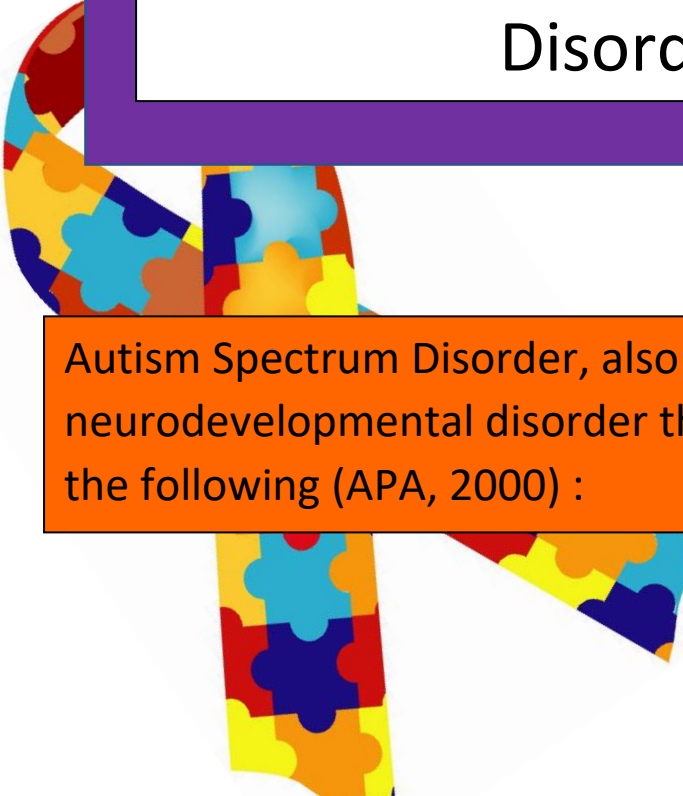


Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder

A Parent Guide

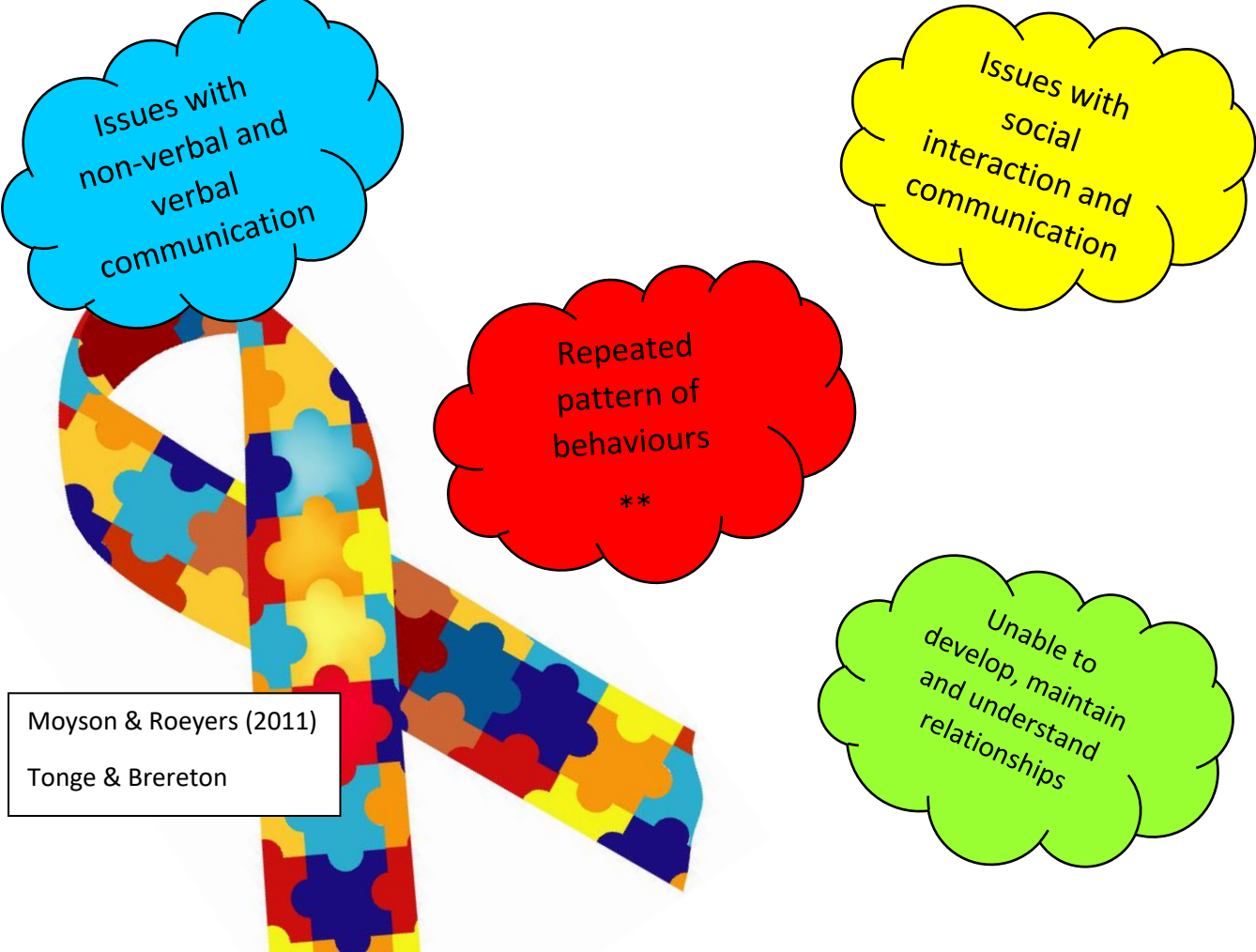
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What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Autism Spectrum Disorder, also known as ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder that can be characterised by the following (APA, 2000) :



