

# Autism



Autism is a complex developmental disability that affects the functioning of the brain. It is a spectrum disorder, which means there is a wide range of function from very low functioning to very high, and everywhere in between. There are five spectrum disorders under the umbrella of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), although the most commonly discussed are Autistic Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS), and Asperger's Disorder.

Autism Spectrum Disorders impact development in three specific areas. These areas are:

- ♥ Social interactions
- ♥ Verbal and non-verbal communication
- ♥ Restricted and/or repetitive behaviors and play

Children with an ASD also have a spectrum of abilities and challenges. No two children are alike, and each child on the spectrum needs services that are reflective of their individual abilities, challenges, and desires.

Parents of children with Autism can often feel confused, overwhelmed, and alone, especially during the first stages of diagnosis. At Family TIES of Massachusetts, we are here to support you in this journey by showing you that you are not alone and by providing you with supportive and helpful resources. Our staff is made up of parents of children with special needs, too, and can relate to your concerns. Our staff will listen, brainstorm, and help you discover opportunities and resources for your child and family. With the proper support and resources, your family and child with Autism will flourish!

For more information, contact your **Family TIES** Regional **Coordinator**  
at **1-800-905-8437** or **[www.massfamilyties.org](http://www.massfamilyties.org)**