

Diagnosis

DSM IV-TR - 299.00 Autistic Disorder

- (A) A total of six (or more) items from (1), (2), and (3), with at least two from (1), and one each from (2) and (3):
- (1) qualitative impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least two of the following:
 - (a) marked impairment in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviors such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body postures, and gestures to regulate social interaction
 - (b) failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level
 - (c) a lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests, or achievements with other people (e.g., by a lack of showing, bringing, or pointing out objects of interest)
 - (d) lack of social or emotional reciprocity
 - (2) qualitative impairments in communication as manifested by at least one of the following:
 - (a) delay in, or total lack of, the development of spoken language (not accompanied by an attempt to compensate through alternative modes of communication such as gestures or mime)
 - (b) in individuals with adequate speech, marked impairment in the ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with others
 - (c) stereotyped and repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic language
 - (d) lack of varied, spontaneous make-believe play or social imitative play appropriate to developmental level
 - (3) restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities, as manifested by at least one of the following:
 - (a) encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus
 - (b) apparently inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals
 - (c) stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (e.g., hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole-body movements)
 - (d) persistent preoccupation with parts of objects
- (B) Delays or abnormal functioning in at least one of the following areas, with onset prior to age 3 years: (1) social interaction, (2) language as used in social communication, or (3) symbolic or imaginative play.
- (C) The disturbance is not better accounted for by Rett's Disorder or Childhood Disintegrative Disorder.

Entire spectrum available at

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/hcp-dsm.html>

Definition

Autism is a developmental disability that appears during the first three years. The result of a neurological disorder affects functioning of the brain, autism and its associated behaviors occur in approximately 1 of every 110 individuals.

Autism is four times more prevalent in boys than girls and knows no racial, ethnic or social boundaries. Family income, lifestyle or educational levels do not affect the chance of occurrence.

Autism interferes with the normal development of the brain in areas which control verbal and nonverbal communication, social interaction, and sensory development. Children or adults with autism may exhibit repeated body movements such as hand flapping and rocking, show unusual responses to people or attachments to objects, and resist changes in routine. In some cases, aggressive and/or self-injurious behavior may be present.

Autism is often referred to as a spectrum disorder, meaning the symptoms and characteristics of autism can present themselves in a wide variety of combinations, from mild to severe. Although autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors, children and adults can exhibit *any combination* of the behaviors in *any degree of severity*. Two children, both with a diagnosis of autism, can act very differently from one another.

Several old theories about the cause of autism have been proven false. Autism is *not* a mental illness. Children with autism are not unruly kids with a behavior problem. Autism is *not* caused by bad parents who gave their child too little attention. Most importantly, *no known factors in the psychological environment of a child have been shown to cause autism*.

It is conservatively estimated that 1.5 million people in the U.S. today have some form of autism. Its prevalence rate now places it as the most common developmental disability, nearly 5 times the rate of Down's syndrome.

Yet, the majority of the public, including many professionals in the medical, educational, and vocational fields are still unaware of how autism affects people and how to effectively work with individuals with autism.

Pocono Autism Society, Inc.

A 501(c)(3) Organization

www.poconoautism.org



Serving Monroe and Pike
Counties of Pennsylvania

Purpose

A volunteer based non-profit support group of families and professionals involved with Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorders.

We advocate for the interests of children and adults with autism, their family members, and the professionals who work with them. We discuss information on therapies, treatments, legislation, and conferences dealing with or affecting Autism/PDD. We also exchange information on locally available resources for families with Autism/PDD and provide mutual support.

Due to the similarity of behaviors associated with autism and PDD, use of the term pervasive developmental disorder has caused some confusion among parents and professionals. However, the treatment and educational needs are the same for both diagnoses. Therefore we do not restrict participation to the diagnosis of autism alone.

The entire organization is volunteer based including the board of directors.



For More Information

Contact the **Pocono Autism Society** by calling Bob or Beth Dellicker at **(570) 421-2299** email rjd@ptd.net

Center for Disease Control and Prevention
at www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism

Autism Society of America at **1-(800) 3AUTISM** or
www.autism-society.org.

AutismLink - a resource for Autistic Spectrum Disorder at
www.autismlink.com

Autism Speaks - an organization who's goal is "to change the future for all who struggle with autism spectrum disorders" at www.autismspeaks.org.

Other Contacts

Colonial Northampton IU 20
1-(610) 252-5550 www.ciu20.org

MH/MR of Carbon-Monroe-Pike
(570) 421-2901 www.cmpmhmr.cog.pa.us

Community Care Behavioral Health Organization
Carbon-Monroe-Pike Office
1-(866) 473-5862 www.ccbh.com

PA Dept Public Welfare Monroe County Office
(570) 424-3030 www.dpw.state.pa.us

PA Dept of Education,
Bureau of Special Education Consult Line
1-(800) 879-2301

Pennsylvania Health Law Project
1-(800) 274-3258 www.phlp.org

Pennsylvania Education Law Center
1-(215) 238-6970 www.elc-pa.org

Meetings

Our primary areas are Monroe and southern Pike counties in Northeastern Pennsylvania but others are always welcome to attend.

We have 2 monthly meetings. An evening meeting early in the month at ESU and a daytime meeting late in the month in Brodheadsville. We meet during the months when school is in session, Sept - Dec and Feb - June. There are no meetings scheduled for January, July and August.

Our evening meetings are scheduled for 7:00pm, on the first Tuesday of the month at East Stroudsburg University (ESU) in the University Center, Student Senate Chambers. ESU students provide childcare, with the exception of May and June, in a nearby room. Our May and June meetings will be held at ESU in Lower Dansbury.

Our daytime meeting is scheduled for 9:30am, on the 4th Wednesday of the month at the Western Pocono Community Library (WPCL).

Call or visit our website for directions.
(570) 421-2299
www.poconoautism.org



Please feel free to make copies of this brochure for distribution.
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