

Autism 101 for Librarians

What is Autism Spectrum Disorder and How Can We Help Students and Families At the Library?

Presented by:
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“ A child with autism is not ignoring you; they are waiting for you to enter their world. ”



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Agenda

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Basic facts about autism spectrum disorders
- ▶ Tips for working with children with disabilities
- ▶ Parents' perspectives
- ▶ Considering environmental supports
- ▶ Questions

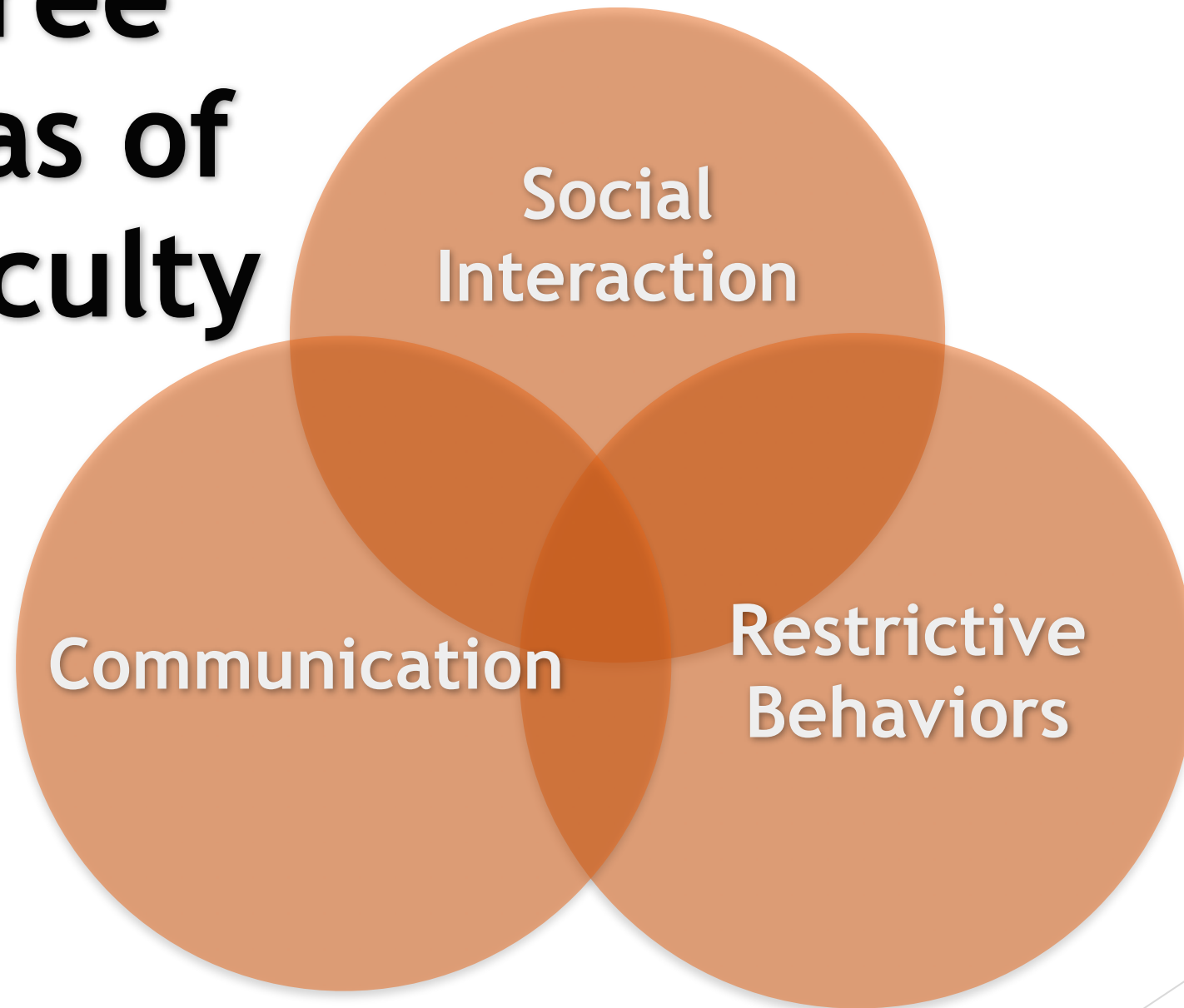
How Common Are Autism Spectrum Disorders?

1 in 68



5 to 1

Three Areas of Difficulty



Social Interaction



- **Limited social interaction**
- **Difficulty interpreting social cues**

Communication

- **Difficulty initiating conversation**
- **Limited ability to maintain conversation**



Restrictive Behaviors

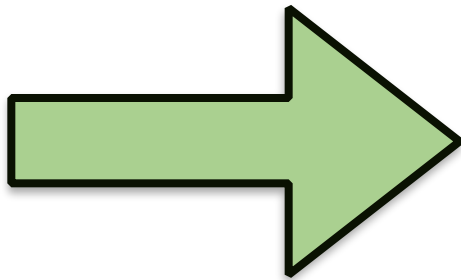


- **Narrowed interests**
- **Repetitive behaviors**
- **Unusual responses**

How Can We Help?



Tools for Addressing Individuals with Disabilities



People-first
Language

Tools for Addressing Individuals with Disabilities

Social
Interaction

Approach quietly

Accept limited/no
eye contact

Watch for understanding
of social cues

Tools for Addressing Individuals with Disabilities

Communication

Use concrete
language

Use individual's
name

Use toys or
“props” for those
who are nonverbal

Tools for Addressing Individuals with Disabilities

Restrictive
behavior

Ensure safety

Keep sensory stimuli
to a minimum

Provide prompts for
expected behavior

Ignore inappropriate
behavior

What Families Say

“Autism is a large spectrum and individuals may have very different needs based on their level of functioning.”



What Families Say

What Families Say



“Be understanding that children with autism do not always understand how to act in a library. More copies of books related to autism and sensory issues [are needed].”

What Families Say

What Families Say

“ I wish they knew that autism is not just the definition they see on Google...My child gets frustrated when he hears some sounds like, ‘shhh.’ I wish they knew more about what sensory issues are like, some children are bothered by certain sounds and that they will react differently before judging the parent.”



What Families Say

- **I would like to see more books to help increase interest for children with autism such as books related to maybe some odd interests that children with autism often like. I would also like to see more books with pictures instead of words to help increase their interest in reading.”**
- **“More copies of books related to autism and sensory issues.”**

What Families Say

- **“Having sensory toys, section of books dealing with autism with different resources.”**
- **“...it would be nice to have a section where we [families of people with autism] would not feel like we were bothering other[s] who are studying.”**



Considering the Environment

- Provide an area that can be used for quiet time
- Provide sensory toys
- Get to know families
- Get to know individual's interests
- Provide different seating options
- Know potential dangers of environment

“ We have got to work on keeping these children engaged with the world. ”



- Temple Grandin, Ph.D.

Questions?

The right side of the slide features a decorative graphic composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent green triangles and polygons in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. The shapes are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, with some shapes appearing to be layered behind others. The overall effect is a modern, abstract design element.