



Child Health Notes

Promoting early identification and partnerships between families, primary health care providers and the community to support early identification of children with special needs and comprehensive care within a primary medical home.

What is Autism Now? The New DSM-5

The new Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-5 (DSM-5) was published in May 2013. Asperger disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS), and autism were replaced by the term, “autism spectrum disorder.”¹



Why the Change?

According to Dr. Bryan King, the impetus for the most recent change was that “There wasn’t any evidence after 17 years that [the DSM-IV diagnoses] reflected reality. There was no consistency in the way Asperger’s or PDD-NOS was applied.”² Dr. King serves as program director of the Seattle Children’s Hospital Autism Center and was a member of the American Psychiatric Association Task Force charged with revamping the diagnosis.

A 2012 study of physicians revealed that only 55% routinely screen for autism spectrum disorders at the 18-month visit.⁴ The good news is that this is up from 8% prior to the AAP recommendation to screen for autism at 18 and 24 months in 2007.^{3,4} The bad news is that it’s still 45% too low.

Developmental and Autism Screenings

Effective for claims with dates of service on and after January 1, 2016, the Health Care Authority is implementing the developmental and autism screenings for young children as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics’ Bright Futures Guidelines. This change complies with Substitute Senate Bill 5317 passed in the 2015 legislative session. For Washington Apple Health clients, the agency will pay for developmental screenings at ages 9 months, 18 months, and 24 months, and autism screenings at age 18 months and 24 months. The agency will update the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Providers Guide by January 1, 2016, to reflect this change.

4 Major Changes in the Diagnosis of Autism with the DSM-5:

1. Rett disorder was included in the DSM-IV diagnosis of autism, but was eliminated from the DSM-5 definition.
2. PDD-NOS, Asperger disorder, and childhood disintegrative disorder from DSM-IV were collapsed into one descriptive term: autism spectrum disorder in the DSM-5
3. The DSM-IV involved three categories of symptoms: (1) language, (2) social, and (3) repetitive /restrictive behavior, whereas the DSM-5 involves only 2 categories: (1) social communication / interaction, and (2) repetitive/restrictive behavior. Severity levels are included now.
4. Unusual sensory behaviors were not part of the DSM-IV diagnosis but they are part of the DSM-5 diagnosis.³

See details of the new DSM-5 definition of autism spectrum disorder in this link to the full criteria:

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/diagnosis/dsm-5-diagnostic-criteria>³

3 Screening Tools

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends screening 18 and 24-month olds for autism. The AAP Autism Toolkit was designed to screen, identify, and treat children with autism spectrum disorders.³ The Toolkit includes screening tools for three age groups:

1. For babies less than 18 months: Communication and Symbolic Play Behavior Scales and Developmental Profile <http://firstwords.fsu.edu/pdf/checklist.pdf>
2. For 18-30 month olds, the Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers-Revised with Follow-up (M-CHAT-R/F): Available at Autismspeaks.org
3. Preschool and Elementary school children: the Childhood Autism Spectrum Test. http://www.autismresearchcentre.com/arc_tests

2 Helpful Hints

1. Individuals with well-established DSM-IV diagnoses of autistic disorder, Asperger's disorder, or pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified should be given the DSM-5 diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. There is no need to review the diagnosis again to see if those individuals still qualify by DSM-5.¹
2. Individuals who have marked deficits in social communication, but whose symptoms do not otherwise meet criteria for autism spectrum disorder, should be evaluated for the new DSM-5 diagnosis of social (pragmatic) communication disorder (SCD).¹ The SCD diagnosis was created to ensure the unique needs of affected individuals are met. While autism spectrum disorder (ASD) does encompass communication problems, it also includes

restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities and gives equal weight to both communication issues and repetitive behaviors. ASD must be ruled out for SCD to be diagnosed. Many individuals with such symptoms previously were given the diagnosis of pervasive development disorder not otherwise specified. This led to inconsistent treatment and services in across clinics. Communication disorders are treatable, so identifying distinct communication problems is important for getting people appropriate care.⁶



1 Last Thing... Centers of Excellence in Washington State

The Washington State Health Care Authority offers an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy benefit to all Medicaid clients with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. In order for a child to be eligible for ABA therapy through Medicaid, a recognized Center of Excellence (COE) must have conducted a comprehensive evaluation, and written an order for ABA within the last two years. Find Centers of Excellence near you: http://www.hca.wa.gov/medicaid/abatherapy/Documents/HCA_Centers_of_Excellence_for_ASD.pdf⁷

More information about the ABA benefit: <http://www.hca.wa.gov/medicaid/abatherapy/Pages/index.aspx>⁷

Spokane County Special Needs Information and Referral Resources

If you have concerns related to possible autism, contact your primary care physician.

