

Early Signs of Autism

While many young children may exhibit one or a few of these behaviors, showing several of them at once may be of concern for two to three year old children. Particularly in combination with delay in language and social development, these behaviors can be related to a possible diagnosis of autism. Have your child evaluated to determine if they do meet criteria for an autism spectrum disorder and to learn what supports and interventions are recommended.

- Delayed speech and use of gestures or signs to communicate
- Having some words and gestures at one point then no longer using them
- Not trying to communicate what he/she wants
- Pushing an adult's hand to get things that he/she wants rather than using words/gestures
- Not understanding things that are said to him or her
- Seeming to "not be able to hear" at times
- Not following simple directions
- Not pointing out objects of interest to others
- Being "in his/ her own world" often
- Not responding to his/her name
- Odd or repetitive movements of their body ("flapping" hands, moving head or arms)
- Limited eye contact
- Not seeking out other children for play
- Preferring to play alone and seems to avoid play with other children
- Not interacting with toys in an age-appropriate way
- Often lining up toys more rather than playing with them
- Getting "stuck" on an activity or idea and having trouble moving on
- Difficulty with transitions or unexpected changes
- Frequent strong tantrums/intense anger

******Early identification and intervention are key for children with autism!******



The Testing &
Tutoring Service

TLC

The Treatment and Learning Centers

Call: 301.424.5200 for more information

TLC is located at 2301 Research Blvd., Rockville MD 20850.

Web: www.tlc.org

Celebrating 60 Years of Serving the Community In 2010

Tommy's Story

The day Tom was diagnosed as autistic was a day I will never forget. We kept trying to face the reality of what autism is, but we couldn't. It was too depressing. There was no hope in our lives. Tommy did not live in the same world as we did.

I feel like someone who has woken up from a nightmare, and yet I am grateful for the luxury of those nightmares. My wife hasn't. She has stayed up with Tom most of the nights when he couldn't sleep since he was born. She pioneered the routes we would drive him down in the middle of the night to try to put him to sleep.

Tommy has received services from TLC for the past three years. Most recently, he began participating in TLC's Interaction Group for toddlers with autism and related developmental disorders. Before he came to TLC, I worried he would never grow to love either me or my wife. Now, we think he does love us. And we never really saw him sleep so well or laugh or enjoy being with us as when he began the Interaction Group. This is what I thought would always be taken away from us – his childhood. I feared he would have to be programmed like a computer.

Until there is a cure for autism, children like my son need people to teach them to speak, to know what they should be looking at with their eyes, how to socialize, and many more things so basic I took them for granted before I tried to raise my son Tommy.

I hope you can appreciate my feelings of loss and how the therapists at TLC have recovered for me some part of my son which I thought would never be there.