

Autism – do you know the signs?

Older Adolescents and Adults

Social Interaction and Verbal Communication

Repeating certain words or phrases over and over again ("echolalia")

Talks excessively about topics of own interest

**"echolalia
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echolalia"**

Takes things literally, struggles with sarcasm and metaphor

Limited use of language



Does not offer comfort to others

Does not seek comfort when in pain or distress

Talks 'at' others rather than sharing a two-way conversation

Indifferent to, or no interest in, age peers

Approaches others in one sided way or on own terms

Can be over-formal or over-familiar

Does not respond to greetings and farewells

Emotional responses to others are inappropriate, rude and unsympathetic

Unaware of other's feelings

Finds making and keeping close friendships difficult



Does not 'share' interests or enjoyment with others

Problems with turn-taking or team activities

Makes comments without awareness of social niceties or hierarchies

Does not spontaneously join in or interact with others of same age

Finds it difficult to sustain employment or education

Imagination, ideas and creativity

Imaginary activities not shared with others or else passively follows another's imaginative theme or insists that others follows his/her own themes and rules.



Reduced or no imagination

Reduced creativity, limited or repetitive fantasy world or role play

Interested only in non-fiction, and not in fictional stories/films

Difficulty with future thinking



Experiences difficulties with problem solving

Finds it difficult to predict intentions of others/ cannot imagine characters intentions in story/film

Unable to foresee the consequences of own actions on other people

Struggles to 'read between the lines'



Unable to adjust behaviour to expectations or predicted reactions of others

Gestures and non verbal communication



Lack of spontaneous gesture that expresses emotion (e.g. putting arm around someone)



Lack of pointing to show objects and share interest



Reduced or unusual eye contact

Odd or flat/monotonous tone of voice



Poorly integrated gestures, facial expression, proximity, body language or eye contact when having conversations

Lack of social smile

Narrow range of interests, routines and repetitive behaviours

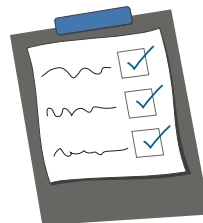
Displays repetitive behaviours or rituals that negatively affect daily activities



Arranges objects in patterns or lines and dislikes these to be disturbed

Self-chosen activities are limited and unchanging

Dislike of change, which can lead to anxiety or aggression



Insists on following own agenda

Over-focused, unusual or highly specific interests and hobbies

Prefers familiar routines, likes things to be 'just right'

Has strong adherence to rules or fairness that leads to arguments

Sensory responses

Unusual sensory responses to sound sight, touch, taste, smell, movement and/or pain