Northwest Autism Center	509.328.1582, info@nwautism.org , http://www.nwautism.org
Washington Autism Alliance	425.836.6513, info@washingtonautismadvocacy.org http://www.washingtonautismadvocacy.org/updates
Family Support	The Arc of Spokane - Parent to Parent http://www.arc-spokane.org/advocacy-family-support
Children under age 3	Spokane Regional Health District Infant Toddler Network 509.324.1651 http://www.srhd.org/services/itn.asp
Children age 3 and older	Contact your local school district Child Find liaison to request developmental assessment. See next page for school district contacts.
Children birth to age 18	Spokane Regional Health District Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs 509.324.1665
Autism Society of Washington	http://www.autismsocietyofwa.org
WithinReach Family Health Hotline	800.322.2588, 800.833.6388 <small>TDD</small> , www.parenthelp123.org Developmental Screening: 800.322.2588, www.parenthelp123.org/ask-now

References/Resources

- American Psychiatric Association. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Washington, DC. (2013). DSM-5 (2013) 5th edition.
- Luz, Amy. You do not have Asperger's. Slate. May 22, 2013.
- Autism Speaks website listing full criteria for autism according to the American Psychiatric Association, Version 5, 2013. Washington D.C.
- Johnson CP, Myers SM, and the Council on Children with Disabilities. Identification and Evaluation of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Pediatrics November 1, 2007; Vol. 120 No. 5; 1183-1215.
- Carbone PS, Murphy NA, Norlin C, Azur V, Sheng X, Young PC. Parent and pediatrician perspectives regarding the primary care of children with autism spectrum disorders. J Autism Dev Disord (2013) 43: 964-972.
- American Psychiatric Association. Social Communication Disorder Fact Sheet. Published by the American Psychiatric Association Publishing 2013: <http://www.dsm5.org/Documents/Social%20Communication%20Disorder%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>
- Health Care Authority of Washington state website: <http://www.hca.wa.gov/medicaid/abatherapy/Pages/index.aspx>
- Autism Speaks Family Services Tool Kit by the Autism Treatment Network. <http://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits>
- Harrington JW, Allen K. The clinician's guide to autism. Pediatrics In Review 2014; 35; 62-113.

School District Contact Information

SPOKANE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #81

Spokane Public Schools

200 N. Bernard, 3rd Floor Special Ed.
Spokane, WA 99201

509.354.7947
509.354.5910 *FAX*

CENTRAL VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT #356

Special Services

19307 East Cataldo
Greenacres, WA 99016-9404

509.228.5520
509.228.5509 *FAX*

Adams Elementary

14707 East 8th Avenue
Veradale, WA 99037

509.228.4000
509.228.4009 *FAX*

Early Learning Center

10304 East 9th Avenue
Spokane Valley, WA 99206

CHENEY SCHOOL DISTRICT #360

Special Education

12414 S. Andrus Road
Cheney, WA 99004

509.559.4507
509.559.4517 *FAX*

DEER PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

Special Services

PO Box 190
Deer Park, WA 99006

509.464.5640
509.464.5665 *FAX*

FREEMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT #358

15001 South Jackson Road
Rockford, WA 99030-9755

509.291.4791
509.291.7339 *FAX*

EAST VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT #361

Curriculum Center

12325 East Grace
Spokane, WA 99216

509.927.9511
509.927.3222 *FAX*

GREAT NORTHERN SCHOOL DISTRICT #312

School Psychologist

31125 North Spotted Road
Spokane, WA 99204-9182

509.747.7714
509.838.5670 *FAX*

LIBERTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #362

S. 29818 North Pine Creek Road
Spangle, WA 99031-9706

509.245.3211
509.245.3530 *FAX*

MEAD SCHOOL DISTRICT #354

Special Services

2323 E. Farwell Road
Mead, WA 99021

509.465.7616
509.465.7646 *FAX*

MEDICAL LAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Special Services

PO Box 128
Medical Lake, WA 99022-0128

509.565.3145
509.565.3149 *FAX*

All Transition Conferences held at:

Medical Lake Alternative High School

317 North Broad
Medical Lake, WA 99022

NINE MILE FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT #325

Lake Spokane Elementary

6015 Hwy 291
NMF, WA 99026

509.340.4064
509.340.4301 *FAX*

ORCHARD PRAIRIE SCHOOL DISTRICT

7626 North Orchard Prairie Road
Spokane, WA 99207-9766

509.467.9517

REARDAN-EDWALL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PO Box 109
Reardan, WA 99029-0225

RIVERSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Special Services

3802 East Deer Park-Milan Road
Chattaroy, WA 99003

509.464.8366
509.464.8365 or 509.464.8447 *FAX*

WEST VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Millwood Grade School

8818 East Grace
Spokane, WA 99212

509.927.1138
509.921.5259 *FAX*