

autism and sign language

Autism and Sign Language: Unlocking Communication and Connection

autism and sign language are intricately connected in ways that have transformed the communication landscape for many individuals on the autism spectrum. For those with autism, especially non-verbal or minimally verbal children, traditional speech can be challenging or even inaccessible. This is where sign language steps in as a powerful tool, opening doors to expression, understanding, and social interaction. The relationship between autism and sign language is not only about communication but also about empowerment, inclusion, and enhancing quality of life.

Understanding Autism and Its Communication Challenges

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental condition characterized by differences in social communication and repetitive behaviors. While every person with autism is unique, many face difficulties with verbal communication. Some might speak fluently, others might have delayed speech, and some might remain non-verbal throughout their lives. This variation makes tailored communication approaches essential.

Many children with autism experience delays in speech development or struggle with expressive language. For these individuals, traditional verbal communication may be frustrating or insufficient to meet their needs. This is why alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) methods, including sign language, have become invaluable.

Why Sign Language Can Be a Game-Changer

Sign language offers a visual and tactile way to communicate, which can align well with the strengths of some autistic individuals who are visually oriented learners. Unlike spoken words that come and go quickly, signs are visible and can be held or repeated, providing clarity and reducing anxiety.

Moreover, sign language can:

- Reduce frustration by providing a reliable method to express needs and feelings
- Enhance social interaction and connection with family and peers
- Support language development that can transfer to spoken language later on
- Encourage joint attention and engagement, key components in social communication skills

How Sign Language Supports Language Development in Autism

Introducing sign language early can have a profound impact on language acquisition for children with autism. Research and anecdotal evidence suggest that using signs alongside speech can stimulate communication pathways in the brain, encouraging verbal attempts and comprehension.

Bridging the Gap Between Non-Verbal and Verbal Communication

For many autistic children, sign language acts as a bridge. It provides a way to communicate before they have the ability or confidence to speak. This bridge helps reduce behavioral issues that often arise from communication frustration, such as tantrums or withdrawal.

Additionally, combining spoken words with signs—known as simultaneous communication—can reinforce word recognition and boost vocabulary. For example, when a parent signs and says “eat,” the child begins to associate the word with the action and the sign, strengthening understanding.

Enhancing Social and Emotional Skills

Communication is at the heart of social interaction. When a child can express themselves clearly, they are more likely to engage with others and develop friendships. Sign language can also help children with autism better understand emotions and social cues. Using signs for feelings like “happy,” “sad,” or “angry” can help them label and communicate their emotions, fostering emotional intelligence.

Choosing the Right Sign Language Approach

Not all sign language programs are the same, and choosing the right approach depends on individual needs and contexts.

American Sign Language (ASL) vs. Signed Exact English (SEE)

- **American Sign Language (ASL)** is a natural language with its own grammar and structure, widely used in the Deaf community. It is rich and expressive but differs significantly from spoken English.

- **Signed Exact English (SEE)** follows the grammar and syntax of English exactly and uses signs to represent English words directly.

For children with autism, SEE may sometimes be easier to integrate with spoken English, especially in educational settings. However, many families and therapists prefer ASL for its natural linguistic features and cultural richness.

Incorporating Sign Language Into Daily Life

Consistency and repetition are key when teaching sign language to children with autism. Parents, caregivers, and educators can:

- Use signs during everyday routines like mealtime, dressing, or playtime
- Pair signs with spoken words to reinforce learning
- Encourage siblings and peers to use signs to create a supportive communication environment
- Use visual aids and videos to supplement sign language learning

Technology and Resources Supporting Autism and Sign Language

The rise of technology has brought innovative tools that make learning and using sign language more accessible for people with autism.

Apps and Online Platforms

There are numerous apps designed to teach and practice sign language, some specifically tailored for children with autism. These interactive tools often include games, videos, and visual prompts that cater to different learning styles.

