

# Pathway to Services and Supports for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

If you've noticed that a child you work with is exhibiting signs of autism or has been diagnosed with autism, there are a variety of services and benefits their family might be able to access. Below, you can see the types of support services different state agencies can connect you with. Support services should be person-centered; each child's needs will be different, and the services they use should be tailored to best fit their needs.

## Healthcare



A healthcare provider or clinic may help with:

- Developmental screening
- Well-child checkups
- Medical diagnosis, including:
  - Initial history, exam, and labs
  - Referral to psychology, developmental pediatrics, or other specialist for diagnostic assessment
- Care or referral for:
  - Nutrition or digestion
  - Seizures
  - Sleep problems
- Referrals for:
  - Occupational therapy (OT)
  - Physical therapy (PT)
  - Speech and language pathology (SLP)
- Medication:



## Education



Services could include, but are not limited to:

- Assistive technology
- Child care services
- Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) program
- Educational/developmental interventions
- Head Start program
- Hearing and vision screenings
- Home visits
- IEP
- OT, PT, and SLP
- Preschool
- Service coordination and community referrals
- Special education

These services are free to all qualified students.

Visit [HelpMeGrowMN.org](http://HelpMeGrowMN.org), call 1-866-693-GROW (4769), or contact your local school district for an education evaluation

## Intervention services



- Case management
- Child care services
- Children's Therapeutic Services and Supports (CTSS)
- Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention (EIDBI)
- Family Support Grant
- OT, PT, and SLP

Contact your local county or tribal human service agency to request financial assistance or a MnCHOICES assessment. This can give you access to waiver services. Services could include, but are not limited to:

- Consumer Support Grant (CSG)
- Personal Care Assistance (PCA)
- Waiver services:
  - Housing
  - Transportation



## Transition and long-term services & supports



- Behavioral health services
- Employment services
- Home care nursing
- Independent living
- Home health aide
- OT, PT, and SLP
- Postsecondary education
- Case management

- CSG
- PCA
- Waiver services:
  - Case management
  - Employment
  - Equipment and supplies
  - Transportation
  - Housing



Note: not all services are available in all areas. Contact your local service providers or other contacts mentioned on this page to determine service availability.

For more information, visit [mn.gov/autism](http://mn.gov/autism) or contact [ASD.DHS@state.mn.us](mailto:ASD.DHS@state.mn.us). Call the Disability Hub MN™ at 1-866-333-2466 or visit [disabilityhubmn.org](http://disabilityhubmn.org) to get connected to resources and services.

# Symptoms and Diagnosis of Autism

People who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD) may experience a range of symptoms and characteristics. Some people may have very noticeable characteristics, others may not. Autism may be diagnosed as early as 18 to 24 months, but can be diagnosed at any age. The earlier treatment and intervention begins, the more effective the outcomes. Here are some of the signs and symptoms of autism.

## Social interaction and communication



- Differences in interacting with other people and making or maintaining relationships
- Differences with back-and-forth conversation
- Differences using eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, and body language
- Differences reading social cues

- In very young children, the first symptoms of autism may include:
- Limited demonstration of emotions, eye contact, or gestures like waving or pointing
  - No or inconsistent response to name
  - Limited interest in sharing or playing with others
  - Loss of speech
  - Delayed speech and/or no social babbling

## Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities



- Differences in speech patterns (ex: saying the same things over and over in exactly the same way)
- Repeating behaviors like hand-flapping, rocking, jumping, or twirling
- Insistence on specific routines/strong resistance to minor changes
- Sensitivity to light, touch, and sound
- Strong interests in certain areas or objects
- Unusual interest in looking closely at objects, touching, smelling, or tasting objects

## Educational determination vs. medical diagnosis



An educational determination of ASD allows for the special education and related services the child needs to be provided through their local school district.



A child with an educational determination of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can access resources through the school, like an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). However, that does not mean they have received a medical diagnosis of ASD.

Contact a medical or mental health provider for a diagnostic assessment, or locate a provider on [Minnesotahelp.info](https://www.minnesotahelp.info)

A medical diagnosis of ASD:

- Determines a person's condition and helps the family decide what services and supports are needed
- Does not automatically mean that a child meets the educational criteria for a special education services
- Is needed to access more services or financial support through Medical Assistance (MA) or Social Security