Issues with
non-verbal and
verbal
communication

Issues with
social
interaction and
communication

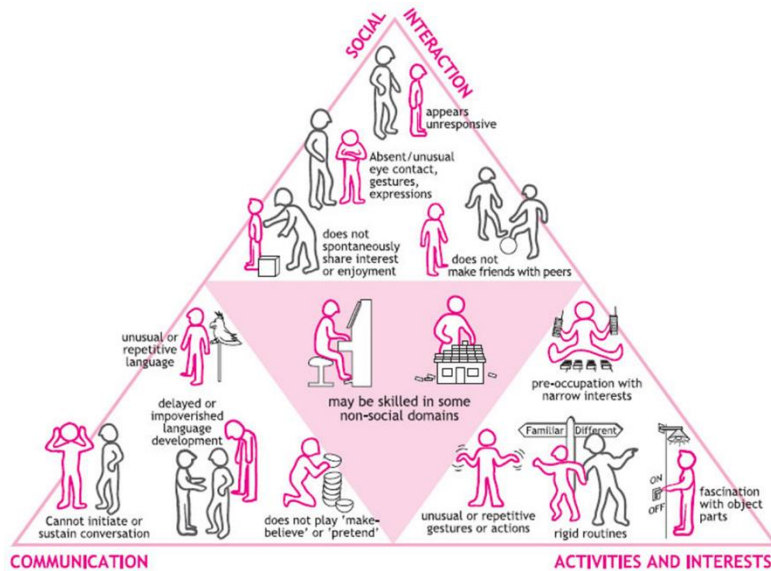
Repeated
pattern of
behaviours

**

Unable to
develop, maintain
and understand
relationships

Moyson & Roeyers (2011)

Tonge & Brereton



**

- Repetitive motor movement, speech or use of an object
- Routine in verbal or non-verbal behaviours
- Repetitive behaviour focusing on interests
- Hyper/hypo-reactivity to sensations

Rates of Autism Spectrum Disorder



In the past 20 years we have seen an increase in the rates of childhood Autism Spectrum Disorder (Boyle et al. 2011).

Baron-Cohen et al (2009) estimated that 1.57% of children aged 5-9 years old were diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder in 2004 using parent-reported clinical diagnosis.

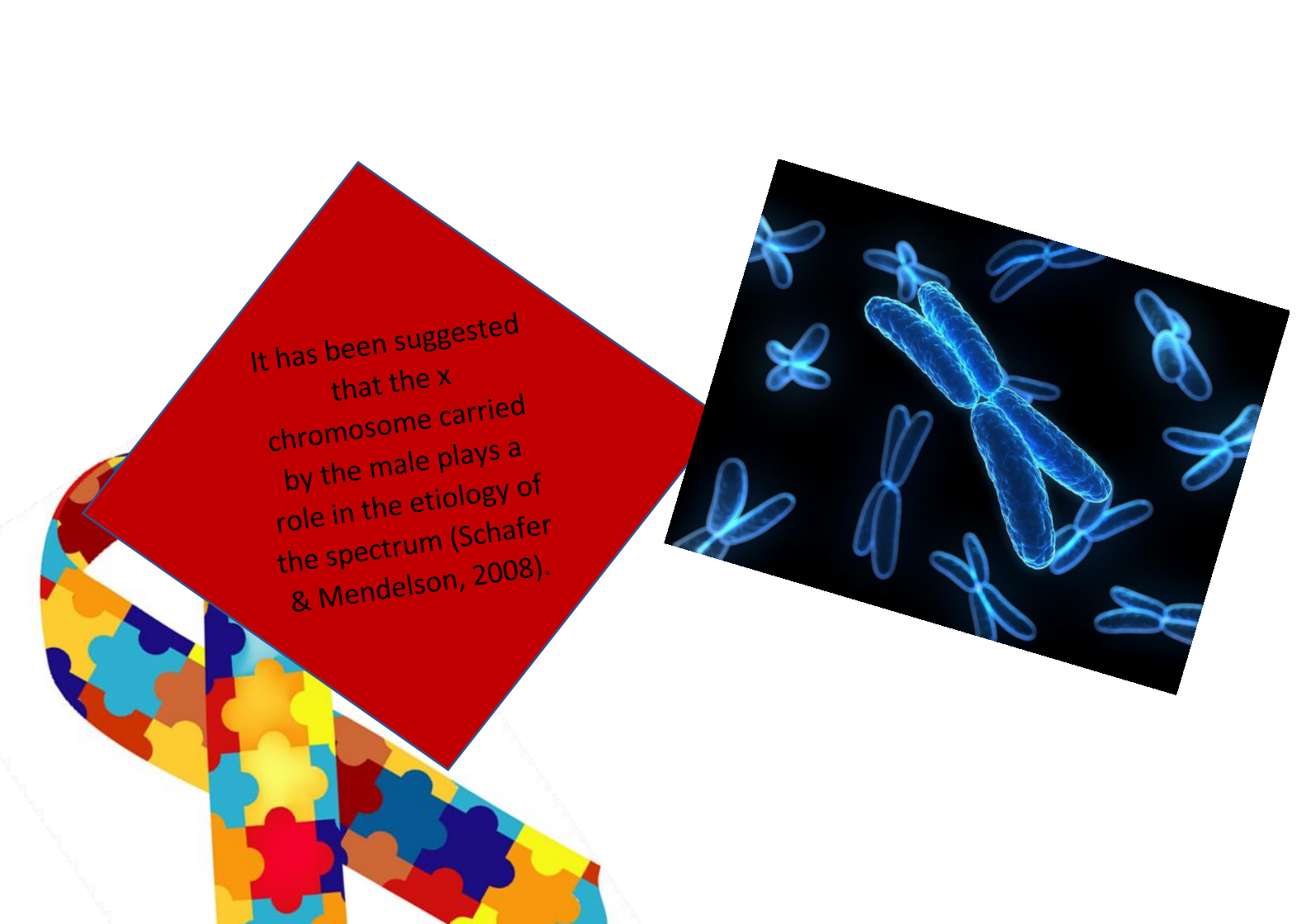


According to research,
around 700,000
people living with
autism in the UK, that
is more than 1 in 1000
(Brugha et al. 2012).

