

Autism Spectrum Disorder

This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Autism spectrum disorder, or ASD, is a developmental disability that causes problems with social, communication, and behavioral skills. CDC estimates that one in 68 children has been identified as having autism spectrum disorder.

People with ASD communicate, interact, behave, and learn differently from most others. The learning, thinking, and problem-solving abilities of people with ASD can range from gifted in some areas to severely challenged in others.

In the past, three conditions that were diagnosed separately—autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified, and Asperger syndrome—are now all called autism spectrum disorder.

Signs of ASD begin during early childhood and usually last throughout life. Children and adults with ASD might have trouble relating to others or talking about their own feelings. Some might avoid eye contact or want to be alone. Others might repeat actions over and over, or have unusual reactions to the way things sound, smell, taste, look, or feel. To read more about the signs and symptoms of ASD, visit [cdc.gov/Autism](https://www.cdc.gov/Autism).

If you think your child could have ASD, talk to a health care provider. Ask for a referral to a developmental pediatrician or other specialist. At the same time, contact an agency in your community for a free evaluation. If your child isn't three years old yet, contact a local early intervention agency. To find one in your area, visit [cdc.gov/concerned](https://www.cdc.gov/concerned). For children three and older, contact your local public school, even if your child doesn't go to that school.

Parents can track their young child's developmental milestones with free checklists from CDC. Find them at [cdc.gov/milestones](https://www.cdc.gov/milestones). You know your child best. If you ever have a developmental concern, don't wait! Acting early can make a real difference!

For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.