

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Fact Sheet

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. However, many individuals with ASD are not diagnosed or identified until school age or even later. Individuals with ASD demonstrate impairments in social interaction, difficulties with verbal and nonverbal communication, and unusual or restricted activities and interests. ASD impacts individuals differently and to varying degrees.

- Prevalence of ASD is estimated at 1 in 36 births (CDC, 2023).
- It is four times more prevalent in boys than in girls.
- There is no known cause or cure.
- No two persons with autism spectrum disorder are alike.
- Early intervention is Key! Outcomes improve when diagnosis and intervention occur early.

Individuals with ASD may display early signs such as:

- Lack of or delay in spoken language
- Little or no eye contact
- No response to name
- Repetitive use of language and/or motor mannerisms (e.g., hand flapping, twirling objects)
- Lack of sharing interest
- Lack of spontaneous or make-believe play
- Persistent fixation on parts of objects
- Inflexible adherence to specific routines or rituals

If you suspect your child may be on the autism spectrum, visit <https://www.ocali.org/project/asd-a-basic-introduction-for-families> for further information on evaluation, resources and services.