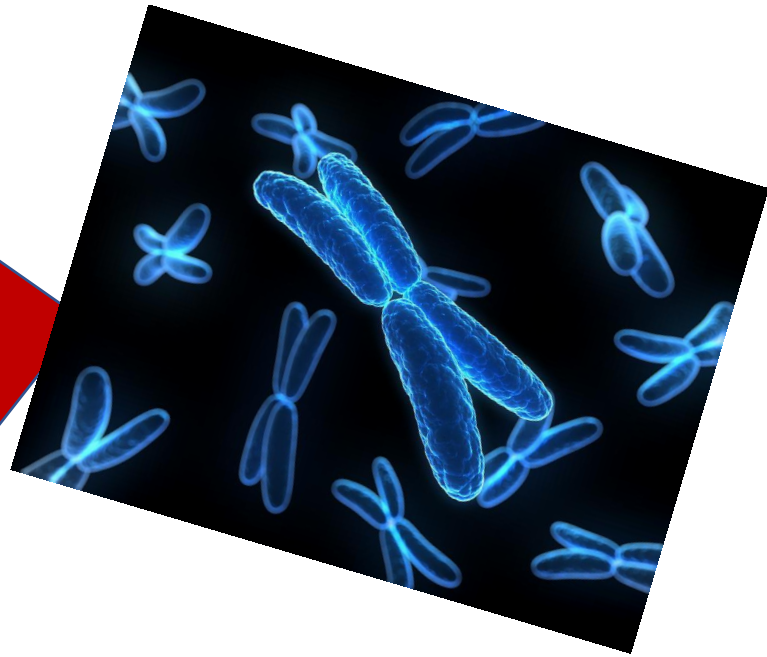
Autism Spectrum Disorder and Genetics

There is varying forms of evidence to support the strong role genetics plays in Autism spectrum Disorder (Schafer & Mendelson, 2008).

Population studies have shown that cases of Autism has been linked to multifactorial inheritance.

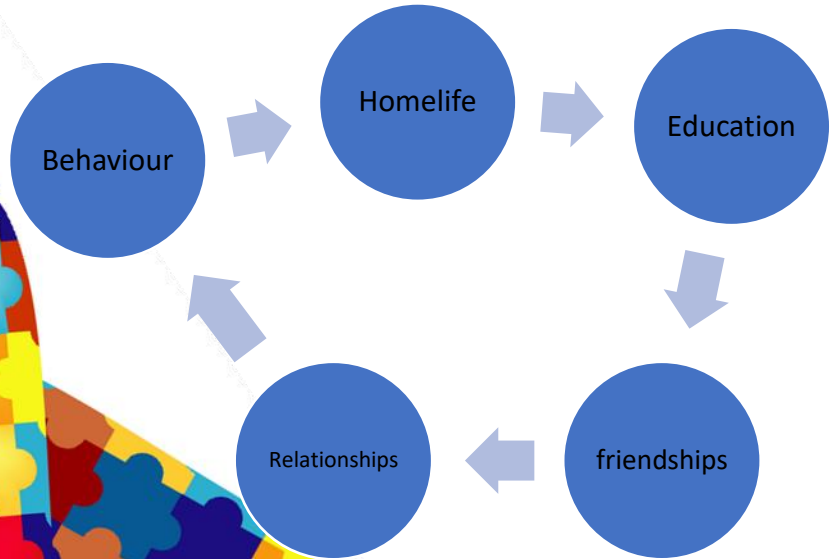


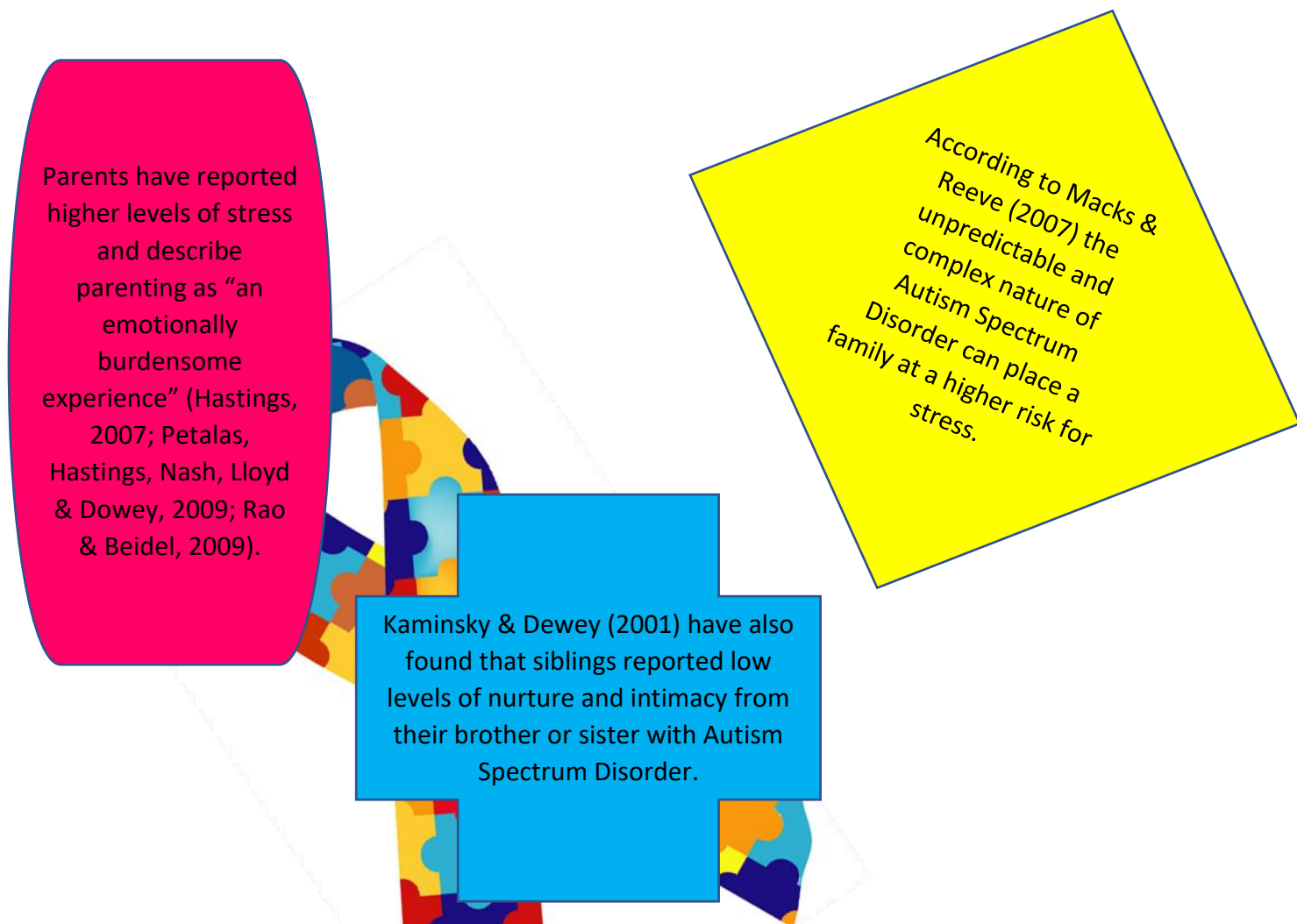
It has been suggested
that the x
chromosome carried
by the male plays a
role in the etiology of
the spectrum (Schafer
& Mendelson, 2008).



