**Signs of Autism & When to Seek Support**

**What is Autism?**

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental condition that affects communication, behavior, and social interaction.

Signs often appear in early childhood, but every child is unique, and symptoms can vary widely.

**Early Signs of Autism**

Here are some common signs to look out for in children:

**Behavioral Signs**

* Repetitive movements (e.g., hand-flapping, rocking, spinning).
* Strong preference for routines and difficulty with changes.
* Intense focus on specific interests or objects.
* Unusual reactions to sensory input (e.g., sounds, textures, lights).

**Social Communication Challenges**

* Limited or no eye contact.
* Delayed speech or lack of spoken language.
* Difficulty understanding or using gestures (e.g., pointing, waving).
* Struggles with back-and-forth conversations.
* Repetitive use of language (e.g., repeating phrases or scripts).

**Social Interaction Difficulties**

* Limited interest in playing with peers.
* Difficulty understanding others’ feelings or perspectives.
* Prefers to play alone or engage in solitary activities.

**You should seek support when:**

You notice any of the above signs/ have concerns about your child’s development.

It’s important to seek professional guidance since early intervention can make a significant difference.

This is what you do:

1. **Talk to Your Pediatrician:** Share your observations and ask for a developmental screening.
2. **Consult a Specialist:** Seek an evaluation from a developmental pediatrician, child psychologist, or neurologist.
3. **Early Intervention Services:** Contact your local early intervention program (for children under 3) or school district (for children over 3) for support.
4. **Connect with Support Groups:** Join autism support groups or online communities to share experiences and resources.

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