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FAMILY FIRST: OVERCOMING DISABILITIES

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AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability manifested by persistent inadequacies in social communication and interaction, limited/repetitive behavior patterns, insistence on sameness, adherence to routines, and hypersensitivity or insensitivity to sensory stimuli.



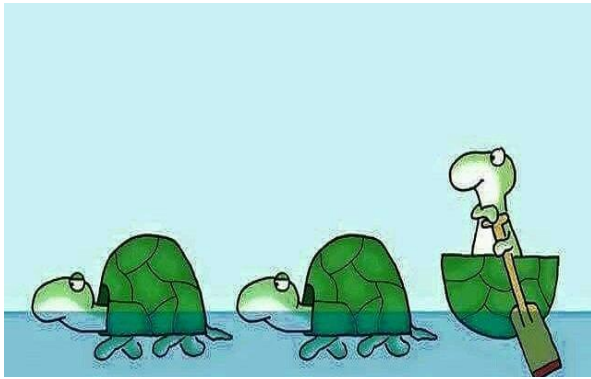
In a study conducted by the American Center for Disease Control and Prevention in 2018, it has been announced that one out of every 59 children has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

SYMPTOMS OF AUTISM

It manifests itself with features such as

- repetitive stereotypical behaviors
- narrow special interests
- Dealing with inanimate objects instead of relating to people,
- Lack of interest in the game,
- Lack of development of speech
- Not being able to make eye contact at appropriate times
- Not responding when their name is called
- Not being interested in the toys
- Not showing social behaviors learned by imitation, such as "bye-bye"





Autism is not the absence of communication, but the presence of a different communication style.

Today, the most important approach in the treatment of autism is special education and behavioral treatments; drug treatment is rarely used.

AUTISM AND PROBLEM BEHAVIORS

In order to understand problem behaviors, it is important to understand the antecedents that cause the problem behaviors. E.g; Noisy cafeteria, crowded bus stops, disruption of daily routine, an unpleasant task, saying no to the child.

Child may show behavioral problems when they

- are not able to effectively express their needs
- their requests are misunderstood
- non-routine and unpredictable events occur
- unable to cope with failure and disappointment.



WHAT CAN YOU DO DURING A TANTRUM?

- Divert their attention instead of approaching with negative and restrictive statements such as “don't do”
- When the tantrum starts, ignore the tantrum move away a little bit, and continue the conversation in a natural tone of voice.
- Make your environment suitable for your child by simplifying the environment, place items that may harm your child out of their reach.
- If your child's tantrums are beyond your control, if you think he has trouble calming himself/herself and if the frequency is too high, seek help from a child mental health specialist or psychologist.



SUGGESTIONS TO FAMILIES

- The achievements of the autistic child should always be followed and praised. This will help the child understand that he is doing what is expected of him.
- If a person who will be in the position of an older brother or sister accompany the child with autism in his/her spare time, it will be beneficial in terms of their social development.
- Keeping a notebook to help children with autism organize their work will be beneficial.
- When your child is playing independently; you should provide information on what to do, how much to do, duration of the work, and what to do when the game is finished.
- In order for the education to be given to the child to be effective, it is necessary to establish cooperation with the teacher.
- In order to follow new developments related to autism for parents should be in contact with associations, journals, institutions and organizations related to autism.
- Your instructions should be simple and directed to the target.
- The good things they do should be recognized and rewarded. The reward should be given as soon as the behavior occurs.
- Ignore negative behaviors that are not harmful.
- Don't ban, define what to do.
- Let your child stop and rest when s/he needs it
- Take small steps. Divide work and homework into small chunks. Instruct each piece individually and give enough time to finish.
- Notify in advance when there is a change in the program or when a change of location is required.
- Set rules for your child and teach them these rules.
- Adjust the light and sound level according to your child.
- Instead of correcting the child's mistakes, try to be a model for him.
- Observe which situations your child finds stressful, which situations pleasant, calming, etc. Knowing such situations is extremely important so that you can prevent the emergence of some problematic behaviors and lay the groundwork for the realization of some appropriate behaviors.



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