

Families for Early Autism Treatment

The earlier the treatment
The better the outcome



For information
about best outcome
treatment, advocacy
and support, visit
www.feat.org
or call 916.303.7405

Without early
intervention,
children with autism
are unable to
function in the
world around them.



"If it hadn't been for FEAT guiding me through this
process of getting help for my child, I would never have
heard those three precious words, I love you!" FEAT Parent

What is Autism Spectrum Disorder ASD?

Autism affects one in 50 children. Autism is a complex neurobiological spectrum disorder encompassing Autistic Disorder, PDD NOS and Asperger's Disorder. Autism occurs in all racial, ethnic and social groups and is four times more likely to strike boys than girls. Children do not grow out of autism.

Autism impairs a person's ability to communicate, understand and relate to others socially and emotionally. Autism is also associated with unproductive repetitive behaviors; sensory sensitivities to light, smell, sound and touch; eccentric behaviors and rigid routines; preoccupation with subjects and obsessions such as obsessively arranging objects.

Symptoms can range from more moderate to profoundly severe. Autism in all degrees of severity typically results in functional disability.

Autism can be treated. If you suspect autism, **urgently contact** your doctor and the **Alta California Regional Center** at **(916) 978-6400** for a diagnostic assessment.

How does FEAT help?

Families for Early Autism Treatment—FEAT is a non-profit volunteer driven organization of parents, family members and treatment professionals working in the trenches to provide **Education, Advocacy and Support** for the Northern California Autism Community. Founded in 1993 by parents and professionals to bring best-outcome treatment to the Greater Sacramento area, FEAT's mission is to ensure that all individuals with autism have the opportunity to live with their family, to maximize their potential, to avoid institutional placement, and to live as independently as possible. Your tax-deductible donations go directly toward achieving these goals.

FEAT's United Way Number: 3180

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Early signs of Autism

Is your baby *too good to be true*, makes no demands, does not cry often ... or is your baby *difficult to handle*, highly irritable, never sleeps? Do you or other family members have concerns about your baby's development? One or more of the following can be indicators of Autistic Spectrum Disorder, which includes Autism, PDD-NOS and Asperger's Syndrome:

- Absence of smiles of recognition by six months or thereafter.
- Acts as though they cannot hear your voice.
- Absence of acknowledgment when a parent returns home or when a new person enters the room by six months or thereafter.
- Preoccupation or fascination with objects rather than with people. Plays alone.
- Impaired social interaction such as back-and-forth sharing of facial expressions by nine months or thereafter. Slow to imitate games like *peek a boo*.
- Giggling for no reason or when no one else is around as early as four months or thereafter.
- Extreme sensitivities to light, smell, sound, touch and taste by four months or thereafter.
- Hand flapping, hand gazing, body rocking or other self-stimulatory behaviors as early as six months.
- Absence of babbling by 12 months.
- Absence of back-and-forth gestures such as pointing, showing, or waving by 12 months.
- Fixation on audio/video stimulation by 18 months.
- Absence of words by 16 months or odd use of language or unusual tone of voice.
- Compulsively arranges non-toy items or lines up toys.
- Absence of initiating two word meaningful phrases by 24 months. Speaks only when coaxed.
- Any loss of first words or babbling or any loss of social skills at any age.
- Peculiar or rigid eating, dressing or sleeping habits.
- Strongly prefers or insists on talking about one subject without variation.
- Lack of daily progress. A developing child is doing or discovering new things every day. Every day without treatment is a lost opportunity for progress.



Autism can be treated



Take action. Trust your parent instinct. Urgently pursue early diagnosis. Autism is a pervasive medical condition requiring effective treatment like diabetes or cancer. Children do not outgrow Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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