Therapeutic Support and Training

Speech therapists and occupational therapists frequently incorporate sign language into their interventions. They tailor strategies to each child's strengths and challenges, making therapy more effective. Training for parents and caregivers is also crucial to ensure the signs are used consistently and meaningfully.

Addressing Common Concerns and Misconceptions

Some parents worry that teaching sign language might delay spoken language development. However, studies have shown that sign language does not hinder speech; in many cases, it encourages earlier communication attempts and reduces frustration.

Another misconception is that sign language is only for deaf individuals. In reality, sign language is a valuable communication tool for many groups, including those with autism, speech delays, or other communication disorders.

Encouraging Inclusion Through Sign Language

Using sign language with children on the autism spectrum also promotes inclusivity. It bridges gaps between different communities and fosters empathy and understanding. Schools that incorporate sign language create more accessible environments where all students can thrive.

Personal Stories Highlighting the Impact of Sign Language

Many families share heartfelt stories about how sign language transformed their child's ability to communicate. For example, a non-verbal child who struggled to express basic needs might start using signs to request food, toys, or comfort, reducing anxiety for both child and parents. These stories underscore the real-life power of sign language as more than just a communication method—it becomes a lifeline.

In addition, adults with autism who learned sign language as children often report feeling more connected to their communities and better able to express complex thoughts and emotions.

Autism and sign language together open up a world of possibilities. They offer a way to break down barriers and build bridges, enriching lives and nurturing connections that might otherwise remain out of reach. Whether through formal programs or informal home use, sign language continues to be a beacon of hope and progress in the autism community.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can sign language benefit children with autism?

Sign language can provide children with autism an alternative way to

communicate, helping to reduce frustration and improve social interactions by offering a clear and consistent method of expression.

Is sign language effective for non-verbal autistic individuals?

Yes, sign language is often effective for non-verbal autistic individuals as it allows them to communicate needs and thoughts without relying on spoken language, fostering better understanding and connection.

At what age should sign language be introduced to a child with autism?

Sign language can be introduced as early as infancy or toddlerhood, especially if delays in speech are observed, to support early communication skills and reduce behavioral challenges.

Does learning sign language interfere with speech development in autistic children?

Research shows that learning sign language does not hinder speech development; instead, it can support language acquisition and may even facilitate spoken language skills over time.

What types of sign language are commonly used with autistic individuals?

American Sign Language (ASL) and Signed Exact English (SEE) are commonly used, along with simplified or tailored sign systems designed specifically for individuals with autism.

How can parents and caregivers learn sign language to support an autistic child?

Parents and caregivers can learn sign language through community classes, online courses, instructional videos, and working with speech-language pathologists specializing in augmentative communication.

Can sign language help reduce behavioral issues in children with autism?

Yes, sign language can reduce behavioral issues by providing children with autism a reliable way to communicate their needs and feelings, thereby decreasing frustration and tantrums.

Are there any challenges in teaching sign language to autistic individuals?

Challenges may include difficulty with motor skills, attention, or sensory sensitivities, but with consistent practice and individualized approaches, many autistic individuals successfully learn sign language.

How does sign language support social interaction for people with autism?

Sign language facilitates social interaction by enabling clearer communication, allowing autistic individuals to initiate and respond in conversations and engage more comfortably with others.

Is sign language therapy covered by insurance for individuals with autism?

Coverage varies by insurance provider and region, but many plans do cover speech and communication therapies, including sign language, especially when prescribed by a healthcare professional.

Additional Resources

Autism and Sign Language: Exploring Communication Pathways for Nonverbal Individuals

autism and sign language have become increasingly intertwined topics within educational, therapeutic, and developmental fields. As understanding of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) evolves, so too does the recognition of diverse communication needs among individuals on the spectrum. Sign language, as a visual-gestural mode of communication, offers a compelling alternative or complement to spoken language, particularly for nonverbal or minimally verbal autistic individuals. This article delves into the role of sign language in autism, examining its benefits, challenges, and the broader implications for fostering communication and social connection.

