



## Red Flags of Autism

The following red flags may indicate that a child is at risk and should be screened to ensure that he/she is on the right developmental path

If your baby shows any of these signs, please ask your pediatrician or family doctor for an immediate evaluation.

- ▶ No big smiles or other warm, joyful expressions by six months or thereafter
- ▶ No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles, or other facial expressions by nine months or thereafter
- ▶ No babbling by 12 months
- ▶ No back-and-forth gestures, such as pointing, showing, reaching, or waving by 12 months
- ▶ No words by 16 months
- ▶ No two-word meaningful phrases (without imitating or repeating) by 24 months
- ▶ Any loss of speech or babbling or social skills at any age

*Early Detection is CRITICAL*

## OUR MISSION

*BASE is a non-profit support group  
for families and professionals  
living and working with Autism  
Spectrum disorders. We strive to  
be a solid foundation for  
Education, Information, and  
Support for those whose lives are  
touched by Autism and  
related disorders.*



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CHARITY #590

## Understanding AUTISM

- Autism now affects 1 in 91 children and 1 in 58 boys
- More children will be diagnosed with autism this year than with AIDS, diabetes & cancer combined
- There is no medical detection or cure for autism



# Understanding AUTISM

Autism is a lifelong neurological disability that affects a person's ability to communicate, understand language, play, and socially interact with others. The first signs of autism usually appear as developmental delays before age three.

Every person with autism is different. However, there are some common characteristics of individuals with autism that may occur.

- Difficulty in using and understanding language
- Difficulty in using social skills and navigating social situations
- Over or under sensitivity to sound, sight, taste, touch, or smell
- Repetitive behaviors such as spinning or lining up objects
- Difficulty with changes to surroundings or routines
- Challenging behaviors such as aggression or self-injury
- Anxiety, abnormal fears and/or lack of appropriate fear of real dangers



## But individuals with autism also often exhibit other traits such as:

- Strong visual skills
- Good rote and long term memory (facts, statistics, etc.)
- Adherence to rules, honesty
- Intense concentration or focus, especially on a preferred activity
- Understanding and retention of concrete concepts, patterns and rules
- Musical, mathematical, technological and/or artistic ability or interest

## Approaching an autistic individual

- Speak in a calm, low voice
- Do not surprise the child from behind
- Keep directions simple
- Wait for a response – some individuals with autism need time to process information and respond
- Be patient and understanding

## Awareness and action

Research indicates, that early behavioral intervention for at least two years during the preschool year can result in significant improvements in IQ and language ability for many young children with autism spectrum disorders. As soon as autism is diagnosed, behavioral intervention should begin. Effective programs focus on developing communication, social and cognitive skills.

In many countries autism is not a recognized disorder and diagnosis can be difficult. Countries must take a commitment to building capacity for early recognition by raising awareness. Screening methods for detection of at-risk children are available for toddlers as young as 18 months of age. Such screening can occur during a regular well-baby check-up.



## About BASE

Bermuda Autism Support & Education strives to be a solid foundation for parents, professionals, and all persons living with and affected by the Autism Spectrum. Our goal is to bring to the community a greater awareness of Autism through education and information and thereby increase community understanding and support for those living with autism.

We provide the community with educational seminars and workshops presented by overseas experts on Autism. We join the USA and UK in celebrating April as Autism Awareness Month during which we carry out a large promotion and fundraising effort. Funds donated to BASE are used to defray the cost of seminars and workshops and to continuously update our library and other resources.

In 2008 BASE launched a Pilot Programme designed to integrate autistic children into the public school system. BASE has now expanded this programme by hiring a qualified Behavioural Consultant full-time to visit autistic children in their school setting on a daily basis to provide hands-on training to teachers and paraprofessionals. The Pilot Programme will provide a much-needed and unprecedented level of professional care that is at present beyond the means of most families of autistic children in Bermuda. It will provide the specialised level of expertise required to meet the specific daily and long-term developmental needs of autistic children and allow them to fulfill their potential as students and functioning members of society.

BASE is a member of the Autism Society of America, The Geneva Centre for Autism in Canada, and the National Autistic Society in England.

