

What are the symptoms of autism in a 3-year-old?

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1. Differences in emotional expression

Children with autism may not play with others. They may:

play alone

have no interest in socializing

avoid sharing toys

not understand turn-taking play

not respond to their name

not understand make-believe or "pretend" play

2. Social detachment

People with autism experience a full range of emotions, but they typically read and express them differently from others. An 3-year old with autism may:

have difficulty discussing or expressing their feelings
have trouble understanding the feelings of others
struggle to be soothed or comforted

2. Social detachment

People with autism experience a full range of emotions, but they typically read and express them differently from others. An 3-year old with autism may:

make facial expressions that may not match internal feelings

avoid physical contact with others

become rigid when hugged

show no emotion when a parent leaves the room

3. Communication difficulties

Autism is characterized by difficulty communicating.

At 3 years of age, a child with autism may:

demonstrate delays or regression in speech and language skills

speak in a flat or sing-song manner

not speak at all

avoid eye contact

3. Communication difficulties

Autism is characterized by difficulty communicating.

At 3 years of age, a child with autism may:

appear expressionless

not answer questions appropriately

repeat the words of others

use words, phrases, or sounds repeatedly; echolalia

3. Communication difficulties

Autism is characterized by difficulty communicating.

At 3 years of age, a child with autism may:

use the wrong pronouns, for example, "you" instead of "I"

not use gestures, such as pointing or waving

not respond to pointing

not understand age-appropriate humor

4. Behaviors

Children with autism often display seemingly unusual or repetitive behaviors. They may:

flap their hands repeatedly

spin around

rock back and forth

appear fascinated with a particular toy or activity

4. Behaviors

Children with autism often display seemingly unusual or repetitive behaviors. They may:

have obsessive behaviors

line up toys in an ordered fashion

be hyperactive in certain situations

have a short attention span

4. Behaviors

Children with autism often display seemingly unusual or repetitive behaviors. They may:

insist on specific routines or rituals

display agitation, anger, or frustration when someone disturbs their routine or ritual

5. Other signs

Autistic children often display seemingly unusual or repetitive behaviors. They may:

aggression

impulsivity

self-injuring

intense reactions to sounds, smells, textures, colors, or tastes

5. Other signs

Autistic children often display seemingly unusual or repetitive behaviors. They may:

temper tantrums

unusual eating habits