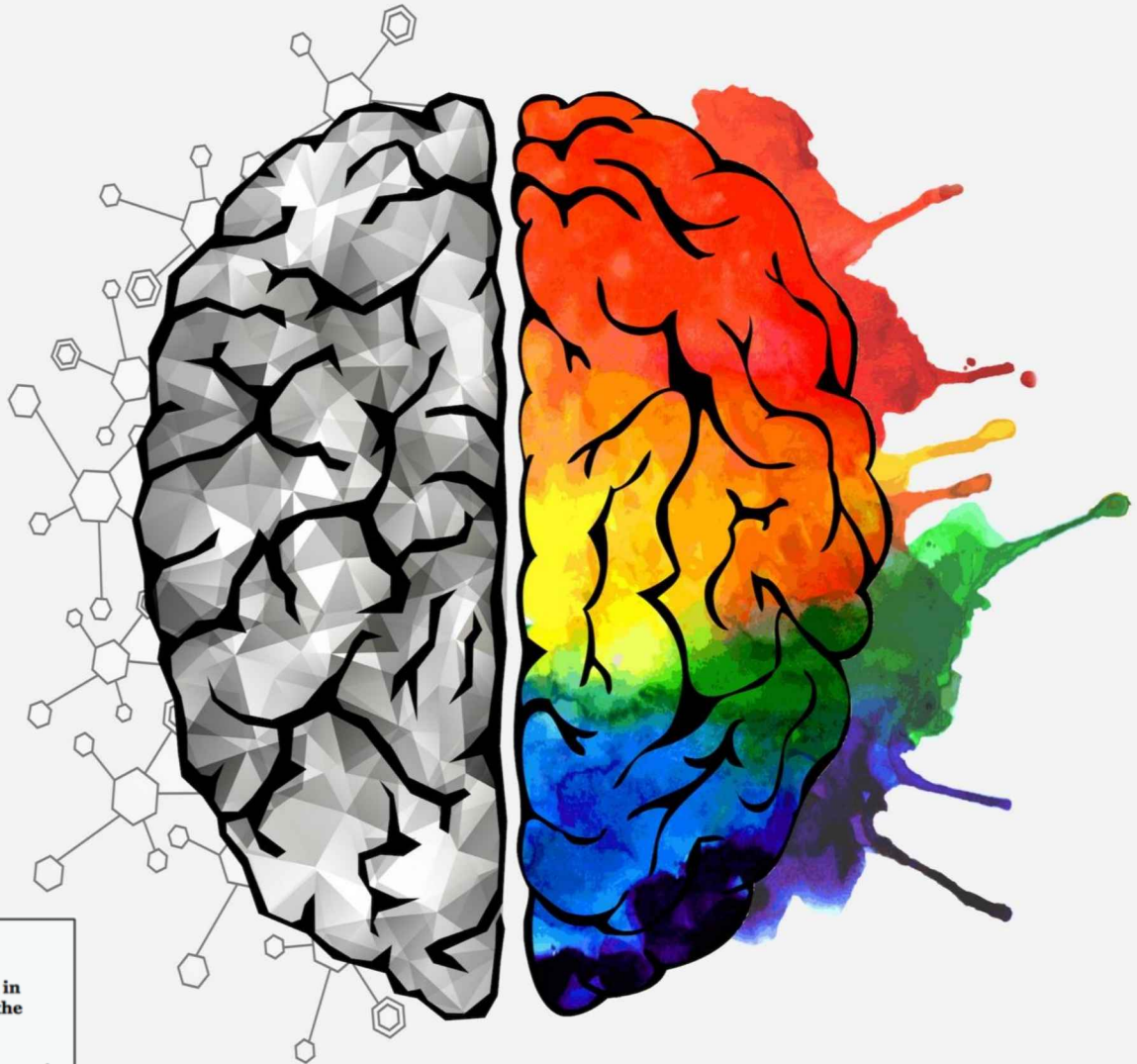


An Introduction to Autism

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Training Goals



- 1. The learner will defend one key concept of the diagnosis of Autism as a spectrum disorder.**
- 2. The learner will compare and contrast one adaptive skill and one behavioral skill of a person with autism versus a person who is neurotypical.**
- 3. The learner will examine and explain one of the three potential causes of autism.**
- 4. The learner will summarize two social skill concerns and two communication concerns.**



What Are People With Autism Like?



