



Autism Spectrum Disorders refers to a range of complex developmental disabilities that affect the functioning of the brain, impacting social interactions, communication and behavior. These characteristics can present themselves in a wide variety of combinations and varying levels and may include:

- Difficulty relating to others
- Minimal eye contact
- Problems adapting to changes in routines
- Repetitive patterns of behavior
- Sensitivity to sensory stimuli
- Obsession with a specific interest

Some children may have delayed communication skills, while children on the higher functioning end of the spectrum may have trouble with the social aspects of communication.

The Center for Disease Control estimates that 1 in 59 children are now affected by autism spectrum disorders, the cause of which is unknown. But research has shown that early intervention can result in significant communication and social improvements. Activities that promote interaction with peers are important for social progress. Using strategies such as visual supports can help children express their needs and manage their behavior. Families working together with professionals can develop a plan to meet the needs of their child.

Autism spectrum disorders may qualify children for special education services if it is impacting their education. If so, school professionals can work with families to develop supports through the IEP (Individualized Education Plan) process. Before age three, children can be served through their state's early intervention agency, such as [Tennessee's Early Intervention System](#).

Interested in learning more about Autism Spectrum Disorders?

These popular books (and hundreds of others) are available to you from our Siskin Lending Library:

General:

[Ten Things Every Child With Autism Wishes You Knew](#) (Notbohm)

[1001 Great Ideas for Teaching and Raising Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders](#) (Notbohm)

[Thinking in Pictures](#) (Grandin) or others by Temple Grandin



[Autism Spectrum Disorder: The Complete Guide to Understanding Autism](#) (Sicile-Kira)
[An Early Start for Your Child with Autism](#) (Rogers)
[Engaging Autism](#) (Greenspan)
[A Parent's Guide to High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder](#) (Ozonoff)
[A Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome](#) (Attwood)
[Uniquely Human](#) (Prizant)

Communication, Social Skills:

[More Than Words: A Guide to Helping Parents Promote Communication and Social Skills in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders](#) (Sussman)
[The Social Skills Picture Book](#) (Baker)
[The New Social Story Book](#) (Gray)
[Signing Time](#) (DVD series)
[The Asperkid's Secret Book of Social Rules](#) (O'Toole)
[Visual Supports for People with Autism](#) (Cohen, Gerhardt)

Sleep Issues, Toilet Training:

[Solving Sleep Problems in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders](#) (Katz, Malow)
[Sleep Better!](#) (Durand)
[Toilet Training for Individuals with Autism or Other Developmental Issues](#) (Wheeler)
[The Potty Journey](#) (Coucovanis)

Anxiety, Sensory Issues:

[When My Worries Get Too Big: A Relaxation Book for Children...](#) (Dunn Baron)
[The Out-of-Sync Child](#) or [The Out-of-Sync Child Has Fun](#) (Kranowitz)

For Children:

[The Survival Guide for Kids with Autism Spectrum Disorders \(and Their Parents\)](#) (Verdick, Reeve)
[My Brother Charlie](#) (Peete)
[My Friend With Autism](#) (Bishop)
[Understanding Sam and Asperger Syndrome](#) (Niekerk, Venter)

We would also recommend:

Informative Websites:

Autism Society of America (www.autism-society.org): offers several articles in its "Living with Autism" series on practical topics of interest to parents.



Autism Speaks (www.autismspeaks.org): *includes the First 100 Days kit, a valuable resource for new families*

Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov)

Local Resources:

Chattanooga Autism Center (www.chattanoogaautismcenter.org): *very active local organization offering trainings, parent support, social events, an annual conference, etc.*

Siskin Children's Institute (www.siskin.org): *lists our training events as well as links to autism information*