

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Understanding the Spectrum

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental condition characterized by a wide range of differences in:

- communication
- behavior
- sensory sensitivities and interests
- social interaction
- repetitive motor behaviors/movements
- perspective taking
- restricted interests, fixation on certain topics or interests
- ...and more.

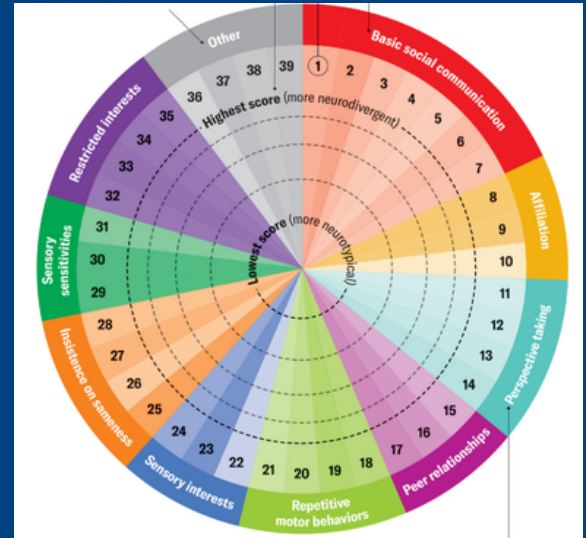
No two individuals experience autism in exactly the same way. For example, some may experience difficulties with sensory sensitivity without a need for significant support, others may have significant need for daily support. This diversity is often better represented by the “autism wheel” model, which illustrates autism as a set of varying traits and strengths across multiple domains.

Because of the variability in how ASD affects each person, approaches to support must be individualized. What works well for one person may not help for another. Effective support plans focus on an individual’s unique strengths and needs. Recognizing autism as a spectrum of many dimensions encourages a more personalized, respectful approach that prioritizes flexibility and the lived experience of each individual.

TOUCHSTONE HEALTH SERVICES

At Touchstone, we provide behavioral health services based on individualized service plans created with the member and family. Our strengths-based approach addresses each member and family’s needs, and may include therapy with autism-informed clinicians, WIT in-home and community coaching, family support, care coordination, and more. Touchstone’s approach is a good fit for those seeking flexible approaches. We encourage you to learn more about our services on our website or call us today to connect!

Example of autism spectrum wheel



Source: "The Autism Symptom Dimensions Questionnaire: Development and Psychometric Evaluation of a New, Open-Source Measure of Autism Symptomatology," by Thomas W. Frazier et al., in *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology*, Vol. 65, No. 8; August 2023 (data)