

What is...

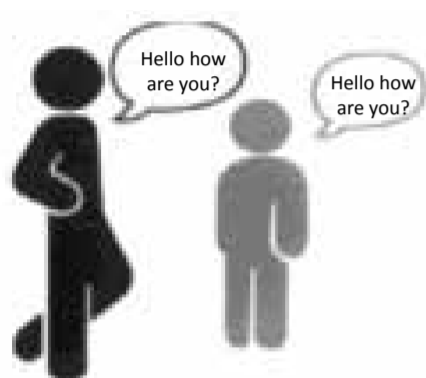
# Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition.

People with ASD may display some of the characteristics in the two main areas below:

## Social Communication and Social Interaction

### Finds two-way conversations difficult



- May find it difficult to start, maintain, or end a conversation
- May find it hard to stay on topic

### Needs help to interact with others



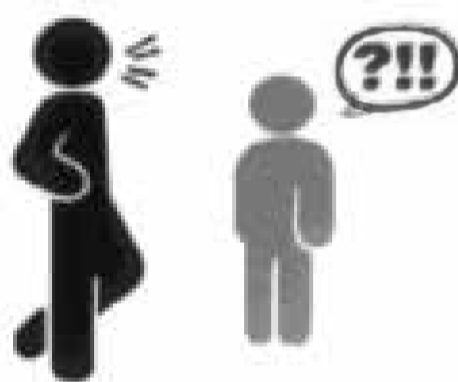
- May prefer to be alone
- May want to join in but not know how
- May find it difficult to form and maintain social relationships

### Seems uninterested



- May avoid eye contact
- May not respond to name
- May appear to be in their own world

### Needs help with communication



- May have delayed or limited speech
- Tends to interpret language literally
- May have a large vocabulary but struggle with social use of language

### Difficulty reading social cues or situations



- May find it hard to read body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice
- May need help to understand what behaviour is appropriate in different environments

## Behaviour, Interests and Activities

### Repetitive behaviours



- May repeat the same action over and over e.g. lining up objects or watching the same movie repeatedly

### Restrictive interests



- May have an intense interest in one topic (e.g. trains)
- May have a topic of interest that is unusual (e.g. gluesticks)
- May have an unusual level of interest in a topic (they think/talk about it all the time)

### Repetitive body movements



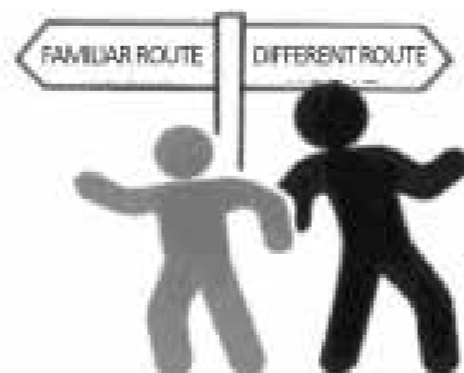
- May display echolalia (repeating words or phrases)
- May display hand-flapping, spinning, rocking etc

### Under- or over-responsive senses



- May have unusual reactions to what they see, hear, smell, touch or taste etc

### Prefers structure and routine



- May not like surprises or change
- Needs to be prepared and supported to try new things

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The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government or the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

 positive partnerships  
supporting school age students on the autism spectrum

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fulfilling life's potential

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