

Autism

What is autism?

Autism is sometimes called a spectrum, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD).



A spectrum means that autism can be very different for different people.



Autism is not a learning disability .





About half of autistic people might also have a learning disability.



If you have autism, you will have it for all of your life.



Autism affects how you:

- behave with other people
- communicate with other people
- experience the world around you. For example, you might find every day noises too loud, or some types of lights too bright.



How do I know if my child has autism?

Everyone with autism is different.



Your child might have autism if they:

- find it difficult to understand what people say
- find it difficult to understand when people are happy, sad or angry
- find some every day noises too loud
- find some lights very bright
- like to do the same thing again and again
- get very upset or very angry sometimes.



Some people do not find out they are autistic until they are at school.



Some people do not find out they are autistic until they are adults.



More boys than girls are told they are autistic.



No-one knows if this is because more boys are autistic, or if it is more difficult to tell if girls are autistic.



Help

Talk to your doctor if you are worried about your child.



If your child is at school, you could speak to their teacher or to the school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) for advice.

[Autism Alliance UK](#) has information about organisations that offer support to people with autism.