Signs of autism in toddlers

Social communication

- Language is delayed
- Language is repeated from others or video
- Does not point
- Does not make consistent eye contact
- Only shows extreme emotions in facial expression

Social interaction

- Does not respond to name
- Does not reciprocate a smile
- Does not show or give you things
- Does not like sharing
- Does not direct words or sounds to others
- Gets needs met by hand leading

Relationships

- Does not show interest in other children
- Does not play with other children
- Plays alongside but not with other children
- Only comfortable with very familiar adults
- Does not differentiate between familiar and unfamiliar adults



Behaviours

- Often seems to be moving hands or fingers
- Jumps, spins, paces or rocks body
- Likes to line up, stack or fill objects
- Watches the same video over again

Interests

- Appears fascinated by numbers or letters
- Carries a specific number of items in hands
- Will not leave house without comfort object

Sensory

- Appears sensitive to certain sounds, smells, textures, touch or tastes
- Seeks sensory feedback through touching, smelling, licking or chewing blankets, toys or objects

Changes

- Struggles when daily routine changes
- Has set routines or ways of doing things
- Insists on sitting in the same seat or using the same cup
- Distress in unfamiliar or new places

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Signs of autism in children

Social communication

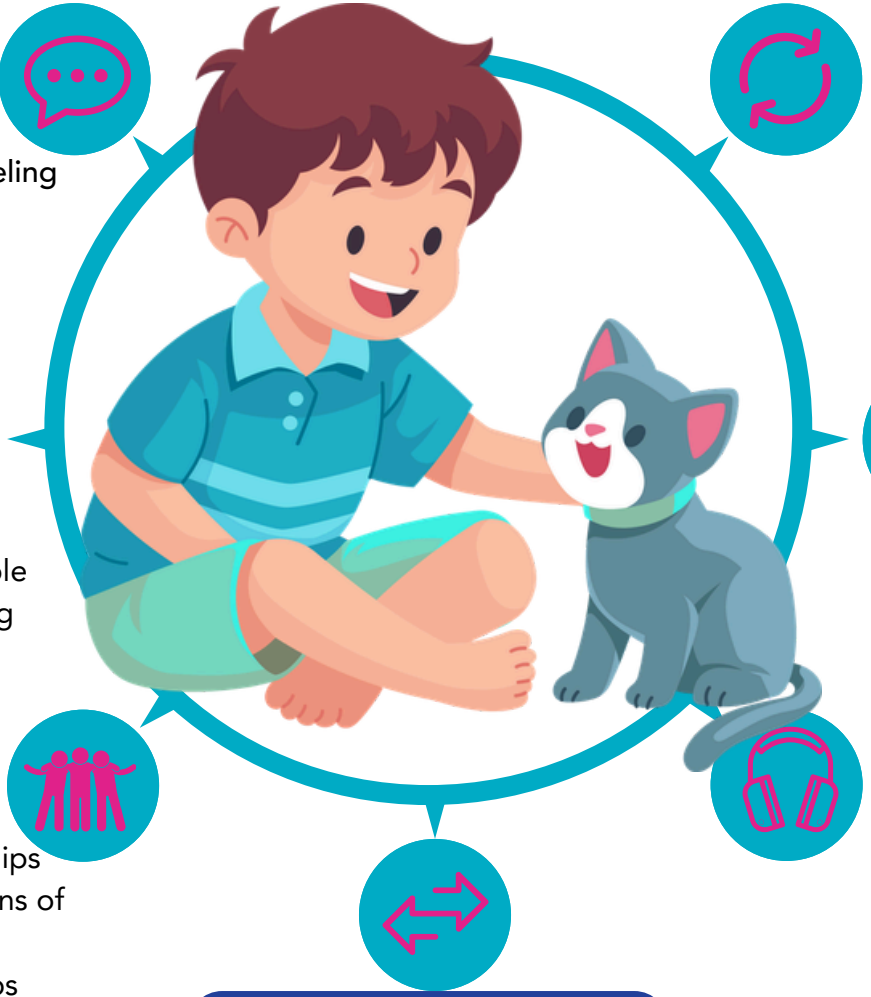
- ☐ Uncomfortable with eye contact
- ☐ Cannot always tell how they are feeling from their facial expression
- ☐ Does not always use hand gestures
- ☐ Language can be quite formal or is repetitive

