

## Resources for Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a brain disorder that impairs a person's behavior and ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism spectrum disorder can be mild or severe. No one knows what causes it. To be diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, a child must show signs of the disorder in early childhood. Sometimes the symptoms do not show up until the child is in school. The signs of ASD include problems in social interaction and communication, and limited interests.

- **Counseling Services**
  - To access individual or family counseling using your health insurance benefits, call the “mental health benefits” number on your insurance card for referral to providers who accept your insurance. You can also access the website for your behavioral health insurance carrier to search for providers in your area and with the specialties you require.
  - If you or your child is covered by Medi-Cal and you live in Sacramento County, contact the [Mental Health Access Team](#) at 916-875-1055 to access counseling or psychiatry services. The after-hours number is 1-888-881-4881.  
<https://dhs.saccounty.net/BHS/Documents/Provider-Forms/Brochures/BR-Access-Team-Brochure-English.pdf>
- **[UC Davis MIND Institute](#)**
  - A collaborative international research center, committed to the awareness, understanding, prevention, care, and cures of neurodevelopmental disorders.
  - Brings together members of the community including families, educators, physicians, psychologists, and scientists. They are collaborating to further understand causes, development and best treatments for (ASD), Fragile X Syndrome, Down syndrome and other neurodevelopmental disorders.
  - <http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/>
  - 916-703-0280
- **[Sacramento Autism Spectrum and Special Needs Alliance](#)**
  - This group exists to make sure that every mentally-diverse child is nurtured and protected toward a life of self-defined happiness and health.
  - They provide comprehensive assistance to youth and their families so that every aspect of the young person's development is cared for.
  - <http://www.sassna.org>
  - (916) 877-5220
- **[UCP Autism Center for Excellence](#)**
  - This is a structured after-school socialization training program designed to meet the special needs of children with autism, ages 8-12.
  - Paraprofessionals and student interns, under the guidance of the Clinical Director and the Clinical Supervisors, provide instruction to children during large and small group activity sessions.
  - Instructors work with every child, teaching them how to interact and build friendships while being involved in their community.
  - <https://ucpsacto.org/programs-services/autism-center-for-excellence-a-c-e/>
  - (916) 548-2562

- [Families for Early Autism Treatment](#)
  - A non-profit, volunteer-driven organization of parents, family members, and treatment professionals dedicated to providing best outcome Education, Advocacy and Support for the Northern California Autism Community.
  - <http://feat.org>
  - (916) 303-7405
  
- [American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry](#)
  - This website offers an Autism Resource Center with an extensive list of articles, books, videos, and other resources for families.
  - [http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families\\_and\\_Youth/Resource\\_Centers/Autism\\_Resource\\_Center/Home.aspx](http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Resource_Centers/Autism_Resource_Center/Home.aspx)
  
- [National Institute of Mental Health](#)
  - This government-sponsored website aims to “transform the understanding and treatment of mental illnesses.” It is a good source of information about ASD, research trials, and new developments in treatment.
  - <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/autism-spectrum-disorders-asd/index.shtml>