

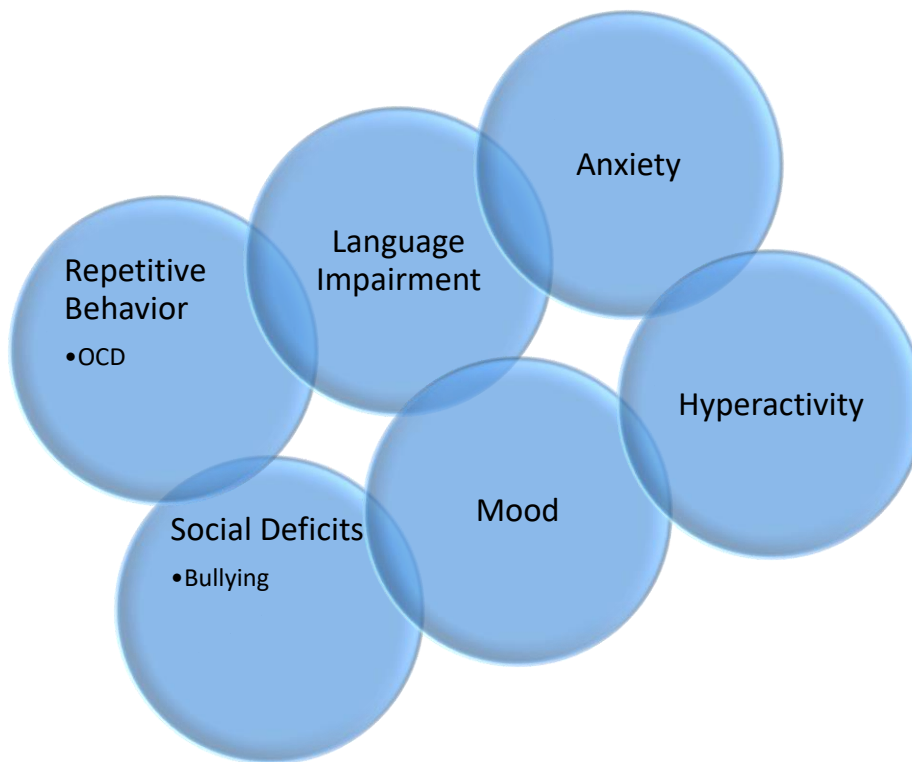
A Brief Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that may lead to significant social, behavioral, and communication challenges. Although people with ASD may communicate, interact, behave, and learn in ways that are different from most other people, the physical appearance of individuals with autism do not set them apart from others. The learning, thinking, and problem-solving abilities of people with ASD typically range from gifted to severely impaired. Some people with ASD need a lot of help in their daily lives; others need less (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017).

Common Signs of Autism Spectrum Disorder May Include:

- ❖ Trouble interacting, playing with, or relating to others
- ❖ Little or brief eye contact with others
- ❖ Unusual or repetitive movements, such as hand flapping, spinning, or tapping
- ❖ Difficulties learning in school
- ❖ Playing with toys in ways that seem odd or repetitive
- ❖ Poor spatial awareness

An Illustration of the Symptoms of ASD



Students with ASD may:

- ❖ Become easily frustrated
- ❖ Act out in certain situations
- ❖ Experience sensory overload
- ❖ Seem insensitive or unemotional
- ❖ Struggle with verbal and non-verbal communication
- ❖ Need extra time for crafts, assignments, or transitions
- ❖ Fail to understand abstract concepts, metaphors, humor, and idioms
- ❖ Perform better with limited choices instead of open ended questions (Gavin, 2013).
- ❖ Be your most rewarding students as you see their amazing progress

Classroom Strategies

- ❖ Many students with autism can thrive in a structured environment, so establish a routine and keep it as consistent as possible. Adhering to daily schedules and warning students before transitions can help with many students' behavioral issues and frustrations.
- ❖ Instructional support is often needed within the classroom setting. Students with autism learn better with pictures, hand gestures, and demonstrations. Limit long verbal instructions and provide visual cues and written instructions, when possible. Also, limit distractions and use positive rewards for positive behaviors.
- ❖ If your student with ASD appears to be overwhelmed, they often benefit from being allowed to have quiet moment alone.
- ❖ Ensure students are evaluated for occupational therapy and speech therapy because many will benefit from these services.
- ❖ Utilize the behavior analyst employed by your school system if you are struggling with a specific behavior.

Free Resources on Autism Spectrum Disorder

- ❖ Brief factsheet: <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/autism-factsheet.html>
- ❖ Free book from NEA on teaching kids with ASD: <http://www.nea.org/home/18459.htm>
- ❖ Free downloadable book for teachers on teaching kids with ASD in a regular classroom setting: <http://researchautism.org/resources/an-educators-guide-to-autism/>
- ❖ <http://www.matthewreardon.org/the-tough-kid-practical-behavior-management/>
- ❖ Creating motivation for kids with autism: <http://nspt4kids.com/therapy/how-to-motivate-children-with-autism-using-reinforcers/>

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2017). Autism spectrum disorder (ASD): Facts about ASD. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/facts.html>

Gavin, M. L.(2013). Special needs factsheet: Autism. Retrieved from <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/autism-factsheet.html>

2018/2019 School Year

Your student _____, has Autism Spectrum Disorder. The information below has been provided by the student's family.

Meltdowns are often triggered by: _____

Differences in sensory perception: _____

Experiences that may be difficult to tolerate: _____

Difficulties in peer relationships often start with: _____

Passions include: _____

Special talents include: _____

Ways to reduce anxiety: _____

General tips: _____

We would like your feedback! Please email us at research@DoctorZeanah.com