

Myth! Children with autism never make eye contact.



Many children with autism establish eye contact. It may be less than or different from the typical child, but they do look at people, smile, and express many other wonderful non-verbal communications.

Myth! Inside a child with autism is a genius.

The myth that a genius is hidden in a child with autism may exist because of the uneven nature of the skills that many children exhibit. Children with autism may have splendid physical skills, but no functional language. A child may remember the birthday of every

child in his class at school, yet be unable to determine when to use the pronouns “you” or “me” appropriately. A child may read with perfect articulation and not understand the meaning of what he has read. Children with autism exhibit a full range of IQ scores. Most children with autism will exhibit significant delays in some areas of mental processing. A very small percentage exhibit above normal intelligence; an equally small percentage of children exhibit very low intellectual functioning.

Myth! Children with autism do not talk.



Many children with autism develop good functional language. Most other children can develop some communication skills, such as sign language, use of pictures, computers, or electronic devices.

Myth! Children with autism cannot show affection.

Probably one of the most devastating myths for families is the misconception that children with autism cannot give and receive affection and love. We know that sensory stimulation is processed differently by some children with autism, causing them to have difficulty expressing affection in conventional ways. Giving and receiving love from a child with autism may require a willingness to accept and give love on the child’s terms. Sometimes the challenge for parents is waiting until the child can risk a greater connection. Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and friends may not understand a child’s aloofness, but can learn to appreciate and respect his/her capacity for connection with others.

• Myths • Myths • Myths • Myths

More Myths and Misunderstandings about Autism

- Progress means that the child doesn’t have autism.
- Children with autism do not smile at you.
- Children with autism do not participate in physical affection.
- People with autism do not notice others and don’t pick up cues from peers/adults.
- People with autism do not want friends.
- Individuals with autism do not relate to peers/adults.
- People with autism could talk if they wanted to.
- When a child with autism does not respond to a question/direction to which he has previously shown a correct response, he is being stubborn/
non-compliant/obnoxious.
- Autism can be outgrown.
- Autism is an emotional disability.
- Children with autism cannot learn.
- Children with autism will show no imagination.
- Bad parenting causes autism.
- Autism is rare.

• Myths • Myths • Myths • Myths

• Facts • Facts • Facts • Facts

There are great differences among people with autism. The range of autistic characteristics exhibited will be different in each person affected. Some individuals may exhibit only mild language delays, while others may have no functional speech. Regardless of language skills, social interactions are typically a challenge for most individuals with autism. They may have average or above average verbal, memory, or spatial skills yet find it difficult to be imaginative or join in a game of softball with their friends. Others more severely affected may need greater assistance in handling day to day activities like crossing the street or making a purchase. Contrary to common belief, many children and adults with autism will make eye contact, show affection, smile, laugh, and express a variety of other emotions though perhaps in varying degrees. Like others, they respond to their environment in positive and negative ways. Autism may affect their range of responses and make it more difficult to control how their bodies and minds react. People with autism live normal life spans and some of the behaviors associated with autism may change or disappear over time.

• Facts • Facts • Facts • Facts

Facts About Autism

- 1 in 150 individuals have autism spectrum disorders.
- Over 25,000 individuals in South Carolina have autism spectrum disorders.
- 80% of all individuals with autism learn to talk.
- Early diagnosis and intervention is essential.
- Each person with autism is a unique individual with special talents and gifts.

The mission of the South Carolina Autism Society (SCAS) is to enable all individuals with autism spectrum disorders in South Carolina to reach their maximum potential.

Autism can be treated!

Membership Levels

BASIC:

Individual \$10 Family \$20

- Receive the *Update*, quarterly newsletter
- State conference discount
- Free shipment of SCAS products purchased by phone and online
- Personalized membership card
- SCAS membership decal
- Voting privileges during annual meeting (Family level gets two votes)

SUPPORTING:

Individual \$35 Family \$50

- Basic benefits *plus*
- Limited edition member coffee mug (Family level receives two mugs)

BENEFACTOR:

Individual \$75 Family \$100

- Basic and Supporting benefits *plus*
- Puzzle piece lapel pin (Family level receives two pins)
- Personal invitation to special events

FULL-TIME STUDENT:

Individual \$10 Family N/A

- Basic benefits

SCAS is a chapter of the Autism Society of America (ASA). ASA encourages all local chapter members to join the national organization. Call 1-800-3-AUTISM or visit their website at www.autism-society.org for more information on joining ASA.



South Carolina Autism Society

Together We Can Solve the Puzzle

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Participant



South Carolina Autism Society

Together We Can Solve the Puzzle

Myths

Fables

Stories

LEGENDS

FICTION

and

Misunderstandings

AUTISM

It's probably not
what you think...