



## AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER – Recognising the Signs



Red flag items are things to watch for. Lack or loss of these skills warrants further investigation with your Maternal Health Nurse or GP.

### QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS/THINGS TO OBSERVE

 <p><b>12 months</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Do they point to things?</li> <li>▶ Have they learnt basic gestures (e.g., waving, shaking head yes/no)?</li> <li>▶ Do they make eye contact?</li> <li>▶ Do they babble (e.g., mama/dada)?</li> <li>▶ Can they be comforted by parent or close caregiver?</li> <li>▶ Do they crawl?</li> <li>▶ Are they interested in new objects?</li> <li>▶ Do they say single words?</li> <li>▶ Do they play peek-a-boo?</li> <li>▶ Do they reciprocate facial expressions?</li> </ul>
 <p><b>18 months</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Do they point to indicate things to other people?</li> <li>▶ Do they have a vocabulary of at least six words?</li> <li>▶ Do they imitate or copy others?</li> <li>▶ Do they notice or react when a caregiver departs or returns?</li> <li>▶ Do they show preference for familiar people?</li> <li>▶ Do they seem to like cuddles?</li> <li>▶ Do they respond to his/her name?</li> <li>▶ Are they gaining new words?</li> <li>▶ Do they make eye contact?</li> <li>▶ Are they walking?</li> <li>▶ Object permanence</li> </ul>
 <p><b>2 years</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Do they know any meaningful two-word phrases (not including imitation or repetition)?</li> <li>▶ Do they know what familiar things are used for (e.g., cup, spoon, phone)?</li> <li>▶ Do they imitate actions or words?</li> <li>▶ Can they follow simple instructions?</li> <li>▶ Do they walk steadily?</li> <li>▶ Do they make eye contact?</li> </ul>
 <p><b>3 years</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Do they have unclear speech?</li> <li>▶ Do they dribble frequently?</li> <li>▶ Do they use sentences?</li> <li>▶ Can they follow simple instructions?</li> <li>▶ Can they work simple toys (e.g., puzzles, peg boards, turning knobs)?</li> <li>▶ Do they show little interest in new toys?</li> <li>▶ Do they fall down often and/or have trouble on stairs?</li> <li>▶ Do they want to play with other children?</li> <li>▶ Do they engage in pretend play?</li> <li>▶ Do they make eye contact?</li> <li>▶ Is the child developing skills at an irregular pace, e.g. knows lots of facts about trains but cannot remember people's names?</li> </ul>
<p><b>5 years</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Do they follow use/social norms, e.g. greetings?</li> <li>▶ Are they making friends?</li> <li>▶ Can they sustain a short back and forth conversation?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Answer questions?</li> <li>▶ Ask questions?</li> <li>▶ Respond to a statement?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Do they only talk about specific topics?</li> <li>▶ Do they share what happened at kinder/school?</li> <li>▶ Do they recognise and/or change their behaviour based on a person's tone of voice?</li> <li>▶ Do their facial expressions, body language and tone of voice match what they are saying/doing?</li> <li>▶ Do they have difficulty concentrating?</li> </ul>
<p><b>8 years</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Do they react appropriately to a joke?</li> <li>▶ Do they insist on following the rules of games exactly?</li> <li>▶ Do they use overly formal language?</li> <li>▶ Do they understand sarcasm?</li> <li>▶ Do they recognise and/or change their behaviour based on a person's body language?</li> <li>▶ Do they have friends?</li> </ul>