

Autism is a group of diagnoses that varies in degree from mild to severe and is increasingly being referred to as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

The following are diagnostic terms used by health care professionals for evaluations (medical, psychological, speech & language):

- Autistic Disorder
- Asperger Syndrome (AS)
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD)
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)

There is often a lack of uniformity among professionals in the use of these diagnostic terms. Many use them interchangeably or inconsistently.

Adding to the confusion for students with ASD may be educationally classified with any of the following:

- Autism
- Other Health Impairment
- Emotional Disturbance
- Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Multiple Disabilities

However, if eligible for an autism classification, Part 200.13 of the Commissioner's Regulations provides specific recommendations for special education services, including parent training.

ASD is paradoxical since inasmuch as individuals on the spectrum are alike, they are at the same time, very different. *Each individual on the spectrum is unique.* As author Stephen Shore noted, "When you have met one person on the autism spectrum, then you have met **one** person on the autism spectrum."

We encourage our members to attend our support meetings, educational presentations and conferences. Together we help raise awareness of the needs of individuals with ASD and their families; we acquire, share and disseminate current, accurate and relevant information in the on-going effort to support each other and those with ASD.

Those with ASD will typically exhibit many of the following behaviors:

SOCIALIZATION:

- awkwardness and clumsiness
- naiveté and gullibility
- poor eye contact
- difficulty developing peer relationships
- increased risk of victimization (bullying)
- inappropriate body language or facial expression
- problems recognizing the nuances of social interaction
- difficulty understanding other's feelings or emotions but once aware will have an appropriate degree of compassion

COMMUNICATION:

- inability to maintain reciprocal (give and take) conversation
- extreme literal use and interpretation of language
- unusual speech patterns: repetitive speech, abnormal tone and/or volume, irrelevant remarks, stilted/formal manner, tendency to lecture others

BEHAVIOR & THOUGHT:

- easily upset by changes in routine
- rigid, ritualistic behavioral patterns
- fixation on one subject or object
- repetitive movements, thoughts and/or speech
- peculiar eating patterns

COMMON ASSOCIATED BEHAVIORS:

- emotional sensitivity and under/overreaction
- fears and anxiety
- hyper/hypo-sensitivity to sensory stimuli (sounds, light, taste, touch, odors, pain)
- physical awkwardness
- problems with spatial awareness
- creative thinking and unconventional problem solving
- exceptional skills (e.g., memory, music, art, math)
- sleeping difficulties

AHA Membership Application 2008

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Zip _____

Phone No.: (____) _____

E-Mail: _____@_____

Parent _____ Teacher _____ Other _____

Professional (Please note area of expertise) _____

Name of Individual with ASD: _____

_____ D.O.B.: _____

If a child: _____

School District: _____

School Placement (if out of district): _____

If an adult: _____

Living: with parent (s) ___ group residence ___
independent ___ other ___

Work: full time ___ part time ___
independent ___ job coach ___

Other: _____

I would like to volunteer my time (please check) _____

I give permission for my name /phone number to be shared with families with similar concerns.

Signature _____ Date _____

Yearly dues (2008):
___ (1) year \$40.00 through 12/31/08
___ (2) year \$70.00 through 12/31/09
___ Lifetime \$400.00 \$___ Donation to AHA

Payment Type (circle one):
Check • Money Order • Master • VISA • Discover
Card # _____

Exp (Mo/Yr) ___/___ Total Amt Enclosed \$ _____

Please mail this application with your check or credit card info payable to AHA Association, to:

AHA
P.O. Box 916
Bethpage, NY 11714-0916

AHA is a 501(c)(3) not-for profit organization.
We gratefully accept (tax-deductible) donations.

Any questions?
e-mail AHA President Pat Schissel at:
PatS@ahaNY.org
or call one of the numbers on this brochure



Our primary purpose is to support one another as we advocate for the unique needs of children and adults with ASD.

AHA Goals:

- To develop a strong network of parents supporting one another through the challenges of daily life.
- To increase awareness and knowledge about ASD among the professionals who diagnose, treat, educate or provide services.
- To promote appropriate educational programs, effective social skills training, increased social and recreational activities, meaningful employment, and sufficient and satisfying independent living accommodations for those with ASD.
- To provide parents and professionals with a useful forum where they can exchange pertinent information.

AHA Offers:

- monthly parent support meetings: daytime, evening on school and older teen/adult issues
- monthly support meetings for teens and adults with HFA/AS
- guest speakers on topics relevant to ASD
- our website with valuable information and resources (www.ahaNY.org)
- twice yearly educational conferences designed to provide the most current information and strategies
- our newsletter, *On The Spectrum* (members only)
- our lending library (members only)
- e-mail notification of the most recent information and events about ASD
- recreational activities for families

Adults and Teens with
HFA/AS:GRASP/AHA
646.242.4003

Parents of Older Teens
and Adults:
631.269.5709

Parents: 516.470.0360

Support Group Meetings:

AHA
Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism Association
P.O. Box 916, Bethpage, NY 11714-0916

Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism Association



Do you know someone who...

- Is socially awkward or isolated?
- Has difficulty making or maintaining friendships?
- Has difficulty with changes in routine?
- Has problems with give and take in conversation?
- Shows "odd" behaviors and mannerisms?

Need information and support?

AHA *can help!*

For families, individuals and professionals
affected by Asperger Syndrome,
High Functioning Autism and other
Pervasive Developmental Disorders

Main 516.470.0360
www.ahaNY.org

Fax 516.470.0362
info@ahaNY.org