards accessing early intervention services. Children with autism may experience mild, moderate, or severe symptoms and impairments. Children at all levels may benefit from early intervention services.

### Need More Info?

Website: [abskids.com](http://abskids.com)

Phone: 800-434-8923

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# WHO CAN DIAGNOSE AN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER?



## Clinical Diagnosis (Psychologist)

A clinical diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder is made by a licensed professional using symptom criteria set in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). A psychological assessment (developmental evaluation) is the best practice for diagnosing a child with autism spectrum disorder and should be done by a licensed psychologist (developmental, clinical, or neuropsychologist preferred) who has experience conducting developmental evaluations and has training and direct experience assessing children with developmental disabilities.

A comprehensive evaluation performed by a psychologist will result in an increased understanding of a child's unique strengths and challenges, diagnosis and severity of the condition at the time of the evaluation, and direction regarding treatment and educational planning.

A clinical diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder is the only diagnosis that qualifies a child for ABA therapy services through medical insurance.



## Medical Diagnosis (Pediatrician)

This type of diagnosis may come from your pediatrician, neurologist, or family practitioner. This diagnosis is based upon the doctor identifying that a child meets the criteria for autism spectrum disorder based upon behaviors they have observed in the office or behaviors that have been reported by the parent. This may allow the doctor to prescribe certain medications or make specific medical recommendations in order to help address concerning ASD behavior (i.e. tantrums, aggression, picky eating, etc).

This is considered a medical diagnosis and may not qualify a child for ABA therapy services through medical insurance.



## School District Diagnosis (Special Education Professional)

The school district can perform assessments in order to determine if the child is eligible for special education services. This is an independent evaluation that identifies children whose emotional, academic, and/or behavioral difficulties at school require specific accommodations. Autism Classification - Under state law, school districts determine that a student has autism or a disorder like autism if he or she exhibits any combination of specified autistic-like behaviors that adversely affect educational performance.

This is considered an educational diagnosis and does not qualify the child for ABA therapy services through medical insurance.