

## Parents of children who have just been diagnosed with ASD often feel overwhelmed.

Some are relieved to have a name to explain what they were worried about. It is very important that you know the things you can do to help yourself and your child. You and your child can develop the skills to reach their fullest potential and participate in their family, school, and community. By educating yourself, you will be able to make wise decisions, advocate for your child, and help educate others. To do this, you need reliable information.

There are several signs that a child may be at risk for autism. Autism, also known as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), describes a condition that affects social interactions, communication, and other behaviors. ASD begins in early childhood and lasts throughout a person's life. People with ASD may show many of the same symptoms, but it can have different severity and impact for different people. This is why ASD is considered a spectrum disorder. Knowing the signs, what to do, and where to get help is critical.

### County Mental Health Programs (Early Intervention programs)

#### Cumberland/ Perry County Early Intervention Program

1615 Ritner  
Highway, Carlisle,  
PA 17013  
**1-717-240-6320**  
Toll-free:  
**1-888-697-0371**,  
ext. **6320**  
Phone (Perry):  
**1-866-240-6320**

#### Dauphin County Case Management Unit Early Intervention

1100 South  
Cameron Street,  
Harrisburg, PA  
17101  
**1-717-441-7034**

#### Lancaster County Early Intervention Program

150 North Queen  
Street, Suite 400,  
Lancaster, PA  
17603  
**1-717-399-7323**

#### Lebanon County Early Intervention Program

220 East Lehman  
Street Lebanon, PA  
17046  
**1-717-274-3415**

### Intermediate units

**Capital Area IU  
15** (Cumberland,  
Dauphin and Perry  
counties)  
55 Miller Street,  
P.O. Box 489,  
Summerdale, PA  
17093  
**1-717-732-8400**

**Lancaster-  
Lebanon IU 13**  
IU13 Lancaster  
County Office  
1020 New Holland  
Avenue, Lancaster,  
PA 17601  
**1-717-606-1600**

**Lancaster-  
Lebanon IU 13**  
IU13 Lebanon  
County Office  
One Cumberland  
Street, Lebanon,  
PA 17042  
**1-717-450-1500**

For members who are deaf or hard of hearing and use a TTY/TDD for communication, call the PA Telecommunications Relay Service at **711** or **1-800-654-5984 (TTY)** and call the number you want.

PerformCare would like to thank the families who have shared their experiences and expertise. We would not have been able to create this brochure without their helpful support.

This information is also available in Spanish. Contact us at **1-866-773-7917** to request a copy.

Esta información está disponible en español. Contacte con nosotros en **1-888-773-7917** para solicitar una copia.

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[pa.performcare.org](http://pa.performcare.org)



## Autism: Help for Families Capital Region

There are several signs that a child may be at risk for a developmental disability called autism.

Autism, also known as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), describes a group of brain disorders that affect social interactions, communication and other behaviors. Signs include delayed speech patterns or no speech. Children at risk for autism can be of any gender. They may avoid contact with others and play with things in an unusual way, such as spinning toys or staring at lights or fans.

If your child has these or other unusual behaviors, they may have autism.

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### To learn more or get help:

- Talk to your pediatrician or family doctor. Ask for testing to rule out other problems, such as a hearing disorder, seizure disorder or developmental delay.
- Make an appointment with a developmental pediatrician, child psychiatrist or child psychologist. Your doctor or local hospital can help you find one.
- If your child is under age 3, call your county's Early Intervention program. Their contact information can be found on the other side of this brochure. Ask for an evaluation by the local Early Intervention program. Your child does not have to be diagnosed with autism to have the evaluation. It can be done in your home at no cost to you.
- If your child is older than age 3, call your intermediate unit (IU). Phone numbers for the IU serving your area can be found on the other side of this brochure.
- Parents who have questions about their child's development may also call the CONNECT Helpline at 1-800-692-7288. The CONNECT Helpline assists families in locating resources and providing information regarding child development for children from birth to age 5. In addition, CONNECT can assist parents by making a direct link to their county Early Intervention program or local preschool Early Intervention program.



**Remember:** While your child does not need to be diagnosed with autism to get help, an accurate and early autism diagnosis can provide the basis for an appropriate educational and treatment program.

If your child is diagnosed with autism, they are able to receive benefits to pay for needed services. According to the Autism Insurance Act, many private insurance companies (as well as Medical Assistance) are required to cover the cost of the diagnostic assessment and treatment of ASD for those under the age of 21. To apply for Medical Assistance, contact the County Assistance Office (CAO) for the county where you live to find out how to apply. Staff at the CAO can help you

complete the form. You can also apply online at [www.compass.dhs.pa.gov/home/#/](http://www.compass.dhs.pa.gov/home/#/).

Phone numbers and addresses of local CAOs can also be found at [www.pa.gov/agencies/dhs/contact/cao-information.html](http://www.pa.gov/agencies/dhs/contact/cao-information.html).

When your child receives Medical Assistance and is a member of PerformCare, you can call us toll-free at the numbers listed in this brochure. Support for families is critical. If you have any problems or questions or if you need someone to talk to who has “been there,” try connecting with one of the organizations on the next page.

### Autism support

**ABOARD's Autism Connection of PA**  
(in the Pittsburgh area)  
1-800-827-9385  
[www.autismofpa.org](http://www.autismofpa.org)

**Support for parents**  
[www.autism-support.org/autism-support-groups/autism-support-for-parents](http://www.autism-support.org/autism-support-groups/autism-support-for-parents)

**ASERT (the Autism Services, Education, Resources, and Training Collaborative)**  
1-877-231-4244  
[www.pautism.org](http://www.pautism.org)

**Autism Society Greater Harrisburg**  
1-800-244-2425, ext. 8408  
[www.autismharrisburg.org](http://www.autismharrisburg.org)

**Bureau of Supports for Autism and Special Populations**  
1-866-539-7689  
[www.pa.gov/agencies/dhs/departments-offices/odp-info/odp-bureau-autism-services](http://www.pa.gov/agencies/dhs/departments-offices/odp-info/odp-bureau-autism-services)

**Special Kids Network**  
1-800-986-4550  
[www.gotoskn.state.pa.us](http://www.gotoskn.state.pa.us)

**PA Support Groups**  
[www.pautism.org/community/support-groups](http://www.pautism.org/community/support-groups)

ATTENTION: If you speak a language other than English, free language assistance services are available to you. Appropriate auxiliary aids and services to provide information in accessible formats are also available free of charge. Call **1-844-626-6813 (TTY: 711)** or speak to your provider.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. También están disponibles de forma gratuita ayuda y servicios auxiliares apropiados para proporcionar información en formatos accesibles. Llame al 1-844-626-6813 (TTY: 711) o hable con su proveedor.

注意：如果您说中文，我们将免费为您提供语言协助服务。我们还免费提供适当的辅助工具和服务，以无障碍格式提供信息。致电 1-844-626-6813（文本电话：711）或咨询您的服务提供商。