Understanding Autism and Communication Challenges

Autism spectrum disorder is characterized by a wide range of developmental differences, including social interaction difficulties, repetitive behaviors, and communication challenges. Communication impairments, especially in verbal expression, are common among autistic individuals. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 25-30% of children with autism remain minimally verbal beyond early childhood. For these

individuals, traditional speech therapy alone may not suffice to bridge the communication gap, prompting exploration of alternative communication methods.

Communication is foundational to human interaction, learning, and emotional expression. When spoken language is limited or absent, individuals with autism may experience frustration, behavioral challenges, and social isolation. This context has driven interest in augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) strategies, of which sign language is a prominent example.

The Role of Sign Language in Autism

Sign language encompasses a variety of visual-manual languages, including American Sign Language (ASL), British Sign Language (BSL), and other country-specific systems. Unlike speech, sign language relies on hand shapes, movements, facial expressions, and body posture to convey meaning. For autistic individuals, particularly those who are nonverbal, sign language can serve as a functional communication tool that aligns with their often heightened visual processing strengths.

Benefits of Sign Language for Autistic Individuals

The adoption of sign language in autism interventions has shown several potential benefits:

- **Enhanced Communication:** Sign language offers a direct means for expression, reducing reliance on verbal speech and helping to alleviate communication frustration.
- **Early Language Development:** Research suggests that introducing sign language can accelerate language acquisition in preverbal children, encouraging cognitive and social development.
- **Reduced Behavioral Issues:** Improved ability to express needs and emotions can decrease the occurrence of challenging behaviors linked to communication barriers.
- **Increased Social Interaction:** Using sign language can facilitate social engagement with family members, peers, and educators who are proficient or willing to learn signs.
- **Supports Multimodal Learning:** Many autistic individuals benefit from multisensory input; sign language provides visual and kinesthetic stimuli that complement auditory learning.

Challenges and Considerations

While sign language presents notable advantages, it is important to consider potential limitations and challenges:

- **Sign Language Proficiency:** Effective use requires that communication partners—parents, teachers, therapists—are fluent or at least competent in sign language, which may not always be feasible.
- **Generalization of Skills:** Some autistic individuals may struggle to generalize sign language use beyond structured or familiar settings.
- **Varied Individual Responses:** Autism is heterogeneous, and not all individuals respond favorably to sign language; some may prefer alternative AAC methods such as picture exchange systems or speech-generating devices.
- **Cultural and Linguistic Diversity:** Sign language differs across regions and cultures; selecting an appropriate system requires consideration of the individual's environment.

Comparative Perspectives: Sign Language vs. Other AAC Methods

In the realm of AAC, several options exist beyond sign language, including picture exchange communication systems (PECS), communication boards, and high-tech speech-generating devices. Each modality has distinct features suited to varying needs.

- **Sign Language:** Provides a natural language structure with grammar and syntax, facilitates direct interaction, and engages visual-spatial skills. However, it demands manual dexterity and partner fluency.
- **PECS:** Uses picture symbols to represent words or concepts, making it accessible even to those with limited motor skills. It is often easier for communication partners to learn but may lack the linguistic richness of sign language.
- **Speech-Generating Devices:** Offer customizable vocabularies and voice output, enhancing independence but potentially requiring costly technology and training.

Studies indicate that multimodal AAC approaches—combining sign language with

other methods—can maximize communicative effectiveness. For example, pairing sign language with PECS or speech devices allows flexibility tailored to individual preferences and contexts.

Evidence-Based Research and Outcomes

Numerous studies have examined the impact of sign language interventions for children with autism. A 2016 study published in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders* found that early introduction of sign language correlated with increased vocalizations and improved social responsiveness. Another meta-analysis highlighted that sign language use could reduce tantrums and aggression by providing a reliable means to express needs.

Nonetheless, research also emphasizes the necessity of individualized assessment. Not every autistic child benefits equally, underscoring the importance of professional guidance from speech-language pathologists and behavioral therapists experienced in autism and AAC strategies.

