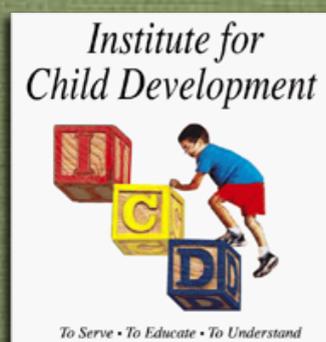




# Autism Initiative Training Series

## Module 1: Chapter 1.1 Introduction to Autism

<http://bddso.icd.binghamton.edu>



# Learning Objectives

---

- Define autism.
- Name at least 2 reasons why autism prevalence rates are rising.
- List the diagnostic criteria for autism.
- Identify the difference in the rate of diagnosis for males and females.

# Why Are We Talking About Autism?



Do you know what autism is?

Autism is a neurological disorder that impairs communication, behavior, and social skills. It is the nation's fastest-growing serious developmental disorder, with a new case diagnosed almost every 20 minutes.

Do you know the early signs?

- ✦ No big smiles or joyful expressions by 6 months
- ✦ No babbling by 12 months
- ✦ No back and forth gestures, such as pointing or waving by 12 months
- ✦ No words by 16 months
- ✦ Any loss of speech or babbling at any age

These are just a few of the possible early signs. If you have any concerns, speak to your doctor about screening your child.



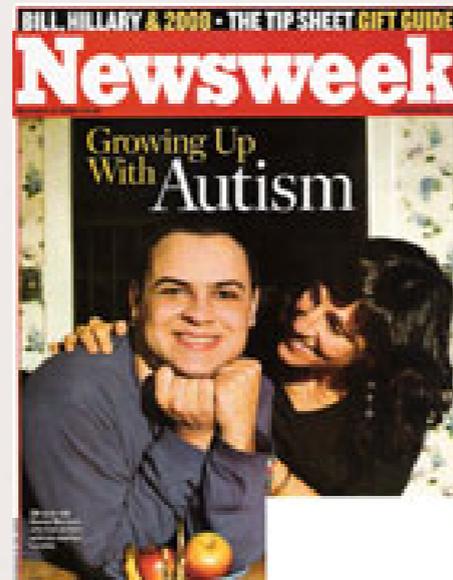
Do you know how you can learn more?

For more information talk to your doctor or visit...

[www.AutismSpeaks.org](http://www.AutismSpeaks.org)



**AUTISM SPEAKS™**  
It's time to listen.



## AUTISM: The hidden epidemic?

### More U.S. families in the grip of autism

While the causes for the dramatic rise in autism cases over the past decade are the subject of much debate, one thing is certain: early diagnosis is crucial. **FULL STORY**

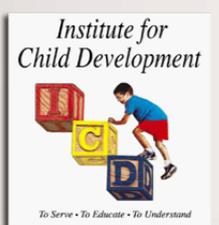
- As autism cases soar, a search for clues
- Inside the autism treatment maze
- How families connect to cope with autism
- Virtual world teaches real-world skills
- Read responses from our readers
- Vote: What's behind the rise in autism?
- Autism resources, treatment and support
- Latest autism news



The number of U.S. children diagnosed with autism has skyrocketed in the past decade, causing widespread concern and confusion. As families struggle to cope with the disorder, MSNBC and NBC News look at the issues surrounding autism, the theories behind its dramatic increase and the latest on treatments.

#### SPECIAL COVERAGE FROM NBC NEWS

- Bob Wright: 'I want my grandson back'
- Today: Is autism in the genes?
- Today: The Marino family's fight
- Nightly: Debate rages over vaccines' role
- Nightly: Movies help doctors discover autism
- Nightly: Autism on the rise nationwide
- Nightly: Parents push for a cure
- CNBC: Demand soars for autism services
- CNBC: Mild autism has 'selective advantages'
- CNBC: Autism Speaks' awareness campaign
- CNBC: Parents battle for medical coverage
- CNBC: Research targets early intervention



# Why Are We Talking About Autism?

([http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/faq\\_prevalence.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/faq_prevalence.htm); <http://IDEAdata.org>)

- Autism cases are increasing significantly.
- Number of individuals with autism in schools and communities
- Number of individuals with autism in need of residential and vocational support