The Impact of Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism Spectrum Disorder can have an impact on many different aspects of the child's life, for example:





Parents have reported higher levels of stress and describe parenting as “an emotionally burdensome experience” (Hastings, 2007; Petalas, Hastings, Nash, Lloyd & Dowe, 2009; Rao & Beidel, 2009).

According to Macks & Reeve (2007) the unpredictable and complex nature of Autism Spectrum Disorder can place a family at a higher risk for stress.

Kaminsky & Dewey (2001) have also found that siblings reported low levels of nurture and intimacy from their brother or sister with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

This is supported by a study carried out by Moyson & Roeyers (2011) where they focused on the siblings of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Using three separate, in-depth interviews where they asked each participant the following: - about themselves, what it is like to be sibling and to reflect on what it means to be a sibling.

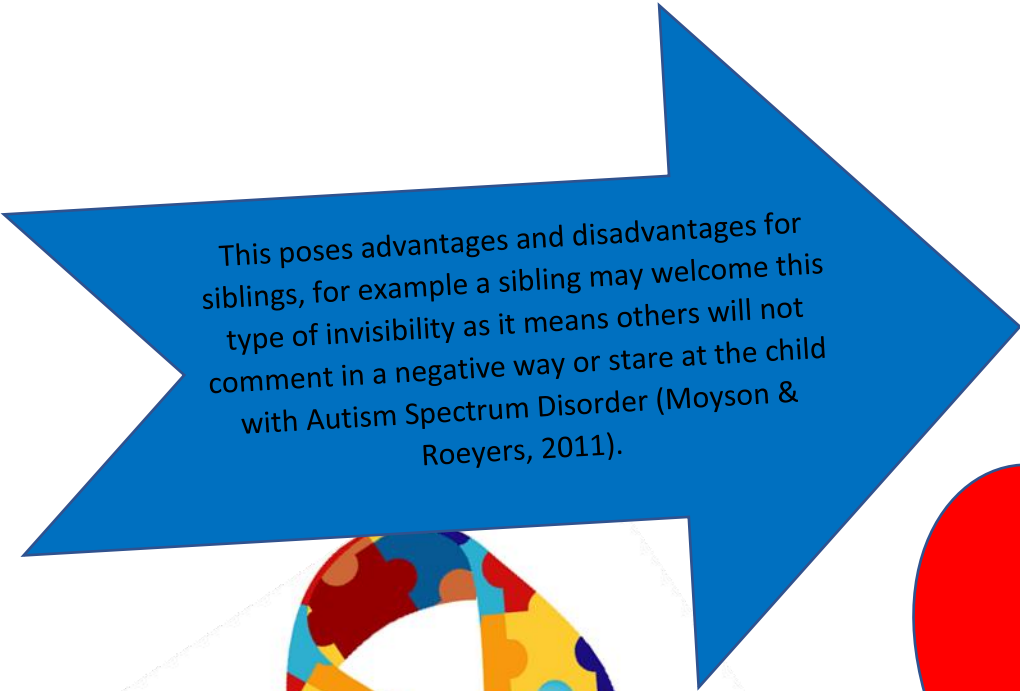


They found nine areas of quality of life for siblings that came from this study:-

- Forbearance
 - Mutual Understanding
 - Joint Activities
 - Private Time
 - Trust in Well-being
 - Acceptance
 - Exchanging Experiences
 - Social Support
 - Dealing with the Outside World
- (Moyson & Roeyers, 2011)



Moyson and Roeyers (2011) also found something called “the invisibility of ASD” where children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder presented with a “normal” appearance physically.