Practical Implementation and Training

For families and professionals considering sign language as a communication tool, certain practical factors should be addressed:

- **Early Exposure:** Introducing sign language early in development facilitates natural learning and integration.
- **Consistent Use Across Environments:** Consistency at home, school, and therapy settings reinforces skill acquisition and generalization.
- **Training for Caregivers and Educators:** Providing training and resources ensures that communication partners can effectively support sign language use.
- **Tailoring to Individual Needs:** Regular assessment helps adapt communication goals and techniques based on progress and preferences.

Many organizations now offer specialized programs to teach sign language to children with autism and train families. Additionally, digital tools and apps have emerged as supplementary resources, making sign language more accessible.

The Broader Impact on Social Inclusion

Beyond individual communication gains, sign language use among autistic individuals can influence broader social dynamics. It challenges prevailing assumptions about communication norms and promotes inclusivity. When schools and communities embrace sign language, they foster environments where diverse modes of expression are valued, helping to reduce stigma associated with autism and communication differences.

Moreover, sign language offers a bridge for autistic individuals to connect with Deaf communities, which can open additional cultural and social avenues. This intersectionality enriches the understanding of neurodiversity and linguistic diversity alike.

The landscape of autism and sign language continues to evolve as research deepens and societal awareness grows. While not a universal solution, sign language represents a vital option in the spectrum of communication strategies. Its integration into autism support frameworks underscores a commitment to honoring the unique communicative profiles of individuals and empowering them to express themselves fully.

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autism and sign language: *Understanding Autism and Autistic Functioning* Laura Villa, Luca Casartelli, 2024-09-09 This concise volume offers an accessible overview of recent clinical and research perspectives addressing autism and autistic functioning. By providing an innovative lens, the book benefits from two different angles: a concrete and pragmatic view of an expert clinician with three decades of practice in diagnosis and treatment of autism, and a more “speculative” and “long-term” view of a researcher who works on neural and computational architecture of (a)typical neurocognitive functioning. Trying to understand autism beyond its behavioral symptoms, the book spans from clinical descriptions (e.g., communicating diagnosis, clinical intervention, and prognosis) to recent neuroscientific evidence supporting a potential perspective-shift. The fil rouge of this volume can be summarized in three fundamental aspects that should orient any clinical practice in the context of autism (e.g., diagnosis, treatment, monitoring, etc.): we need an age-dependent,

context-dependent, and functioning-dependent approach. Understanding Autism and Autistic Functioning is crucial reading for parents and caregivers, and professionals in health, education, and social care.

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autism and sign language: Autism: The Movement Perspective Elizabeth B Torres, Anne M Donnellan, 2015-05-19 Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) is portrayed as cognitive and social disorders. Undoubtedly, impairments in communication and restricted-repetitive behaviors that now define the disorders have a profound impact on social interactions. But can we go beyond the descriptive, observational nature of this definition and objectively measure that amalgamate of motions and sensations that we call behavior? In this Research Topic we bring movement and its sensation to the forefront of autism research, diagnosis, and treatment. We gather researchers across disciplines with the unifying goal of recognizing movement and sensory disturbances as core symptoms of the disorder. We also hear confirmation from the perspective of autism self-advocates and parents. Those important sources of evidence along with the research presented in this topic demonstrate without a doubt that profound movement and sensory differences do exist in ASD and that they are quantifiable. The work presented in this Research Topic shows us that quantifiable differences in movements have a better chance than current observational techniques to help us uncover subtle solutions that the nervous system with autism has already spontaneously self-discovered and utilized in daily living. Where the naked eye would miss the unique subtleties that help each individual cope, instrumentation and fine kinematic analyses of motions help us uncover inherent capacities and predispositions of the person with autism. The work presented in this topic helps us better articulate through the voices of parents and self-advocates those sensory motor differences that current inventories could not possibly uncover. These differences are seldom perceived as they take place at timescales and frequencies that fall largely beneath our conscious awareness. To the person in the spectrum living with this disorder and to the caregiver creating accommodations to help the affected loved one, these subtleties are very familiar though. Indeed they are often used in clever ways to facilitate daily routines. We have waited much too long in science to listen to the very people that we are trying to define, understand and help. Being autism a social problem by definition, it is remarkable that not a single diagnosis inventory measures the dyadic social interaction that takes place between the examiner and the examinees. Indeed we have conceived the autistic person within a social context where we are incapable -by definition- of accepting those differences. The burden is rather placed on the affected person to whom much too often we refer to in the third person as "non-verbal, without intentionality, without empathy or emotions, without a theory of mind", among other purely psychological guesses. It is then too easy and shockingly allowed to "reshape" that person, to mold that person to better conform to our social expectations and to extinguish "behaviors" that are socially unacceptable, even through the use of aversive punishing reinforcement techniques if need be. And yet none of those techniques have had a single shred of objective scientific evidence of their effectiveness. We have not objectively measured once, nor have we physiologically characterized once any of those perceived features that we so often use to observationally define what we may think the autistic phenotype may be. We have not properly quantified, beyond paper-and-pencil methods, the effectiveness of interventions in autism. Let us not forget when we do our science, that we are all part of the broad human spectrum.

