



**Autism New Zealand Inc.**  
Including Asperger Syndrome and Related Disorders

# Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder



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- Autism – Current facts
- What is ASD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder?
- What will make your job easier!



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## Current Facts:

- Current estimates – 1:100 children diagnosed with ASD. 10 years ago 1:2000
- It is possible to identify some children as having ASD at 12-18 months. Autism can be reliably diagnosed as young as two.
- There are up to 40,000 people who have ASD in NZ



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## Triad of Impairments (Lorna Wing):

- Social Behaviour
- Communication
- Imagination
- Sensory issues



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# What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Diagnostic Criteria for Autism Spectrum Disorder DSM-IV 1994

## Social interaction

- Failure to develop peer relationships
- Impairment in use of non-verbal behaviours (e.g. Gestures, eye contact)
- Lack of sharing enjoyment

## Communication

- Delay or lack of spoken language
- If have language, deficient conversational skills
- Repetitive use of language
- Impaired make-believe play

## Restrictive/Repetitive & Stereotypic Behaviour Patterns

- Routines/Rituals
- Repetitive motor mannerisms



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## What do I need to know and ask:

- *What way does your child/young person communicate?*
- *How does he or she react to touch ?*
- *What are the ways or what items does he/she uses to calm themselves?*
- *Key thought to remember is this population can react in different ways while stressed ie fight or flight or fright.*



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## Autism NZ INC.

[www.autismnznz.org.nz](http://www.autismnznz.org.nz)

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