

EARLY AUTISM PROJECT



Autism Spectrum Disorder is a lifelong **neurodevelopmental disorder**.

1:68 children have autism.
Boys are **4 times** more likely to have autism than girls.



There are **no observable physical features** of autism.



WHAT IS AUTISM?



Autism presents itself in early childhood & can be diagnosed by **18 months**.

Autism is a **spectrum disorder**.



Autism affects the development of the brain and impacts an individual's ability to **communicate, socially interact and learn** like a typical developing child.

CAUSES OF AUTISM

1

There is **no exact cause** of autism yet, but there are links to **genetic, environmental** and **biological** factors.

2

Autism is **NOT** caused by poor parenting or 'refrigerator mothers'.

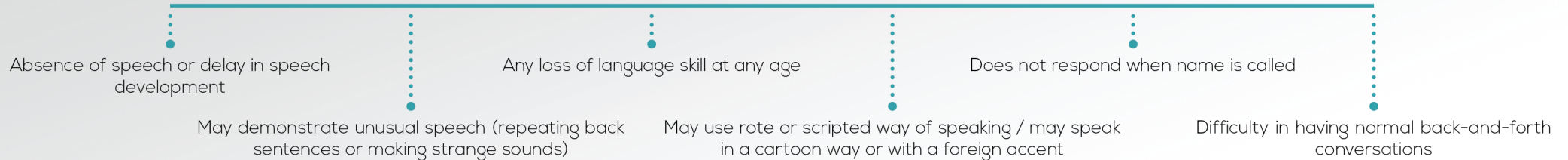
3

Autism is **NOT** caused by vaccinations.

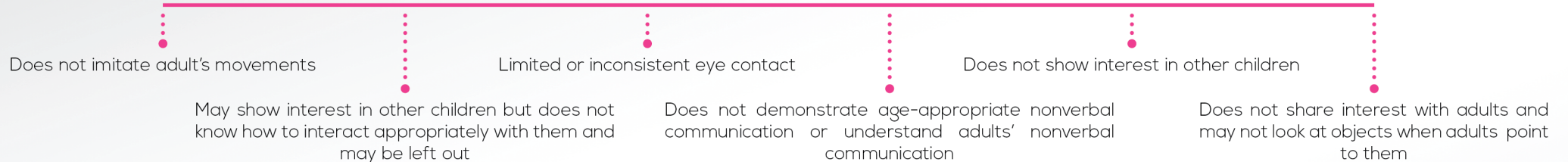
SYMPTOMS OF AUTISM

Below is a list of symptoms that children with autism may demonstrate. As autism is a spectrum disorder, not all children will demonstrate the same symptoms. It is important to identify the symptoms as early as possible in order to provide the intervention as soon as possible.

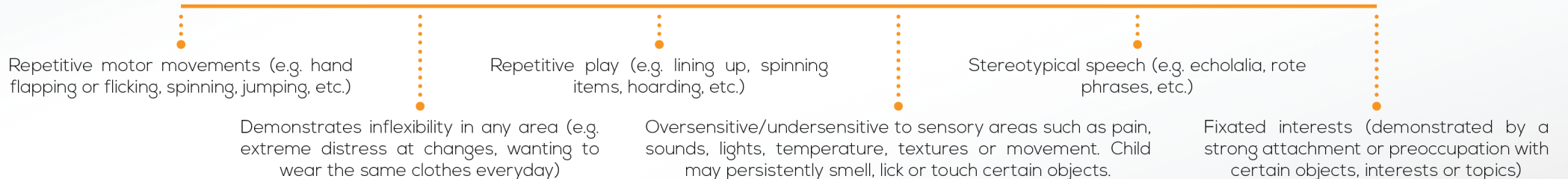
DEFICITS IN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT



DEFICITS IN SOCIAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



RESTRICTED OR REPETITIVE BEHAVIORS



DIAGNOSIS OF AUTISM



WHEN

Parents can bring children for diagnosis for autism as early as 18 months of age.



WHO

Diagnosis needs to be conducted by clinical psychologist, developmental pediatrician, psychiatrist, neurologist or similar qualified medical professionals.



HOW

Golden Standard for Diagnosis

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health (5th edition) (DSM-5) (2-3 hour long appointment with child and family + detailed report)

TREATMENT FOR AUTISM

There is **no medical cure** for autism.

Golden Standard for Treatment

Intensive Behavioral Treatment using the Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) approach.

ABA is the only teaching approach for autism supported by over **1000 journal articles** based on controlled studies, post-treatment follow-up data and peer-reviewed studies.

More than 40 states in the USA provide funding for behavioral therapy.

Almost 50% of children with autism who receive good quality ABA will be able to catch up to their typically developing peers. The other 50% show improvement in areas of independence and communication but at a gradual pace.

*Please refer to our **ABA fact sheet** for more information on ABA.

Usage of alternative treatments need to be carefully considered in relation to its safety and effectiveness based on sound and scientific research.

Below are some alternative treatments that are **NOT** recommended due to the given reasons.

INSUFFICIENT, INCONCLUSIVE OR CONFLICTING EVIDENCE

- ✗ Animal-assisted therapy
- ✗ Expressive psychotherapy (e.g. Art or play therapy)
- ✗ Gluten-free, casein-free diet
- ✗ Music therapy
- ✗ Sensory-based therapy (Including massage therapy)

DANGEROUS OR HARMFUL

- ✗ Acupuncture
- ✗ Chelation
- ✗ Craniosacral therapy
- ✗ Hyperbaric oxygen therapy
- ✗ Medication & Supplements
- ✗ Weighted vests

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