

What is Autism?

Autism is a complex developmental disability that usually becomes apparent during the first three years of life, and is the result of a neurological disorder that affects the functioning of the brain.

Autism is part of a family of disorders called Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), which is one of several Pervasive Developmental Disorders, including:

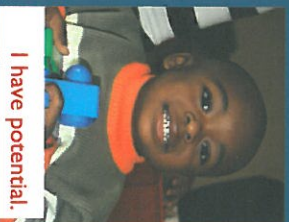
- Asperger Syndrome
- PDD-NOS (pervasive developmental disorder—not otherwise specified)

No two people experience autism in precisely the same way; every individual with autism will show characteristics of the disorder in varying degrees. However, all individuals with autism experience difficulties—from mild to severe—with verbal and non-verbal communication, social interaction, and leisure or play activities.



Our Mission

Together with the collective efforts of Autism Ontario (formerly known as Autism Society Ontario), the mission of Autism Ontario - Durham Region is to provide information, support and friendship to families and community members dealing with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in Durham Region; to assist in educating society about autism and the fact that it is a disability, and to help ensure that every individual with autism is given all the opportunities and resources needed to achieve his or her full potential in our community.



You Can Get Involved

- Become a Member of Autism Ontario - Durham Region
- Volunteer
- Make a tax deductible donation

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

AutismONTARIO - Durham Region

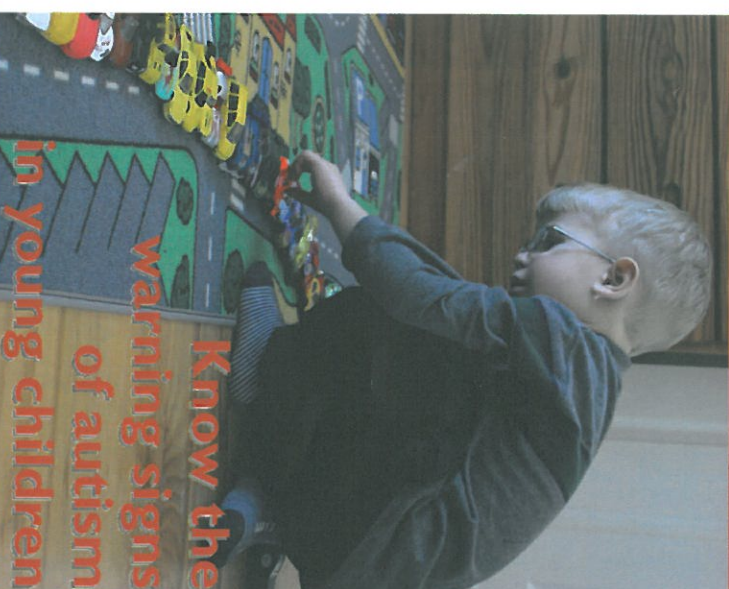
Website: www.autismontario.com/durham

Toll Free Phone/Fax: 1-866-495-4680

Email: durham@autismontario.com

Office: P.O. Box 40008, Whitby, ON L1R 0G2

Red Flags for Autism



There is treatment for autism.

Early intervention is critical.



AutismONTARIO
Durham Region

Red Flags for Autism



Parents should ask their child's family doctor for a referral to a developmental pediatrician if there are concerns with any of the following:



Communication

Red Flags

- No babbling by 11 months of age
- No simple gestures by 12 months (e.g., waving bye-bye)
- No single words by 16 months
- No 2-word phrases by 24 months (noun + verb – e.g., “baby sleeping”)
- No response when name is called, causing concern about hearing
- Loss of any language or social skills at any age

Behavioural

Red Flags



- Odd or repetitive ways of moving fingers or hands
- Oversensitive to certain textures, sounds or lights
- Lack of interest in toys, or plays with them in an unusual way (e.g., lining up, spinning, opening/closing parts rather than using the toy as a whole)
- Compulsions or rituals (has to perform activities in a special way or certain sequence; is prone to tantrums if rituals are interrupted)
- Preoccupations with unusual interests, such as light switches, doors, fans, wheels
- Unusual fears

Social

Red Flags

- Rarely makes eye contact when interacting with people
- Does not play peek-a-boo
- Doesn't point to show things he/she is interested in
- Rarely smiles socially
- More interested in looking at objects than at people's faces
- Prefers to play alone
- Doesn't make attempts to get parent's attention; doesn't follow/look when someone is pointing at something
- Seems to be “in his/her own world”
- Doesn't respond to parent's attempts to play, even if relaxed
- Avoids or ignores other children when they approach