Social interaction

- ☐ Struggles with social chit chat
- ☐ Uses short responses to avoid conversation
- ☐ Worries about what to say to unfamiliar people
- ☐ Talks about own interests rather than showing an interest in others experiences

Relationships

- ☐ Shows decreased interest in friendships
- ☐ Struggles to understand the intentions of peers
- ☐ Needs support to manage friendships
- ☐ Is passive or takes the lead in play
- ☐ Does not engage in imaginative play with others



Changes

- ☐ Struggles when plans change
- ☐ Has set routines or ways of doing things
- ☐ Dislikes spontaneity
- ☐ Seeks reassurance about plans
- ☐ Difficulty settling following a transition

Behaviours

- ☐ Often seems to be moving hands or fingers
- ☐ Jumps, spins, paces or rocks body
- ☐ Likes to line up, order or organise objects
- ☐ Watches the same TV show or reads the same book

Interests

- ☐ Likes to collect things
- ☐ Has intense interests that take time and focus
- ☐ Has unusual interests
- ☐ Needs to learn facts and details about topics of interest

Sensory

- ☐ Appears sensitive to certain sounds, smells, textures, touch or tastes
- ☐ Seeks sensory feedback through touching, smelling or chewing blankets, toys or objects

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Signs of autism in teenagers

Social communication

- Uncomfortable with eye contact
- Cannot always tell how they are feeling from their facial expression
- Does not always use hand gestures
- Language can be quite formal or is repetitive

Behaviours

- Often seems to be moving hands or fingers
- Paces or rocks when excited or overwhelmed
- Likes to order or organise objects
- Finds comfort in watching the same programmes or films

Social interaction

- Struggles with social chit chat
- Uses short responses to avoid conversation
- Worries about what to say to unfamiliar people
- Talks about own interests rather than showing an interest in others experiences

Interests

- Likes to collect things
- Has intense interests that take time and focus
- Needs to learn facts and details about topics of interest



Relationships

- Is passive in friendships
- Annoyed when friends don't do things their way
- Struggles with social hierarchy
- Can only manage a few, familiar friendships
- Struggles to make or maintain friendships
- Is over reliant on a particular friend

Sensory

- Appears sensitive to certain sounds, smells, textures, touch or tastes
- Seeks sensory feedback through blankets, or objects

Changes

- Struggles when plans change
- Has set routines or ways of doing things
- Dislikes spontaneity
- Seeks reassurance about plans
- Difficulty settling following a transition

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Signs of autism in adults

Social communication

- Finding eye contact uncomfortable
- Consciously using facial expressions and gestures to make a good impression
- Using phrases that you have copied from others, read or heard on television

Behaviours

- Finding comfort in pacing or rocking
- Moving your fingers and hands often
- Enjoying watching the same TV programmes or books
- Liking to order or organise, finding pleasure in how this looks

Social interaction

- Finding social chit chat difficult, boring or pointless
- Rehearsing conversations in your head before having them
- Feeling anxious about social interactions with unfamiliar people

Interests

- Enjoying collecting things
- Having interests that take time and focus and put you in a flow state
- Needs to learn facts and details about topics of interest



Relationships

- Making new friends is difficult
- Feeling like you do not need friendships or that friendships require too much effort
- Feeling like you are on the outskirts of social groups
- Not needing to see your friends regularly
- Feeling more comfortable with relationships that are focussed on a shared hobby or interest

Sensory

- Irritated or overwhelmed certain sounds, smells, textures, touch or tastes
- Seeking sensory feedback through blankets, or objects

Changes

- Struggling when plans change
- Having set routines or ways of doing things
- Disliking spontaneity
- Needing to plan and prepare for anything new
- Difficulty settling following a transition

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