

Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum disorder" that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. There is no known single cause for autism, but increased awareness and funding can help families today.

The prevalence of autism had risen to 1 in every 150 American children, and almost 1 in 94 boys. Autism is growing at a startling rate of 10-17 percent per year. At this rate, the ASA estimates that the prevalence of autism could reach 4 million Americans in the next decade.

Autism knows no racial, ethnic, or social boundaries; family income levels; lifestyle choices; or educational levels, and can affect any family and any child. More children will be diagnosed with autism than cancer, diabetes and AIDS combined.

Know the Signs: Early Identification Can Change Lives

Autism is treatable. Children do not "outgrow" autism, but studies show that early diagnosis and intervention lead to significantly improved outcomes.

Here are some signs to look for in the children in your life:

- Lack of or delay in spoken language
- Repetitive use of language and/or motor mannerisms (e.g., hand-flapping, twirling objects)
- Little or no eye contact
- Lack of interest in peer relationships
- Lack of spontaneous or make-believe play
- Persistent fixation on parts of objects

Autism is one of a group of disorders known as autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). ASDs are [developmental disabilities](#) that cause substantial impairments in social interaction and communication and the presence of unusual behaviors and interests. Many people with ASDs also have unusual ways of learning, paying attention, and reacting to different sensations. The thinking and learning abilities of people with ASDs can vary—from gifted to severely challenged. An ASD begins before the age of 3. Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and is the result of a neurological disorder that affects the normal functioning of the brain, impacting development in the areas of social interaction and communication skills. Both children and adults with autism typically show difficulties in verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions, and leisure or play activities.

And although the overall incidence of autism is consistent around the globe, it is four times more prevalent in boys than in girls.



In 1987 Kansas Legislators passed House Concurrent Resolution 5017 that implemented an Autism Task Force.

K.S.A. 75-138 established the **Governor's Commission on Autism** was established to be responsible to monitor to future needs of person with autism.

We believe that persons within the Autism spectrum and their Families have the right to:

- Community awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorders;
- Early diagnosis and multi-disciplinary Intervention
- Evidence based treatment options and implementation
- Affordable insurance coverage
- Crisis intervention and management
- Effective educational services
- Qualified providers and consistent support services
- Employment opportunities
- Participate in community activities
- Options for living independently

Equal opportunities and rights throughout the life span