



**Social interaction**

- Lack of attention or unresponsive to people, or tendency to ‘ignore’ adults or peers in the environment
- More interested in objects than people
- Lack of eye-contact, fleeting or unusual eye contact, or only eye contact as an initiator of communication rather than as a responder to other’s communication attempts
- Problems with establishing and maintaining joint attention routines, i.e. may have problems joining other people’s interests, or paying attention to something not of his choosing
- Has difficulty looking at others and imitating them, i.e. following actions in a song
- May not greet people unless prompted
- May be very anxious with new people or places, with separation anxiety
- Does not share in other’s enjoyment e.g. when friends are happy. May not acknowledge this or want to be a part of it
- Unusual social behaviours that are not socially appropriate, such as: difficulty sitting with the group; standing up and walking away without permission; interrupting others in conversation; coming too close in personal space; being overly friendly to strangers
- May have difficulty asking for Help or asking for assistance, asking for a break, or saying “I don’t know”
- May be limited to functioning in certain social contexts i.e. better with adults than with peers, or better in 1:1 rather than in groups
- May break social rules through lack of understanding i.e. undressing in public, burping without saying ‘excuse me’
- May not understand the facial expressions of others i.e. happy, sad, fearful
- Difficulty making friends or being interested in relationships
- Lack of awareness of the thoughts and feelings of others, such as not showing empathy or understanding when a peer is upset
- Problems looking at other friends, joining–in play or sharing / turn taking
- May show strong person preference, or being overly fearful of strangers
- Does not understand what people will do, or why they do these things

**Social Communication**

- May not respond to name being called
- Difficulty following routine instructions such as ‘come’, ‘go’, ‘sit’
- Uses unconventional communication to express needs and wants i.e. temper tantrum, crying, hand holding
- Limited intentional communication, where initiating communication with others may be infrequent
- May not call for attention or call people by name
- Limitations or absence of joint attention pre-verbal communication such as Pointing, Showing, Giving
- Limited understanding and use of gestures or facial expression
- Difficulties using head or hand gestures to indicate ‘Yes’ / ‘No’

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**Social Communication cont...**

- Unusual tone of voice, which may be flat / monotone, high pitched, or sing-song in nature
- May have Echolalia, repeating single words, phrases or jingles from television, or sometimes using a whole sentence said by somebody else in an odd way (gestalt). E.g. “Yien Yien do you want a snack”...when asking his mother for a snack
- Limited vocabulary i.e. has difficulty naming items or talking about things that are known rather than seen e.g. “tell me what you did in the holidays?”
- Pronoun reversal or confusion i.e. ‘I’ for ‘You’, ‘He’ for ‘She’
- Limited grammar forms i.e. problems with past and future tense, plurals, understanding punctuation, speaking in sentences in a sequenced way that makes sense
- May use communication in a restricted way, usually to get what s/he wants i.e. Requesting, Protesting, but limited in Commenting, Asking permission, or Asking questions
- Difficulties with responding to questions – basic questions: Who, What, Where, or abstract questions: Why, When, How
- Hitting-out at others when stressed
- Self-injury such as biting or hitting head when anxious or angry
- Tantrum behaviour when anxious, scared, or angry

**Flexibility & Imagination**

- Insists on following daily routines without interruptions or changes
- May have an unusual attachment to a particular object i.e. holds a red block in each hand
- Distress with unexpected changes
- Unusual toileting routines; difficulty in toilet training; persistent diaper use
- Preoccupations or obsessions with a particular object, person, or activity e.g. looking at fans, touching electrical socket switches, talking about areas of interest
- Difficulty with eating routines such as eating with the rest of the family, eating outside of home, or eating at school
- Insists on doing things one way, appearing to be unaware of the alternatives e.g. insistence on following the same route to school
- May have limited interests or motivations i.e. does not seem to play with a variety of toys or activities like his/her peers

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**Cognitive learning style**

Play & Imagination

- May use toys in an unusual manner, such as mouthing or tapping
- Likes examine toys in an unusual way i.e. looks at the wheels on a car
- May be disinterested in toys, does not seek out toys or explore the environment
- May line up toys or be repetitive in play routines
- May do simple pretend play such as feed the dolly, but play routines are limited
- May be overly interest in one type of leisure pursuit i.e. computers, reading about the Titanic, Drawing - to the exclusion of other types of leisure options
- May have simple imaginary play, such as placing the bear in an imaginary bed, but does not have a variety of ideas or scripts in play
- May engage in fantasy play such as superman, but plays pretty much the same way each time

Thinking

- May have a tendency to focus on details (torch-like focus) e.g. looking at car license plate numbers, Petrol station logos, looking at the fan in the classroom rather than paying attention to the teacher
- May be highly distractible, or shut down when having to process incoming information, either in 1:1 or in a group context
- If concentrating on one thing, is unable to listen at the same time (disengagement – engagement problems)
- Tendency toward concrete rather than abstract thinking i.e. difficulties matching symbols to objects
- Problems with organization and sequencing i.e. may have problems getting started or finishing tasks independently
- May have difficulty with generalizing skills i.e. problems doing the same task in school that can be done at home
- Prompt Dependent i.e. waiting for prompts by an adult before doing a familiar task
- Problems understanding time concepts such as ‘later’, ‘after’, ‘before’
- Struggles to be flexible in problem-solving i.e. difficulties thinking differently if a problem arises.

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**Sensory**

- Overly selective on food types or textures i.e. avoids certain foods, does not like different food types to be mixed
- Under sensitive to food and eating i.e. poor oral skills, drooling, difficulties with chewing
- Overly sensitive to certain sounds such as the hair dryer or airplanes
- Under sensitive to certain sounds i.e. does not respond to loud sounds such as a peer crying; or ignores people when they talk
- Overly sensitive to certain tactile experiences i.e. does not like to touch glue or sticky substances; does not like to be hugged
- Under sensitive to certain tactile experiences i.e. seeks out textures such as messy paint, plays with own saliva
- Overly sensitive to movement i.e. does not like to be on uneven surfaces, swings or climb
- Under sensitive to movement experiences i.e. will seek-out jumping, spinning, ‘crashing’ experiences, at times being unsafe such as climbing on window grills
- Overly sensitive to visual stimulation i.e. avoids certain rooms with lights, or people who wear visually ‘busy’ and patterned clothing
- Under sensitive to visual input i.e. will place items in front of the eyes; will spin or flick items; look at items with the corner of the eye
- May be over or under sensitive to pain, or have difficulty reporting pain
- May be clumsy or lack motor coordination
- Stereotyped behaviours such as hand flapping or rocking

**Medical**

- Epilepsy
- Digestive issues
- Co-morbidity e.g. Landau Kleffner, ADHD, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Eczema
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Hyperlexia / Dyslexia

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**Special interests**

Special talents in:

- Computers
- Drawing
- Music
- Calendar
- Alphabets
- Calculation
- Timetables
- Mechanical construction
- Rote memory for facts on a particular subject such as Trains, the Titanic, Fish

**Likes**

- Obsessions
- Interests
- Routines
- People
- Places
- Particular objects or toys

**Dislikes**

- Fears
- Phobias
- Anxieties related to people, places, activities

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