



**Raising Brilliance LLC**

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## **I Think My Child May Be on the Autism Spectrum — What Should I Do?**

First, take a deep breath. Noticing differences in your child does not mean you failed as a parent. It means you are paying attention, loving your child well, and seeking understanding. Early support can make a tremendous difference.

### **1. Trust Your Instincts**

Parents are often the first to notice when something feels different. Common signs may include:

- Delayed speech or communication
- Limited eye contact
- Difficulty with social interaction
- Repetitive behaviors or movements
- Intense interests
- Sensory sensitivities
- Difficulty with transitions or routines
- Emotional meltdowns beyond typical tantrums

### **2. Schedule an Appointment with Your Pediatrician**

Share your concerns and examples. Ask questions like:

- Should my child receive developmental screening?
- Do you recommend an autism evaluation?
- Should we pursue speech or occupational therapy evaluations?

- Are there local specialists or early intervention programs you recommend?

### **3. Request a Developmental Evaluation**

Your pediatrician may refer you to:

- Developmental pediatrician
- Child psychologist
- Neurologist
- Autism evaluation clinic

### **4. Contact Early Intervention or Your School System**

If your child is under age 3, contact your state's Early Intervention program. If school-aged:

- Request a school evaluation in writing
- Ask about special education testing
- Learn about IEPs and 504 Plans

### **5. Focus on Supporting — Not “Fixing”**

The goal is understanding your child's needs and helping them thrive. Focus on:

- Communication
- Emotional regulation
- Sensory support
- Building confidence
- Creating routines and safety

### **6. Start Learning About Autism from Positive Sources**

Autism is not one-size-fits-all. Learn from:

- Autistic adults
- Trusted medical professionals
- Supportive parent communities
- Advocacy organizations

### **7. Take Care of Yourself Too**

This journey can feel emotional and overwhelming. Remember:

- You do not need all the answers today
- You are allowed to ask for help
- Small steps matter

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A diagnosis does not change who your child is. It simply helps you understand how they experience the world.

**Your child is still wonderfully unique, valuable, capable, and deeply loved. ■■**