

DSM-5 Autism Criteria

Keep in mind:

- Criteria to be met currently OR by history.
- For kids, it's more about how they interact with peers than with adults.

Social and Communication

(Need all three)

Criterion	What people think of:	But it really means/includes problems with:	But for girls/women:
1. Problems reciprocating social or emotional interactions.	Complete lack of reciprocity and empathy. Disengaged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Responding to name. – Greeting, responding to greetings. – Initiating conversation. – Engaging in a variety of topics. – Taking turns (not monologuing, interrupting). – Sharing info, feelings, and objects. – Responding to praise. – Picking up social breadcrumbs. – Staying on topic. – Having a social filter. – Understanding others' intentions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Better functional social behavior than boys. – They camouflage more than boys well into adulthood. – They can be more engaged and chattier. – They mediate social behavior through their prefrontal lobe. – You have to get at their inner experience.
2. Problems developing or maintaining relationships.	Doesn't have friends. Doesn't want friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reciprocal play. – Understanding relationships – Making <i>and</i> keeping friends – Friendships at developmental level (i.e., best friend, groups, flirting, etc.) – Social motivation and social energy. – Social flexibility. – Conflict management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Differences in play are much subtler. – They engage in more pretend play. – Might be fine until middle school. – They <i>look like</i> they are blending in on the playground. – More likely to play with younger kids than to be loners. – Activation of social brain is like that of a typical boy.
3. Nonverbal communication problems.	No eye contact. Flat affect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Using eye contact to manage interactions. – Body posture. – Personal space. – Receptive nonverbals. – Expressive nonverbals. – Volume, intonation, prosody etc. – Flat <i>or</i> unusual affect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – They tend to have better basic nonverbals than boys with ASD (e.g., better eye contact, body language, voice intonation, etc., esp. with adults). – Ask for their <i>experience</i> of eye contact.

Repetitive/Restricted

(Need two of four)

Criterion	What people think of:	But it really means/includes:	And for girls:
1. Repetitive or unusual speech, movements, or use of objects.	Flapping or echolalia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wide variety of stereotypies (not just flapping). - Lining up or organizing toys. - Idiosyncratic phrases. - Scripted language. - Pronoun reversal. - Unusual noises or humming. - Toe walking. - Watching the same movie/read the same book. - Repetitive picking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is well established that they have fewer and subtler repetitive behaviors. - Pacing, walking the perimeter. - Twirling. - Reading the same book over and over.
2. Inflexibility.	Routines or rituals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulty with transitions. - Difficulty with change. - Obsessive mind, Perfectionism. - Black and white thinking. - Overly strong moral compass. - Rigid rule following. - On/Off switch; tendency to shut down. - Uneven ability to understand humor, literal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less likely to have behavioral problems due to rigidity. - More likely to have perfectionism, rigid rule following, anxiety related to change.
3. Interests.	Overtly odd interests (e.g., airport codes).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interests that are atypical OR intense. - Attachment to certain objects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is well established that they have fewer and less obvious restricted interests. - Tend toward typical interests but at an intense level. - Animals, reading, social justice, pop stars, anime, K-pop, fan fiction, makeup, etc. - Women – intense interests can be one of their kids.
4. Sensory seeking or sensitivities.	Sensory seeking (e.g., looking at fans).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensory sensitivities, even if only when young. - Smell, sound, feel, taste, sight. - Unusually high tolerance to pain. - May explain hygiene problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No clear differences in females but they may internalize so it's very important to ask.