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Bogdashina, 2005 Providing a theoretical foundation for understanding communication and language impairments specific to autism, Olga Bogdashina explores the effects of different perceptual and cognitive styles on the communication and language development of autistic children. She stresses the importance of identifying each autistic individual's nonverbal language - which can be visual, tactile, kinaesthetic, auditory, olfactory or gustatory - with a view to establish a shared means of verbal communication. She offers an explanation of why certain approaches, for example PECS, might work with some autistic children but not others. Offering real insights, the 'What They Say' sections enable the reader to see through the eyes of autistic individuals and to understand their language differences first hand. 'What We Can Do to Help' sections throughout the book give practical recommendations on what to do in order to help autistic individuals use their natural mechanisms to learn and develop social and communicative skills. The final chapters are devoted to assessment and intervention issues with practical recommendations for selecting appropriate methods and techniques to enhance communication, based on the specific mode of communication a person uses.

autism and sign language: Educating Young Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders Erin E. Barton, Beth Harn, 2012-05-22 Everything you need to know to educate students with autism Every 20 minutes, another child is diagnosed with autism. Are you ready to meet this growing educational challenge? This authoritative guide for practitioners--early interventionists, teachers, school counselors and psychologists--provides practical strategies for addressing the unique needs of children on the autism spectrum and their families. Drawing on current research and evidence-based practice, the authors discuss the causes of autism and present methods for educating children and assisting their families in supporting the educational process. Each chapter focuses on a critical issue and offers solutions, including: Improving communication, social, generalization and self-management skills Designing instruction, intervention, and assessment Including families in developing goals and interventions Using students' special interests to deliver instruction Understanding and preventing challenging behavior Evaluating practices to promote successful outcomes for students, families and practitioners Included are forms, charts, and activities to help practitioners and families fulfill learning programs. Educating Young Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders will give you insight and tools to make a difference in the learning and lives of students with autism spectrum disorders.

autism and sign language: *The Science and Fiction of Autism* Laura Ellen Schreibman, 2009-06-30 Autism is a complex and incurable constellation of bizarre behaviors, impaired cognition, limited language, and most distressingly, a lack of responsiveness to other people, and it has been the center of impassioned debates for decades. What is it? What causes it? How can it be treated? In *The Science and Fiction of Autism*, one of the country's leading experts in behavioral treatments approaches autism through the context of its controversies, showing where extraordinary and unfounded claims have falsely raised hopes, stirred fears, and ruined lives. Arguing that autism is an entirely biological disorder, however complex its neurological origins, Laura Schreibman lays waste to the beliefs that it is caused by refrigerator mothers or the MMR vaccine, as well as to the simplistic claims that it can be cured by a variety of unsubstantiated treatments. Drawing from her own long clinical experience with autistic children and their parents, Schreibman arms her readers--students, educators, psychologists, and parents alike--with information and arguments to deal with the onslaught of good, bad, deficient, and irrelevant ideas about autism.

