

Family Support for Autism Spectrum Disorder



A diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is hard for both your child and you. Autism symptoms can vary widely. Odd or incorrect behaviors, problems with communication, and repeated routines and rituals are all linked to ASD. This can make life hard for the entire family. Some children with ASD are less affected than others.

The importance of support

Parents of a child with ASD must have a good support system in place. This will help your child cope with the unique aspects of their disorder. It will also help you learn how to manage your feelings when faced with the challenges of raising a child with ASD. Pay special attention to the needs of other children in the family. Sometimes siblings' needs get lost when so much attention is needed by the child with ASD. Spend one-on-one time with your other children. Look for sibling support groups that can provide a safe place for them to talk and share their feelings and fears.

Part of this support will come from the healthcare team that is treating your child and educating you as a parent. There is no cure for ASD. But most children can lead a happy, productive life by taking part in therapy. Therapy addresses the 3 main symptoms of the disorder:

- Poor communication skills
- Obsessive or repeated routines
- Physical clumsiness

Experts agree that the earlier a child starts therapy, the better the outcome often is.

Support for parents

Parents also benefit from a strong support network. The term Asperger syndrome is no longer used to describe higher-functioning people with ASD in the U.S. But you may still find the following support groups helpful:

- **Autism Speaks.** This organization provides support and advocacy for those with autism and their families.
- **GRASP (Global and Regional Asperger Syndrome Partnership).** This group provides community outreach, online support, education, and advocacy for teens and adults on the autism spectrum. Membership is free.
- **ASPEN (Asperger Syndrome Education Network).** This organization provides education, support, and advocacy for families and people whose lives are affected by ASD.

© 2000-2027 The StayWell Company, LLC. All rights reserved. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions
This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your Healthcare professional's instructions. Copyright Krames LLC.