An Interview with Dustin

From Special Books by Special Kids

www.specialbooksbyspecialkids.org





Why Autism is Referred to as a Spectrum



- ◉ **Wide range of symptoms across social, communication, adaptive and behavioral skills**
- ◉ **Symptoms vary from person to person**
- ◉ **Severity of symptoms also vary from person to person**
- ◉ **Instead of Autism Disorder, or Asperger's Disorder, or Rhett's Disorder, or Childhood Disintegrative Disorder ...**

Autism Spectrum Disorder





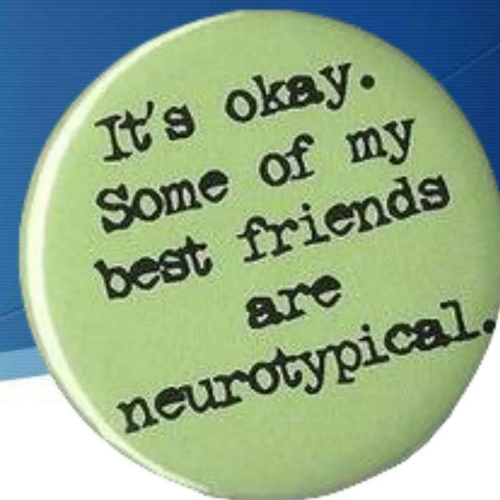
What We See Before 2 Years



- ⦿ **May not respond to their name**
- ⦿ **No big smiles or other warm, joyful expressions**
- ⦿ **No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles or expressions**
- ⦿ **Doesn't point at objects to show interest**
- ⦿ **Doesn't play “pretend” games**
- ⦿ **Doesn't make eye contact**
- ⦿ **Uses very few words**



What We See in Later Years



- ⦿ **Repeating words or phrases over and over**
- ⦿ **Giving unrelated answers to questions**
- ⦿ **Getting easily upset by changes in routine**
- ⦿ **Having obsessive or narrow interests**
- ⦿ **Flapping hands, rocking, or turning in circles**
- ⦿ **Spinning objects or lining them up**
- ⦿ **Reacting differently to sounds, smells, tastes, things**





We Don't Know the Cause

- ⦿ **1 in 59 people**
- ⦿ **Genetics**
- ⦿ **Prenatal**
- ⦿ **Environment**





A Few Important Facts



- ⦿ **It's a lifelong condition. There is no cure.**
- ⦿ **It is 4 times more common among males than females.**
- ⦿ **Across all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups in every country.**
- ⦿ **Not everyone with Autism has an intellectual disability.**
- ⦿ **There is no medical test to determine Autism.**
- ⦿ **A higher risk of early death due to accident or other illnesses.**
- ⦿ **A growing need in adult services.**



Other Conditions That May Be Present



⦿ Intellectual disability	35%
⦿ Seizure disorder	30%
⦿ Specific phobia	30%
⦿ Obsessive-compulsive disorder	17%
⦿ Depression or anxiety	16%
⦿ Fragile X syndrome	10%
⦿ Trauma	70%



Autism is Mostly a Social Skill Issue ...



- ⦿ **“Wrong” emotional responses**
- ⦿ **Poor interaction with peers**
- ⦿ **Lack of apparent attachment**
- ⦿ **Lack of give-and-take interactions**
- ⦿ **Treating objects and people the same**
- ⦿ **Difficulty with facial recognition**
- ⦿ **Inwardly focused**



... With Lots of Communication Issues ...



- ⦿ **Delayed language development**
- ⦿ **Lack of useful spoken language**
- ⦿ **Ability to read but not comprehend**
- ⦿ **Little imaginative word play**
- ⦿ **Literal use of language**
- ⦿ **Echolalia and scripted speech**



... And Behavior & Learning Issues



- ⦿ **Restricted, focused interests**
- ⦿ **Need for sameness of routine**
- ⦿ **Unusual sensory sensitivities**
- ⦿ **Repetitive rocking, spinning, hand flapping (“stereotypical”)**
- ⦿ **Self-injury**
- ⦿ **Aggression**
- ⦿ **Wandering**



There's No Cure – But We Can Help By ...



- ⦿ **Conducting early identification – absolutely CRUCIAL**
- ⦿ **Providing social skills training**
- ⦿ **Using communication supports**
- ⦿ **Creating preferred and consistent routines**
- ⦿ **Managing sensory environment**
- ⦿ **Safeguarding the physical environment**
- ⦿ **Using a variety of behavioral interventions**





Opportunities for Agencies



- ⦿ **Your referral base is changing**
- ⦿ **Workforce training needs to adjust**
- ⦿ **Programs need to be designed to address unique needs**
- ⦿ **Agencies need to advocate for supports and resources**



About Our Project



This training was produced by Georgetown University's Center for Child & Human Development as part of the the DDA Health Initiative Project. This project supports the mission of the District of Columbia's Developmental Disabilities Administration, and focuses on improving the physical, behavioral and mental health supports that affect the quality of living for people with intellectual and other disabilities.

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