

AUTISM

**What Your Child Would
Like You to Know About
this Disorder**

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INTRODUCTION

You may have seen an autistic child or adult and never knew that the person had a diagnosis. Your lack of knowledge about the disorder is not uncommon, because most people who are not experienced with the disorder look at autistic people as those who are mentally retarded or have some learning disability.

This is not true. Autism is a very complicated disorder that affects children typically from the age of three to conception. The disorder is neurological in nature and primarily affects the areas of the brain where communication and social interaction is developed. To the unsuspecting person, the autistic child or adult would be considered mentally unstable or retarded.

The unique thing about autism and the reason it is sometimes hard to detect is that the disorder affects different sufferers in different levels of complexity. A mildly affected child may be able to communicate their wants and needs, but their communication is often stifled and they do not understand the subtleties of the English language. Sometimes humor, irony, and other nuances of the language will present a difficult or impossible barrier to the child's communication process.

Another autistic sufferer may have severe autism where the child or the adult cannot communicate at all. The sad thing is that the autistic person can think about what they want to say and how to communicate it, but the words do not come out and their silence appears on the outside.

Can you imagine trying to communicate with your teacher or parent and the words won't come out? You know the answer to the question and you know how to do the task, but the communication and the rest of your body just doesn't come out. That is why it is difficult for both teachers and parents to understand what autism is and how to deal with it. The child cannot even communicate its wants and needs during play with other

children. A simple act of digging with a sand shovel can be an awkward movement or grunt that would be totally misunderstood by the other child.

Autistic children act differently to normal situations than other kids. Loud noises, a deviation from a familiar route, or a change in time schedule can set an autistic child off with sometimes violent consequences. The acts of an autistic child could be misinterpreted as a behavior disorder or an emotional disorder.

Simple communication is not there. If an autistic child is hot, it has been reported that some will strip naked in public and run around. The communication is there. They are hot. It is cooler when I am naked. Therefore I will be naked and be cool. Again, the communication is there, but the socially accepted communication in which we communicate is not.

According to statistics, almost four million children will be born with autism in the next decade. The diagnoses of autistic children are becoming more refined, but think about the number of children misdiagnosed in the past where their learning and life skill accommodations were not met by professionals.

Autism is a tragic disorder and many parents should be given kudos for the extra time and energy it takes to raise an autistic child. In this e-book you will learn the characteristics of autism, its symptoms, treatments, and learning strategies that will help both you and your child.

Though the definition of autism is still sketchy for health care professionals and psychologists, you will learn more about autism and have a more definitive approach when dealing with autism as a teacher, parent, or someone who works with these special people.

CHAPTER 1 – WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO AUTISM

Autism is a mystery for most health care professionals. They have found no one clear cause for autism though there are several factors that are common throughout the research. The most common is that autistic sufferers have abnormalities in their brain. When compared to non-autistic people, autistic brains are shaped differently and function differently.

There are many theories concerning the factors that contribute to autism in which genetics, heredity, and environmental aspects are suspected. The genetic theory is supported that in some families there are patterns of disabilities and mental illness that are frequent and autism is considered a part of this pattern.

What causes the mutations or the passing of the autistic gene is uncertain. Some researchers believe that a group of unstable genes interfere with the development of the brain during the early years of life and these genes rearrange themselves to hinder the proper realignment of brain tissue.

If this is truly a factor for the contribution to autism, then it cannot be stopped with today's medical knowledge. If the genes are isolated, genetic screening before pregnancy can determine if the parents have a predisposition to give birth to an autistic child.

Environmental factors have been another theory that researchers have come up with. The research for this idea is very sketchy and according to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, there has been no link between autism and an outside source such as chemicals or other toxins in the environment.

Remember there could still be a link and the research is just not showing the connection yet. With all the pollution that is in our air and water and all