

# Autism Spectrum Disorder (DSM 5.0)<sup>1</sup> – Parent Version

## ASD Diagnosis

- Meets all 3 Social Communication Deficits criteria and at least 2 Repetitive Behaviors criteria
- Symptoms are present in early childhood (may not be noticeable until social demands exceed capacity)
- Symptoms cause significant functional impairment
- Severity level is determined for each area (Social Communication Deficits, Repetitive Behaviors)

**Social Communication Deficits:** Persistent deficits in social communication and interaction across multiple contexts)

Criteria	Severity Levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Deficits in social-emotional reciprocity                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not show or point out objects of interest</li> <li>• Has difficulty sharing pleasure, interests, emotions</li> <li>• Has difficulty maintaining “back and forth” interactions or conversations with others</li> <li>• Has one-sided exchanges, talks “at” rather than “with” others</li> <li>• Has difficulty initiating a social interaction</li> <li>• Has difficulty responding to social overtures of others; does best when interactions are “on his/her terms”</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Deficits in nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has poor eye contact, especially when others request attention; may be better on his/her own terms</li> <li>• Has blank facial expression. May direct limited expressions, like smiles, to self</li> <li>• Turns away from others during interactions</li> <li>• Has limited social use of gestures, such as pointing to express interest</li> <li>• Has poor integration of verbal and nonverbal communication</li> <li>• Has difficulty noticing or understanding nonverbal communication of others</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Deficits in developing, maintaining, understanding relationships                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has difficulty making or keeping friends</li> <li>• Has no interest in peers, or avoids peer interactions</li> <li>• Has difficulty adjusting behavior to suit different social contexts</li> <li>• For toddlers, lacks interest in shared social play (e.g., peek-a-boo), lacks imaginative play (e.g., pretending)</li> <li>• For preschoolers, plays alone, has difficulty joining group activities, engages in parallel play when peers are engaging in interactive or make-believe play</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><u>Level 3 – requires very substantial support</u> Severe deficits in verbal and nonverbal social communication skills; severe functional impairment with very limited initiation of social interaction and minimal response to social overtures from others.</p> <p><u>Level 2 – requires substantial support</u> Marked deficits in verbal and nonverbal social communication skills; even with supports in place, functional impairments are apparent; limited initiation of social interaction and reduced or abnormal responses to social overtures from others.</p> <p><u>Level 1 – requires support</u> Deficits in social communication skills; with supports in place, functional impairments are less noticeable; difficulty with initiation of social interaction and atypical or unsuccessful responses to social overtures from others.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Includes former DSM IV diagnoses of: Autistic Disorder, Asperger’s Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For older children, does not have an identified friend, chooses solitary activities, has difficulty making new friends, doesn't understand physical boundaries</li> </ul>	
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**Repetitive Behaviors:** Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities

Criteria	Severity Levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Stereotyped or repetitive motor movements, object use or speech <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paces or runs in circles</li> <li>Moves body into unusual positions</li> <li>Flaps hands, flicks fingers</li> <li>Spins or flips objects</li> <li>Lines up toys</li> <li>Use immediate echolalia (parroting)</li> <li>Uses jargon (speech-like babbling)</li> <li>Repeats lines from favorite videos</li> <li>Uses scripted or "canned" phrases</li> <li>Pronoun reversal (I/you)</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, or ritualized patterns of verbal or nonverbal behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs to do things in a particular manner, order, or sequence; becomes distraught if order is not followed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examples of routines: schedules, eating, object placement, dressing, driving routes, greetings</li> </ul> </li> <li>Shows extreme distress at small changes</li> <li>Has difficulty with transitions</li> <li>Shows rigid thinking patterns</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Highly restricted, fixated interests with abnormal intensity or focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has strong attachments to or preoccupations with unusual objects</li> <li>Has unusual interests; has normal interests that are highly focused or obsessive</li> <li>In younger children, intense interest in certain videos (e.g., Thomas), in certain toys (e.g., trains, cars), in numbers and letters, in mechanical objects (e.g., elevators)</li> <li>In older children, intense interest in certain subjects (e.g., marine animals, outer space, dinosaurs)</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Hyper- or hypo-reactivity to sensory input; unusual interest in sensory aspects of the environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has interests that seem sensory in nature</li> <li>Engages in excessive smelling or touching of objects</li> <li>Visually examines parts of toys (e.g. car wheels), squints or peers, fascination with lights or movement</li> <li>Engages in repetitive dropping of objects, or watching objects fall (e.g., water, sand, balls)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><u>Level 3 – requires very substantial support</u> Extreme difficulty coping with change and great distress changing activities; restricted/repetitive behaviors markedly interfere with functioning in all contexts.</p> <p><u>Level 2 – requires substantial support</u> Difficulty coping with change and distress changing activities; restricted/repetitive behaviors appear frequently enough to be obvious to casual observer and interfere with functioning in several contexts.</p> <p><u>Level 1 – requires support</u> Difficulty switching between activities; inflexible behavior causes interference with functioning in one or more contexts. Organization and planning problems hamper independence.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows adverse response to specific sounds, textures, tastes, smells</li><li>• Appears indifferent to pain/temperature</li></ul>	
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