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in each conference topic, we are publishing a series, Current Issues in Autism, based on these conferences. These books are not, however, simply the published proceedings of the conference papers. Instead, some chapters are expanded conference presentations, whereas others come from national and international experts whose work is beyond the scope of the conference, but essential in our attempt at comprehensive coverage of the conference theme. These volumes are intended to provide the most current knowledge and professional practice available to us at the time.

autism and sign language: Autism Decoded May Ng, 2024-11-22 Embark on a transformative journey through the intricacies of autism and neurodiversity with multi-award-winning paediatrician Professor May Ng. In 'Autism Decoded,' she demystifies autism with clarity and empathy, offering a jargon-free, comprehensive account for parents, carers, educators, healthcare professionals, and anyone seeking a deeper understanding of neurodiversity. Drawing from her personal experience documented in 'A Journey with Brendan,' Professor Ng translates scientific nuances into accessible language, providing a roadmap to navigate the autistic spectrum. 'Autism Decoded' equips readers with knowledge, fostering empathy and appreciation for the diverse strengths within the neurodiverse community. The book offers practical insights to enhance the lives of autistic individuals, empowering readers to embrace neurodiversity and fostering a world of understanding and acceptance.

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and Tell: Self Advocacy and Disclosure For People on the Autism Spectrum (1-931282-58-7). Linda G. Rastelli (Middletown, NJ) is a veteran journalist who specializes in health and business. Temple Grandin, PhD (Fort Collins, CO) is the author of the bestselling Thinking in Pictures (0-679-77289-8) and Emergence: Labeled Autistic (0-446-67182-7).

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autism and sign language: **Helping Children with Autism Learn** Bryna Siegel, 2007-04-09 Bryna Siegel gives parents of autistic children what they need most: hope. Her first book, *The World of the Autistic Child*, became an instant classic, illuminating the inaccessible minds of afflicted children. Now she offers an equally insightful, thoroughly practical guide to treating the learning disabilities associated with this heartbreaking disorder. The trouble with treating autism, Siegel writes, is that it is a spectrum disorder--a combination of a number of symptoms and causes. To one extent or another, it robs the child of social bonds, language, and intimacy--but the extent varies dramatically in each case. The key is to understand each case of autism as a discrete set of learning disabilities, each of which must be treated individually. Siegel explains how to take an inventory of a child's particular disabilities, breaks down the various kinds unique to autism, discusses our current knowledge about each, and reviews the existing strategies for treating them. There is no simple cure for this multifarious disorder, she writes; instead, an individual program, with a unique array of specific treatments, must be constructed for each child. She gives practical guidance for fashioning such a program, empowering parents to take the lead in their child's treatment. At the same time, she cautions against the proliferating, but questionable, treatments hawked to afflicted families. She knows the panic to do something, anything, to help an autistic child, and she offers parents reassurance and support as well as sensible advice, combining knowledge from experience, theory and research. For parents, autism in a child is heartbreaking. But it need not be overwhelming. Bryna Siegel offers a new understanding, and a practical, thoughtful approach that will give parents new hope.

autism and sign language: Simplified Signs: A Manual Sign-Communication System for Special Populations, Volume 1. John D. Bonvillian, Nicole Kissane Lee, Tracy T. Dooley, Filip T. Loncke, 2020-07-30 Simplified Signs presents a system of manual sign communication intended for special populations who have had limited success mastering spoken or full sign languages. It is the culmination of over twenty years of research and development by the authors. The Simplified Sign System has been developed and tested for ease of sign comprehension, memorization, and formation by limiting the complexity of the motor skills required to form each sign, and by ensuring that each sign visually resembles the meaning it conveys. Volume 1 outlines the research underpinning and informing the project, and places the Simplified Sign System in a wider context of sign usage, historically and by different populations. Volume 2 presents the lexicon of signs, totalling

