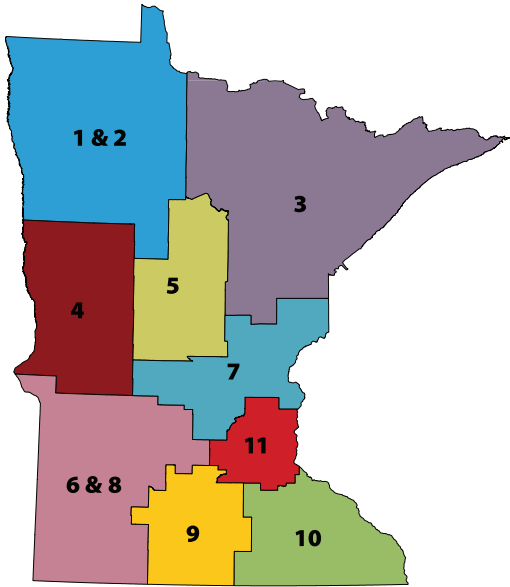


# CONTACTS

## MN AUTISM NETWORK

The goal of the Minnesota Autism Network is to build the capacity of staff, districts and regions, to provide a full array of educational services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

The network is comprised of regions that provide technical assistance and training opportunities for schools and families.



Regions 1 & 2	218.745.5628
Region 3	218.748.7606
Region 4	218.739.3273
Region 5 & 7	218.894.5462
Region 6 & 8	507.537.2240
Region 9	507.389.2123
Region 10	507.287.1346
Region 11	612.638.1517

Contact your Regional Low Incidence Facilitator for more information.

## MN AUTISM PROJECT COORDINATOR

- Metro ECSU  
3055 Old Hwy. 8  
St. Anthony, MN 55418  
612.638.1519

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Minnesota Department of Education  
Special Education Policy—  
Autism Spectrum Disorders  
<http://education.state.mn.us/mde/index.html>
- Minnesota Autism Project/Network  
Metro ECSU  
[www.mnlowincidenceprojects.org/asd.html](http://www.mnlowincidenceprojects.org/asd.html)
- Autism Society of America  
1.800.3AUTISM  
[www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)
- Autism Society of Minnesota  
651.647.1083  
[www.ausm.org](http://www.ausm.org)

## SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY

- State Specialist for ASD  
Special Education Policy Division  
Minnesota Department of Education  
651.582.8607

To access an electronic copy of this brochure, visit [www.mnlowincidenceprojects.org/documents/asdguide.pdf](http://www.mnlowincidenceprojects.org/documents/asdguide.pdf)

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# Autism Spectrum Disorders



## Minnesota Educational Resource Guide



## What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

The term *Autism Spectrum Disorder* is used to refer to a range of related conditions also known as Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD). The disorders on the autism spectrum are lifelong developmental disabilities that usually begin during the first three years of a child's life. They are neurologically

*The earlier a child receives intervention the more gains they make.*

based disorders and affect the way a child communicates, interacts with other people, and perceives and reacts to the world. The current prevalence rate is believed to be between 1/166 to 1/500 and is more common in boys than girls.

### Red Flags or Absolute Indicators for Young Children

- No big smiles or other warm, joyful expressions by 6 months or after
- No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles, or other facial expressions by nine months or after
- No babbling by 12 months
- No back-and-forth gestures, such as pointing, showing, reaching, or waving by 12 months
- No words by 16 months
- No two-word meaningful phrases (without imitating or repeating) by 24 months
- **ANY** loss of speech or babbling or social skills at **ANY** age



### Red Flags or Absolute Indicators for Older Children/Adults

- Failure to develop peer relationships appropriate for developmental level
- Appropriate language skills, but not using language in a socially appropriate way
- Stereotyped and repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic language
- Preoccupation with an interest that is abnormal in its intensity or focus
- Inflexibility, with a "need" for nonfunctional routines or rituals

# The Spectrum of Autism

Rett's Disorder

Childhood Disintegrative Disorder

Autistic Disorder

Asperger's Disorder

PDD Not Otherwise Specified

## What Causes Autism?

Researchers have not found a specific cause for autism. Evidence indicates that there are genetic factors involved and that there are biological and/or neurological differences in the brains of children with autism. Autism is not a form of mental illness. It is not something that is caused by bad parenting or by any other psychological influences in the child's life. Children with autism are not choosing to behave badly.

## What to Do if You Suspect Your Child Has Autism?

Contact your local education unit as soon as possible and discuss your concerns with your doctor. The earlier a child receives intervention the more gains they make.

Students who meet the behaviorally defined eligibility criteria for an Autism Spectrum Disorder are entitled to a free and appropriate public education which includes early intervention services. Special education programming is individualized and may include early intervention, specially designed instruction, speech, behavioral and occupational therapy and other related services. While a medical or clinical diagnosis is not required to meet educational criteria or for educational intervention, a diagnosis may provide additional understanding, direction, and guidance for families.

If parents have concerns related to health such as nutrition, sleeping or sensory regulation, they should contact their doctor.