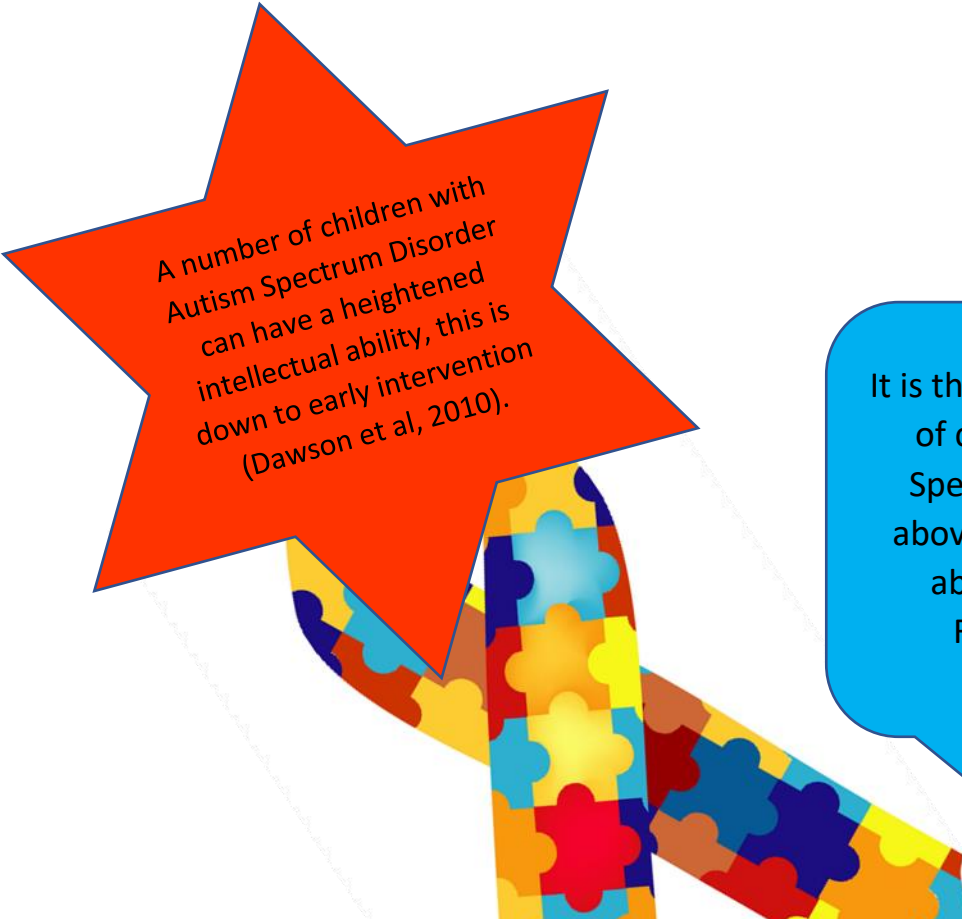


This poses advantages and disadvantages for siblings, for example a sibling may welcome this type of invisibility as it means others will not comment in a negative way or stare at the child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (Moyson & Roeyers, 2011).

