



What Are The Signs of Autism?

According to [Autism Speaks](#), Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurological sensory-motor difference that typically emerges in childhood and interferes with daily life, such as social interactions, academic performance, and professional settings. While symptoms often manifest within the first year of life, some children initially seem to develop typically but experience a regression phase between 18 and 24 months, during which autism symptoms become apparent. With ASD affecting [1 out of 36 kids](#), it's important to know the signs.

Communication

- Doesn't respond to their name by 9 months of age.
- Doesn't use gestures by 12 months of age (e.g., doesn't wave goodbye).
- Doesn't point to show something interesting by 18 months of age (e.g., pointing to favorite food).
- Lacks facial expressions.

Interaction

- Doesn't sing, dance, or act for you by 60 months of age.
- Avoids or does not keep eye contact.
- Doesn't play simple interactive games like pat-a-cake by 12 months of age.
- Doesn't respond when others are hurt or upset by 24 months of age.
- Doesn't respond to other children and join them in play by 36 months.
- Doesn't pretend to be something else, like a dog or doctor, during play by 48 months of age.

Repetitive Actions

- Becomes upset if toys are moved from their arranged order, preferring them to stay in a specific lineup.
- Plays with toys the same way every time (e.g., the toys say the same thing).
- Often repeats words or phrases in a set pattern (e.g., repeating lines from a book or movie).
- Engages in play with toys in a repetitive manner and follows the same sequence of actions each time.
- Reacts strongly to even minor routine changes.
- Engages in repetitive body movements, such as hand-flapping or rocking, often in response to excitement or distress.
- Displays unusual responses to sensory input, such as being overly sensitive or having adverse reactions to certain sounds, smells, tastes, textures, or visual stimuli.

Repetitive/Restricted Interests

- Develops intense interests in narrow topics or activities and devotes significant time and attention to them.
- Interested in only specific parts of the toy (e.g., the wheels of a car).
- Stares at lights or spinning objects.

Other Signs

- Dislikes physical touch (e.g., hugging, cuddling, etc.).
- Notices small details (patterns, smells, sounds, etc.) that others do not.
- Likes to plan things carefully before doing them.

If you suspect your child has ASD, early intervention is crucial. Addressing these symptoms of ASD early on can help lessen the challenges for your child. To find out how to get an evaluation to see if your child has ASD, check out [this](#) article!

If you have any questions or need assistance navigating this process, please don't hesitate to reach out to hello@loveyourschool.org! If you have more questions, we want to hear from you and we can help you know your rights about getting an evaluation, finding a school, and scholarships and other programs you may qualify for in Arizona, such as the Arizona Empowerment Scholarship Account program, which provides significant funds for students with Autism to use towards their education.

Arizona Specific Autism Support Groups

[Arizona Autism Coalition](#)

[Autism Society of Greater Phoenix](#)

[Facebook - AZ Autism Community](#)

[AZ Autism United](#)

[Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center \(SARRC\)](#)