

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

### Pittsburgh Agencies:

The Autism Center of Pittsburgh  
—North Hills branch

135 Cumberland road, Suite 105  
Pittsburgh, pa 15237  
412-364-1886  
[www.autismcenterofpittsburgh.com](http://www.autismcenterofpittsburgh.com)

—Offers speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, psychological evaluations, and parent support.

The Watson Institute  
301 Camp Meeting Road  
Sewickley, Pa 15143  
412-741-1800  
[www.thewatsoninstitute.org](http://www.thewatsoninstitute.org)

—Offers early educational programs for children, wraparound services, and parent/family support groups.

### Support Groups:

National Alliance on Mental Illness  
of Pennsylvania—WPIC Family  
Support Group  
Pittsburgh, Pa 15213  
412-366-3788  
[www.namispap.org](http://www.namispap.org)  
—Helps families and individuals affected by mental illness.



## ONLINE AND NATIONAL RESOURCES

### Autism Society of America (ASA)

ASA focuses on improving the lives of all people affected by autism.

[www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)

### Autism Research Institute (ARI)

ARI provides parents and professionals around the world with research-based information on autism.

[www.autism.com](http://www.autism.com)

### Autism Speaks

Autism Speaks is a foundation dedicated to changing the future of all people with autism spectrum disorders.

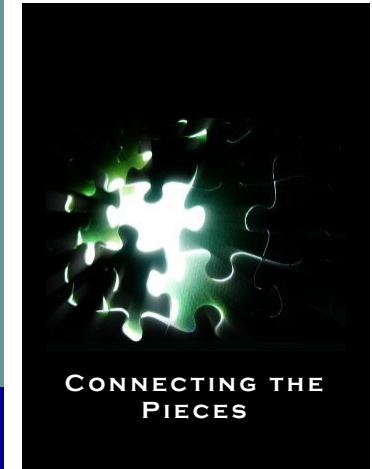
[www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)

### National Autism Association

National Autism Association was designed to empower and educate families affected by autism.

[www.nationalautismassociation.org](http://www.nationalautismassociation.org)

## AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS



CONNECTING THE  
PIECES

- *1 in 150 children are diagnosed with autism*
- *More children will be diagnosed with autism this year than with AIDS, diabetes, & cancer combined*
- *Autism is the fastest-growing developmental disability in the U.S.*

## *What is an autism spectrum disorder (ASD)?*

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Autism spectrum disorders affect a person's brain. A person with an autism spectrum disorder will usually have difficulty with social interactions, communication, and have some form of repetitive behaviors or interests.

Children with ASD may experience different kinds of social, communication, or behavior problems than another child with the same diagnosis. Just as their behaviors are different, each child may experience the first difficulties at various ages. Some children may even display typical characteristics of development before the first signs of ASD surface.

## *What are the signs of ASD?*

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Some of the behaviors demonstrated by people with ASD might include:

- Difficulty understanding and using language.
- Poor eye contact.
- Repeated actions over and over again.
- Trouble with changes in routine.
- Does not know how to play with toys.
- Lack of smiling.
- Unusual reactions to the way things sound, taste, feel, smell, or look.
- Trouble understanding feelings of other people.
- Loss of social or language skills once they have been learned.

\*\*\*It is important to know that not all children or adults with ASD will show the same behaviors. They can vary from one person to another as well as vary in degree from mild to severe.

## *What can we do to help children with ASD?*

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While there is no cure for ASD, there are some treatments and forms of education that can help people with ASD. There is no treatment or teaching method that will be successful for every child. Each plan will have to be designed to help their specific needs.

To help design a treatment plan, contact your doctor for a referral to a developmental pediatrician or specialist.

Most importantly, the earlier an evaluation is done the sooner the child will benefit from the support. There are treatment options for infants as well as for school aged children.