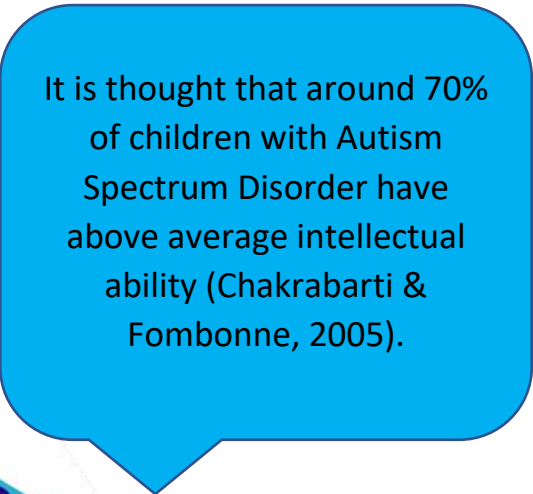


But some people
aren't always
believing of the
child's disability



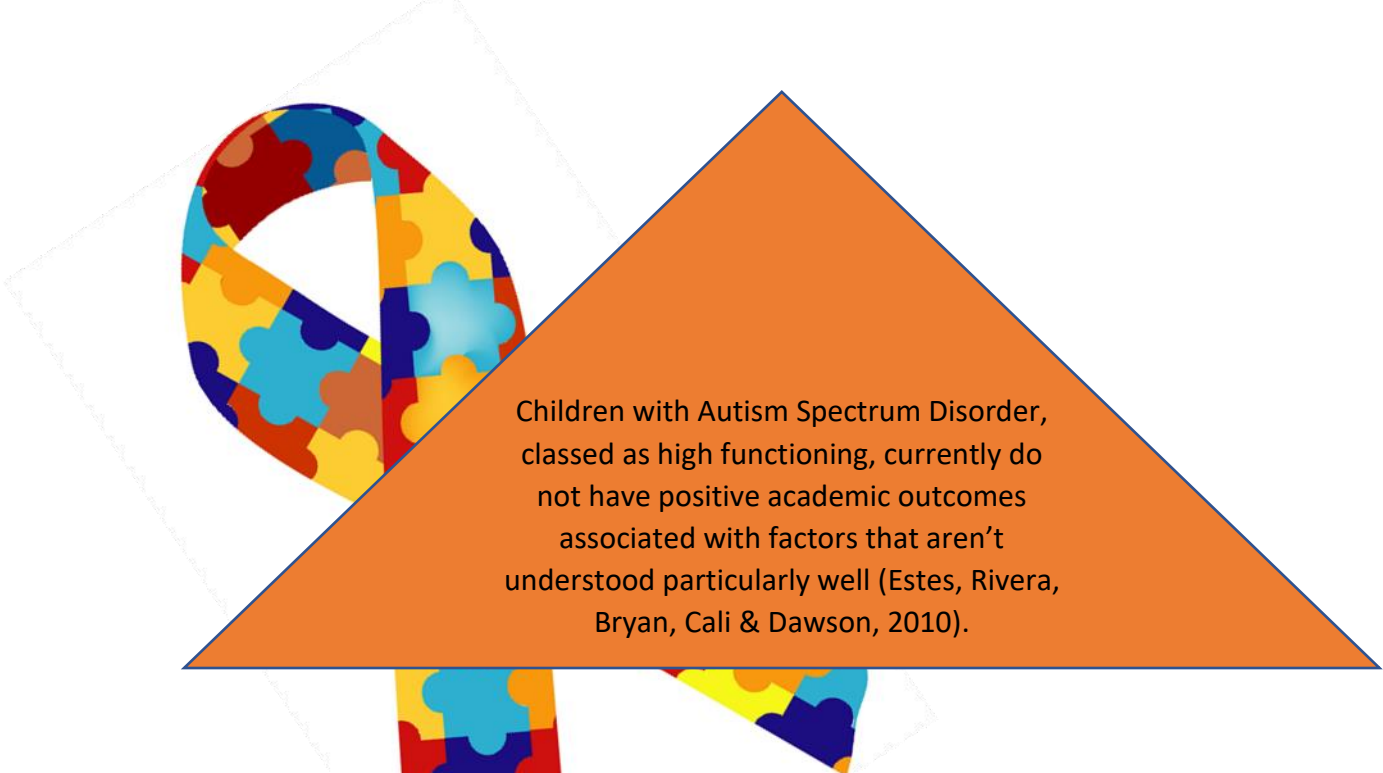


A number of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder can have a heightened intellectual ability, this is down to early intervention (Dawson et al, 2010).



It is thought that around 70% of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder have above average intellectual ability (Chakrabarti & Fombonne, 2005).

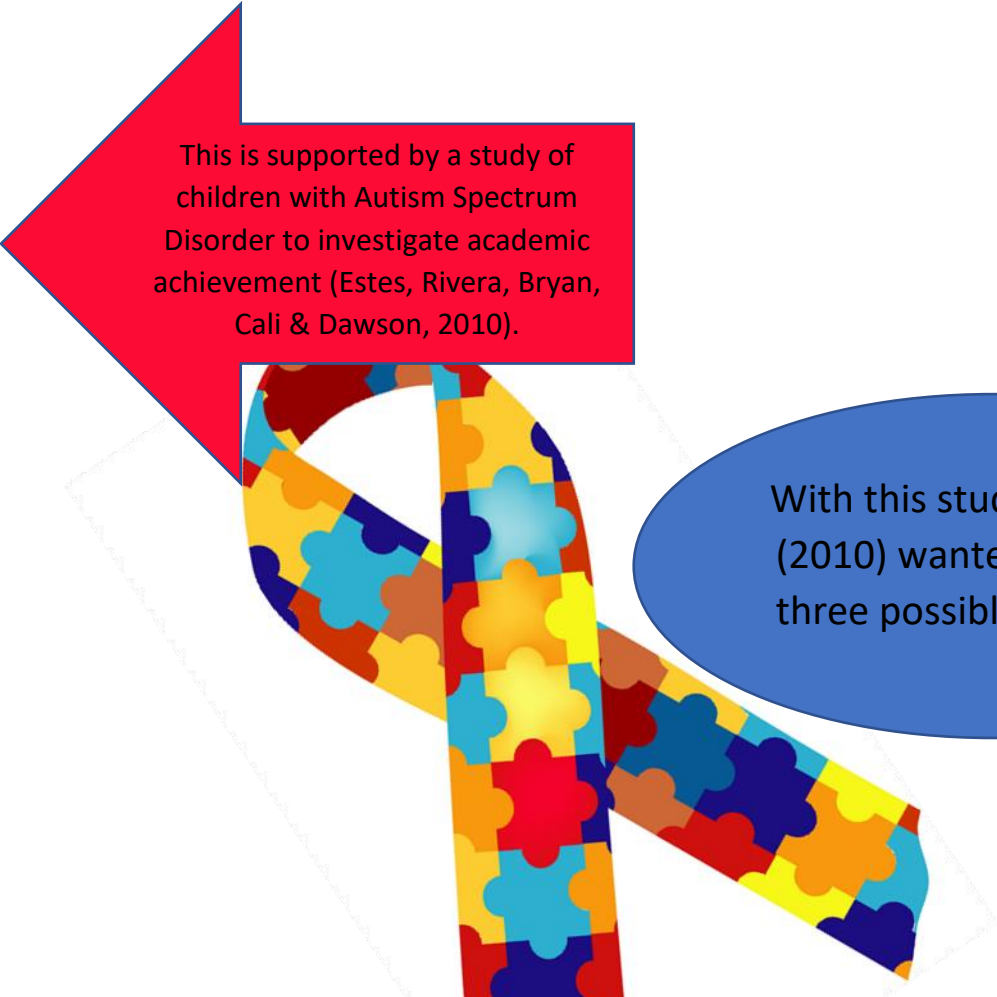
Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder are typically placed in classes with other school-aged peers and work towards similar academic ability and goals as their peers (Estes, Rivera, Bryan, Cali & Dawson, 2010).



Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, classed as high functioning, currently do not have positive academic outcomes associated with factors that aren't understood particularly well (Estes, Rivera, Bryan, Cali & Dawson, 2010).

It has been reported by many that children with Autism Spectrum Disorder can have an impaired reading comprehension that may co-exist with normative reading accuracy (Minshew et al, 1994; O'Connor & Klein, 2004; Grigorenko et al, 2003; Nation et al, 2006).





This is supported by a study of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder to investigate academic achievement (Estes, Rivera, Bryan, Cali & Dawson, 2010).

With this study Estes et al (2010) wanted to answer three possible questions:

1.

