

Centers for Disease Control released new prevalence statistics this year, based on 2008 Observation

Identified Prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders
ADDM Network 2000-2008
Combining Data from All Sites

Surveillance Year	Birth Year	Number of ADDM Sites Reporting	Prevalence per 1,000 Children (Range)	This is about 1 in X children...
2000	1992	6	6.7 (4.5-9.9)	1 in 150
2002	1994	14	6.6 (3.3-10.6)	1 in 150
2004	1996	8	8.0 (4.6-9.8)	1 in 125
2006	1998	11	9.0 (4.2-12.1)	1 in 110
2008	2000	14	11.3 (4.8-21.2)	1 in 88

Research: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/research.html>



Spectrum of Abilities

1

- Attention to detail

2

- Honesty with no bias

3

- “Deep” Learners

Mannerisms

Rule-
Oriented

Ignorance of
Teen Culture

Immature
Interests

Sensory
Issues

1. Mannerisms- Talking too loud

Suggestions:

- Avoid games, icebreaker, or situations that require a quiet voice or use a reminder tool
- Build on strengths – make the teen your “announcer”

2. Mannerisms - Talking too much on favorite topic

Suggestions:

- Institute a “Back on Topic” tool
- Build on strengths – allow them a little time to teach about their favorite topic

3. Mannerisms - No eye contact

Suggestions:

- Assume attention is being paid & don't insist on eye contact
- Build on strengths – make the teen your “recorder”

2. Mannerisms - Won't interact, share opinions or thoughts

Suggestions:

- * Allow thoughts & ideas to be expressed in a way other than verbal, for example, a drawing or making a film

1. Rule-Oriented - Knowing the Rules = Security

Suggestions:

- Use an Agenda and stick to it
- Enforce time or use a time clock or visual aid to keep oriented to time
- Keep group apprised of changes ahead of time – preferably in writing
- Be literal about how much flex might be in any rule – even if it seems “obvious.”
- As much as possible, stick to your word!
- Explain metaphors

1. Immaturity - Liking things for “younger” kids

Suggestions:

- Devote some group time to discussing why we hang on to things we used to like & why its ok.
- Build on strengths – make it a point of pride that all preferences are honored
- Point out that resisting peer pressure can be beneficial

2. Immaturity - Emotional Immaturity

Suggestions:

- Patience & Understanding – sometimes having some explicit teaching about how we handle negative events, upsetting news, or simply not getting our own way can be beneficial to the whole group.
- Use opportunities to model mature behavior

1. Sensory - Senses are at different levels

- Many AS teens have a poor sense of smell but an overly developed tactile sense, and sensitivity to noise and light.
- Use tactile aids for calming
- Avoid changing light levels, crowds and echoing noises
- Allow a “safe place” – a spot where teen feels comfortable to retreat to under stress
- Build on strengths – make a game of “micro-observation” or asking the AS Teen to recall a situation

2. Sensory - Discomfort and anxiety

- If AS Teens are refusing to try it a task or activity it is most likely because the task or situation is very UNCOMFORTABLE to their senses. What may seem fine to a an NT can cause great distress to AS Teens.
- Build on strengths – allow everyone in the group to share their sensory preferences.

Resources

- Rhythms of Grace – CT site
www.rhythms-of-grace.org
- A Special Grace – MA site
www.ASpecialGrace.com
- Facebook : Rhythms of Grace – Sensory-Friendly Worship
- [Twitter: @RevRebe](https://twitter.com/RevRebe)

Autism “Characteristics”

SENSORY

- Hypersensitive to
 - Sound
 - Light/dark
 - Changes in routine
 - Textures
 - Touch
 - Body in space
- Preference for
 - Low noise
 - Steady lighting
 - Stable routine
 - Enclosed space



Autism “Characteristics”

SOCIAL



- May
 - Circle & Touch
 - “Stim”(Rock, flap,tics)
 - Respond non-verbally
- May Not
 - Converse
 - Make eye contact
 - Respond to verbal inquiry or instruction
 - Notice what others are doing

1. Teen Culture - Dressing “Cool”

Suggestions:

- Devote some group time to discussing the dynamic that perception can lead to judgment
- Build on strengths – assign an observation activity to the whole group. How can this teen teach others about being non-judgmental?

2. Teen Culture - Hygiene

Suggestions:

* Devote some group time to social expectations:

- What is rude and what is not?
- Why do others expect you to be clean?

* Build on Strengths – remember how rule-oriented these teens are?

3. Teen Culture - Honesty and Non-Judgment

One of the AS Teens greatest strengths can be their ignorance of social judgment and norms. They tend to be honest and non-judgmental of others. They will not usually share the prejudices or stereotypes of their peers.