

AUTISM 123

1. Autism: What is it?

- Autism is a neurological and developmental syndrome that is found in **1 in 68 people** in every country in the world in every type of family.
- Autism is different in each person, but most people with Autism have differences in their **speech, social skills and behavior** that affects some areas of their development.
- Autism is **NOT** caused by something a parent did or by vaccines. Research is underway; but there is no proven cause for Autism so far. Parents should be very cautious of things they read on the Internet and review them with experts.
- Autism affects each person **differently** throughout their whole life. There are many therapies that have been scientifically proven to help people with Autism reach success, however, there is no known cure at this time.
- Children with the best outcomes have supports from the community, their school and, **MOST IMPORTANTLY, their family** - all working and learning together.

2. Autism: What to do next?

- Every child's diagnosis of Autism is different. At different times, children and families may need different supports.
- Some people may want to get a second opinion.
- Some people may want to talk with others who know how this feels.
- Some people may want to get more information on their own.
- Children with Autism will need both Educational AND Behavioral services:

For **FREE EDUCATIONAL** services (no matter what your immigration status is) in Pennsylvania call:
CONNECT at 1800-692-7288

For **Medical and Psychological services**, your child will need Medical Assistance

For **BEHAVIORAL** supports call your child's insurance company:

- If you have Medical Assistance call CBH at **1-888-545-2600**
- If you have private insurance, call **the number on the back of your insurance card** to find out about Behavioral Supports for Autism.
- Children in Pennsylvania diagnosed with Autism can get Medical Assistance as a secondary insurance. See www.pccy.org or call **215-563-5848** (Spanish spoken).
- "The A-List" has a guide to Philadelphia behavior programs, find it at: www.elwyn.org/programs/seeds/

-  SmallWorldSpecialNeeds.org has short videos with subtitles in **7 different languages** about how parents can help a child with behavior, speech and language and social skills.

3. Autism: Help and Information

- Keeping informed about community supports, events and trainings are the best way for families to help their children. There is something available for everyone's style of getting help!
- Family members (including siblings!) need accurate support and information. Perhaps you can designate a helpful family member or friend to be your child's community outreach contact if you are too busy! They don't even have to live in Philadelphia to help you out!
- As your child grows, the information you and your family need will also change.
- Find a community connection that works for you: phone, social media, on-line or in person. Exciting things are happening in Philadelphia every day for people with Autism, stay informed!



FREE Resources, events calendar, list-serve, trainings, conferences and map of support groups. **Website:** www.phillyautismproject.org
Email: phillyap@drexel.edu

Philadelphia Autism Centers for Excellence (PACE): FREE trainings, caregiver group, resources and services:

SPIN-PACE: 1-844-7746-226;
spin@spininc.org

NET-PACE: Icylee Basketbill 215-278-5517;
icylee.basketbill@net-centers.org



CGRC-PACE: Child Guidance Resource Center,
Shari Sims, 267-713-4100; ssims@cgrc.org