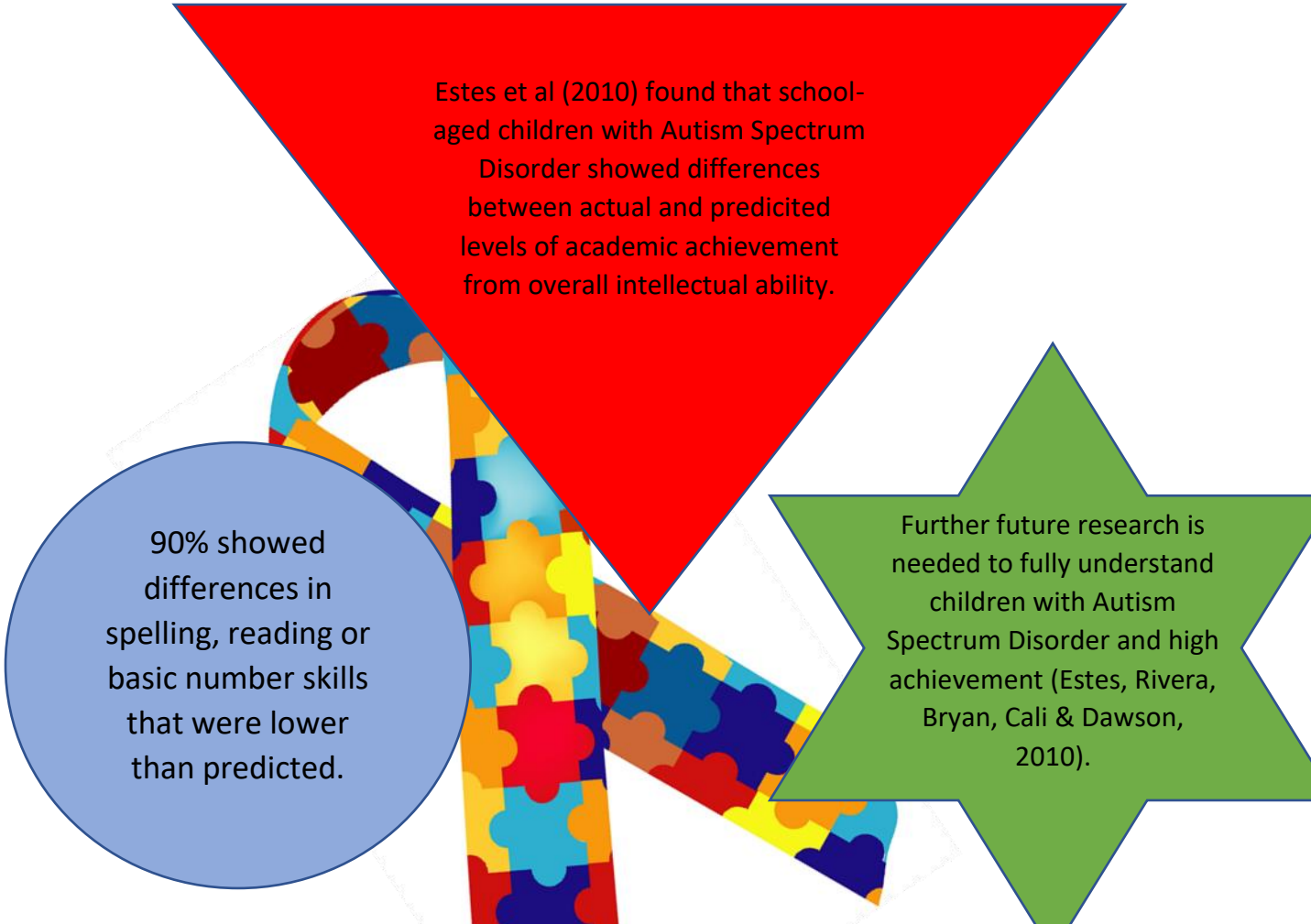
- Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder would show academic achievement scores that would differ from the predicted scores.

2.

- Children at the ages of 6 and 9 with problem behaviours would have lower academic achievement.

3.

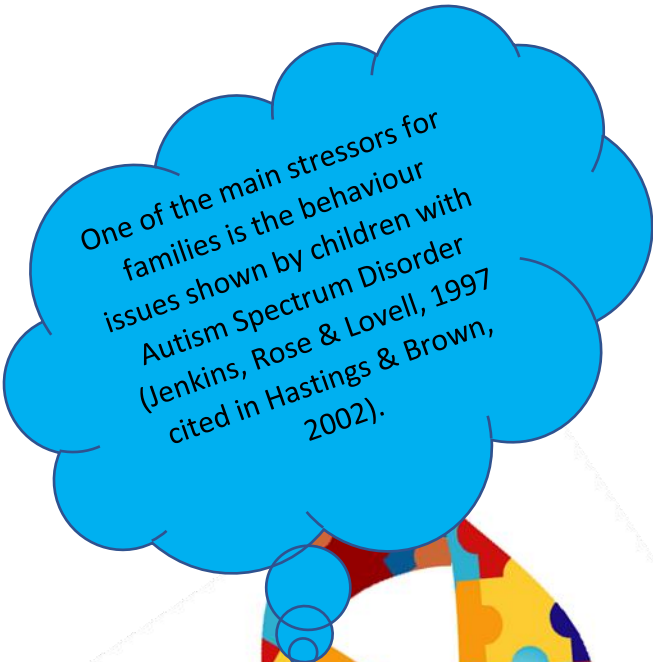
- Children at the ages of 6 and 9 with lower social functioning would have lower social functioning.



Estes et al (2010) found that school-aged children with Autism Spectrum Disorder showed differences between actual and predicted levels of academic achievement from overall intellectual ability.

90% showed differences in spelling, reading or basic number skills that were lower than predicted.

