

ASD

What is ASD all about?

Autism – do you know the signs? Children and Younger Adolescents

Social Interaction and Verbal Communication

Limited use of language

- Repeating certain words or phrases over and over again ("echolalia")
- Does not follow simple commands relating to objects not in view (such as fetch your toothbrush)
- Talks excessively about topics of own interest
- Takes things literally, struggles with sarcasm and metaphor
- Does not respond by looking when name is called. Talks 'at' others rather than sharing a two-way conversation
- Does not seek comfort when in pain or distress
- Indifferent to, or no interest in, age peers
- Unaware of other's feelings
- Problems with turn-taking or team activities
- Does not offer comfort to others
- Approaches others in one sided way or on own terms
- Finds making and keeping friendships difficult
- Does not spontaneously join in or interact with others of same age
- Can be over-formal or over-familiar
- Does not respond to greetings and farewells
- Emotional responses to others are inappropriate, rude and unsympathetic
- Does not 'share' interests or enjoyment with others

Imagination, ideas and creativity

- Lack of imaginative pretend play (pretending that dolls and toys are real and enacting out scenarios with them or role play)
- Imaginative pretend play is solitary or plays near but not with other children
- Empathy reduced or absent
- Plays imaginative pretend play with others but not equally shared - may passively copy another's imaginative game, or insist that others follows his/her own themes and rules
- Imaginative pretend play is over-focused or obsessive or copied (not invented)
- Imaginative pretend play is repetitive
- Struggles to predict reactions of others

Gestures and non verbal communication

- Does not 'show' objects by holding them up or giving them to someone
- Does not follow a pointing gesture to where someone is looking
- Lack of pointing to show objects and share interest
- Poorly integrated gestures, facial expression, proximity, body language or eye contact when having conversations
- Lack of spontaneous gesture that expresses emotion (e.g. putting arm around someone)
- Lack of social smile
- Odd or flat/monotonous tone of voice
- Reduced or unusual eye contact

Narrow range of interests, routines and repetitive behaviours

- Displays repetitive behaviours or rituals that negatively affect daily activities
- Repetitive 'stereotypical' movements such as hand flapping, body rocking while standing, spinning, finger flicking
- 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

echolalia

Wales Autism Research Centre

www.ASDInfoWales.co.uk

Allen, C., de Jongh, R., & Baxendale, S. (2012). Toward a 'red flag' for autism screening: the short autism spectrum quotient and the short autism spectrum checklist in 1,080 cases and 3,822 controls. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 51(2), 202-212.
Bal, S., & Dismaggio, C. (2015). Early markers of autism spectrum disorders in infants and toddlers: progressively identified in the Social Interaction and Communication Study. *Autism*, 19(5), 68-84.
Cantagrel, S., Leclercq, S., Koenig, B., Wajsborn, A., Gault, J., Wang, L., ... & Naveau, S. (2016). Signposting for diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder using the Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders (DISCO). *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, 9, 41-52.

ASD

Remember:

V.I.S.T.A.

Use **Visuals** whenever possible

Provide the right **Information** at the right time

Think about the child's **Sensory** needs and how to meet them

Give them **Time** to process what you're saying (count to ten – silently - and ask again if needed)

Ask them what you need to know. Let them help you!

Look after yourself!

Additional information, support and resources are available at:

www.asdinfoales.co.uk

www.youngminds.co.uk