approximately 1000 signs, each with a clear illustration and a written description of how the sign is formed, as well as a memory aid that connects the sign visually to the meaning that it conveys. While the Simplified Sign System originally was developed to meet the needs of persons with intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, autism, or aphasia, it may also assist the communication needs of a wider audience – such as healthcare professionals, aid workers, military personnel, travellers or parents, and children who have not yet mastered spoken language. The system also has been shown to enhance learning for individuals studying a foreign language. Lucid and comprehensive, this work constitutes a valuable resource that will enhance the communicative interactions of many different people, and will be of great interest to researchers and educators alike.

autism and sign language: Workshop on the Neurobiological Basis of Autism, February 26 and 27, 1976, 1979

autism and sign language: Educating Children with Autism National Research Council, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, Committee on Educational Interventions for Children with Autism, 2001-11-11 Autism is a word most of us are familiar with. But do we really know what it means? Children with autism are challenged by the most essential human behaviors. They have difficulty interacting with other people—often failing to see people as people rather than simply objects in their environment. They cannot easily communicate ideas and feelings, have great trouble imagining what others think or feel, and in some cases spend their lives speechless. They frequently find it hard to make friends or even bond with family members. Their behavior can seem bizarre. Education is the primary form of treatment for this mysterious condition. This means that we place important responsibilities on schools, teachers and children's parents, as well as the other professionals who work with children with autism. With the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975, we accepted responsibility for educating children who face special challenges like autism. While we have since amassed a substantial body of research, researchers have not adequately communicated with one another, and their findings have not been integrated into a proven curriculum. Educating Children with Autism outlines an interdisciplinary approach to education for children with autism. The committee explores what makes education effective for the child with autism and identifies specific characteristics of programs that work. Recommendations are offered for choosing educational content and strategies, introducing interaction with other children, and other key areas. This book examines some fundamental issues, including: How children's specific diagnoses should affect educational assessment and planning How we can support the families of children with autism Features of effective instructional and comprehensive programs and strategies How we can better prepare teachers, school staffs, professionals, and parents to educate children with autism What policies at the federal, state, and local levels will best ensure appropriate education, examining strategies and resources needed to address the rights of children with autism to appropriate education. Children with autism present educators with one of their most difficult challenges. Through a comprehensive examination of the scientific knowledge underlying educational practices, programs, and strategies, Educating Children with Autism presents valuable information for parents, administrators, advocates, researchers, and policy makers.

autism and sign language: *Autism* Christopher D. Webster, M. Mary Konstantareas, Joel Oxman, 2013-10-22 *Autism: New Directions in Research and Education* presents the results of research on autism and the experiences of the families of autistic children, as well as the trials and tribulations of a psychologist working with an autistic child. The successes and failures of educational programs are discussed, followed by a detailed and helpful account on the value and limitations of a method of teaching language through simultaneous use of signs and speech. This monograph consists of 25 chapters and opens with an overview of the various behaviors likely to be exhibited by autistic persons, along with the theory of autism. It then considers a person's presentation about stuttering in relation to early infantile autism. An important point emphasized throughout this work is that an autistic child can be helped only if a serious attempt is made to see the world from his point of view, so that the adaptive function of much of his peculiar behavior can

be understood in the context of his handicaps. The following chapters explore individual differences in the acquisition of sign language by severely communicatively-impaired children; the autistic child's disturbances of perception, speech, and language; and the nature and relevance of simultaneous communication with autistic children. This book should prove useful to clinicians, researchers, parents, teachers, and students.

autism and sign language: The Study of Signed Languages William C. Stokoe, David F. Armstrong, Michael A. Karchmer, 2002 This text contains papers that were presented at an October 1999 conference at Gallaudet University in honor of the 80th birthday of William C. Stokoe, one of the most influential language scholars of the 20th century. Twenty-two international specialists contribute 12 chapters on the historical con

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