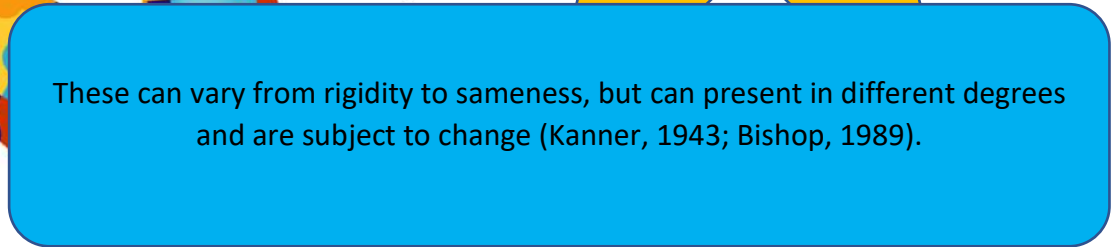
Further future research is needed to fully understand children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and high achievement (Estes, Rivera, Bryan, Cali & Dawson, 2010).



One of the main stressors for families is the behaviour issues shown by children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (Jenkins, Rose & Lovell, 1997 cited in Hastings & Brown, 2002).



Repetitive behaviours can be seen in all children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.



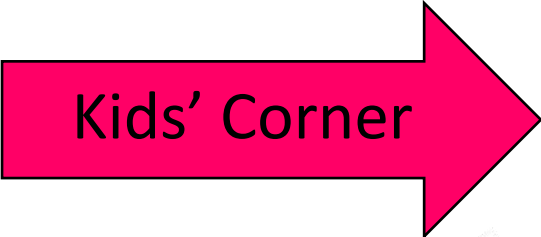
These can vary from rigidity to sameness, but can present in different degrees and are subject to change (Kanner, 1943; Bishop, 1989).

For a child without Autism Spectrum Disorder, repetitive behaviours will present during the stages of development between infancy and 4 years of age (Evans et al, 1997).

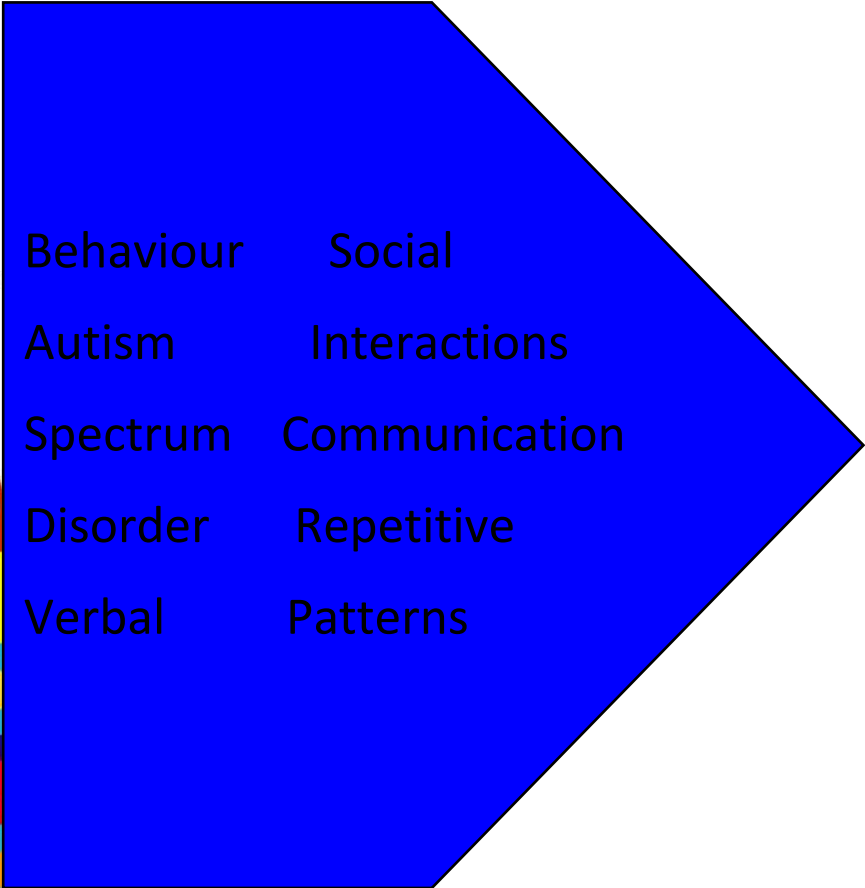
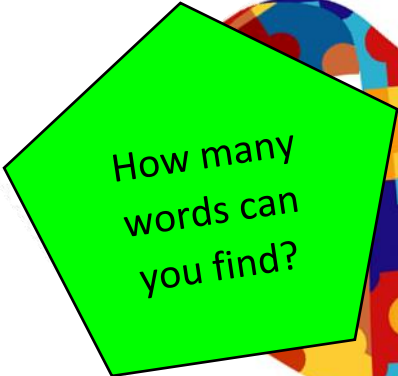


Where as research has shown that for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, the repetitive behaviours last significantly longer (Hermelin & O'Connor, 1963; Prior & Macmillan, 1973; Bodfish et al, 2000).

Kids' Corner



How many
words can
you find?



Behaviour	Social
Autism	Interactions
Spectrum	Communication
Disorder	Repetitive
Verbal	Patterns

a	u	t	i	s	m	f	c	o	m
d	h	j	i	p	l	v	b	r	r
q	a	s	z	e	y	i	n	t	e
g	s	o	r	c	t	h	b	e	h
g	r	f	t	t	w	y	y	u	h
k	v	v	e	r	b	a	l	d	v
i	p	l	j	u	k	b	n	t	r
s	d	f	g	m	n	p	a	t	t

m	u	n	i	c	a	t	i	o	n
e	p	e	t	i	t	i	v	e	w
r	a	c	t	i	o	n	o	l	k
a	v	i	o	u	r	p	a	t	t
e	t	t	h	f	k	i	l	c	a
v	f	h	n	k	d	a	x	z	c
h	d	i	s	o	r	d	e	r	j
e	r	n	s	u	y	t	s	o	p

Helplines

For any more
information on Autism
Spectrum Disorder
please contact one of
the following:

autism.o
rg.uk

scope.org.uk

0808 800
3333

Reference List

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