# Increasing Prevalence Rate

---

- More cases of autism
- Better diagnostic criteria
- Increasing community awareness
- Diagnostic shift

# Prevalence of Autism

- CDC estimates that an average of 1 in 150 children currently have autism
- 4 times more likely in males
- Prevalence rates for adolescents and adults
- Currently unclear



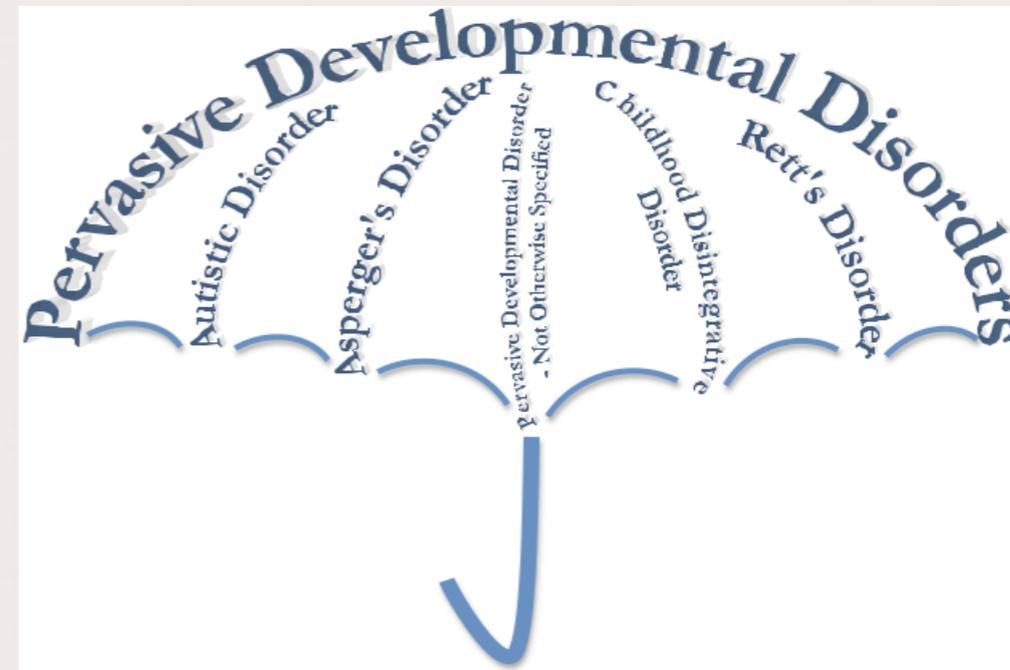
# What is Autism?

- Complex biological disorder
- Likely to be neuro-biological in nature
- Developmental disorder (lasts throughout a person's life)
- First described by Leo Kanner in 1943 as "early infantile autism"  
(Kanner, 1943)



# DSM-IV-TR Umbrella Category: Pervasive Developmental Disorders

- “Autism Spectrum Disorders”
- Group of severe and life-long, developmental disorders
- Significant delays in multiple areas
- Autism is another name for Autistic Disorder  
(APA, 2000)



# Deficits Associated with the Pervasive Developmental Disorders

---

- Diagnosis of each PDD requires that the individual exhibit impairment in two or more of the following areas prior to the age of 3:
  - Social Interaction
  - Communication
  - Play and imagination
  - Range of interests and activities
- (Volkmar et al., 2005)

# DSM-IV-TR Diagnostic Criteria for Autistic Disorder

---

- Qualitative impairment in social interactions
- Qualitative impairment in communication
- A restricted or stereotyped pattern of activities, interests and behaviors
- Symptom onset before 3 years of age
- (APA, 2000)

# Autism

---

- Autism is a syndrome composed of behavioral excesses and deficits:
  - Stereotyped patterns of behaviors, interests, or activities (excess)
  - Impairments in social interaction (deficit)
  - Impairments in communication (deficit)

# Autism

---

- Wide range of symptoms
- Wide range of severity of symptoms
- Individual differences among individuals with autism
- “If you have met one individual with autism, you have met **ONE** individual with autism.”

# Autism is Unbiased

(<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/overview.htm>)

---

- Autism is found in all:
  - Races
  - Ethnicities
  - Socioeconomic groups
  - Geographical areas