



The Mini Page

Next Week:
Our states:
New Jersey

Issue 11, 2023

Founded by Betty Debnam



Mini Fact:

Autism is the fastest-growing developmental disorder.

Try to imagine what it would be like if you couldn't talk. How would you tell a teacher or your parents that you needed to use the bathroom? What if your stomach was upset, or you had a headache?

This is what many kids who have **autism** (AH-tiz-um) struggle with every day. Even kids with autism who can talk may have a difficult time saying what they're thinking.

Today, 1 out of every 44 children in the United States is diagnosed as autistic. Boys are much more likely to have autism than girls. This week, The Mini Page recognizes Autism Awareness Month, coming up in April, and learns more about kids living with the disorder.

What is autism?

Autism is a disability in the brain that affects how certain skills develop. For instance, people with autism may have trouble communicating with other people. They may not understand the way others interact with each other, such as with body language or jokes.

People with autism can be overly sensitive to certain **stimuli** (STIM-yoo-lie), such as noises or touch.

Autistic kids can have physical problems, too, such as seizures and allergies. They may have trouble digesting food or sleeping. Scientists and doctors are not sure what causes the disorder, but experts are sure that it is not caused by vaccinations.

The disorder affects everyone differently. Some people with autism can speak very well; others don't speak at all. Some can focus on one or two favorite subjects but can't concentrate on anything else.

Researchers are working to discover not only the cause, but also better ways to treat autism and help people live with it.

At school

Autistic kids can learn, but they may need to be taught in different ways. For example, a teacher or therapist may break a lesson down into small steps and start with pictures instead of words.

Students with autism might get help from therapists with speech or **gross motor skills** such as balance, jumping and running. Others need help understanding their sensitivity to light or noise, or learning to use a pencil.

Newer technologies, such as tablets, help to make autistic kids' lives more manageable.



Kids with autism visit a fire station and meet a firefighter.



photo by Kate Ter Haar

Be a good friend

"Children with autism are just like every other kid," an expert told us. "They want to have friends and have fun."

For many autistic people, the biggest struggle is with social skills — getting along with other people. Autistic kids may not look you in the eye. They might need extra processing time to answer a question, or they might not understand friendly teasing or joking. This makes building friendships harder.

Kids need to remember that autistic children, even those who don't speak, can hear everything we say, and they understand. Children with autism want to make friends and do all the same things other kids do, but many times they just don't know how.

The "clang" of a locker door may be painful to hear.

The buzzing and flickering of fluorescent lights may be unbearable.

Children who are sensitive to being touched may feel as if walking down a crowded hallway is like being beat up.

Remember to use patience with friends who have autism and respect how much strength it takes them to get through a regular day.

Resources



On the Web:

• bit.ly/1A3WJCP

At the library:

• "The Girl Who Thought in Pictures: The Story of Dr. Temple Grandin" by Julia Finley Mosca

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Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of autism awareness are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

AUTISM, BOYS, BRAIN, COMMUNICATION, DISABILITY, FOCUS, FRIENDS, GROSS, MONTH, MOTOR, NOISE, RESEARCH, SKILLS, SOCIAL, SPEECH, STIMULI, TECHNOLOGY, TOUCH.

U B D I S A B I L I T Y D T E
W Z U H T N O M B R O T O M B
N O I S E Y G O L O N H C E T
F O C U S D N E I R F Q P X K
D H C U O T T T L A I C O S N
I L U M I T S R E S E A R C H
G C O M M U N I C A T I O N I
H C E E P S K H N I A R B M W
S K I L L S W A U T I S M T M
C P D V B O Y S U S S O R G O



Mini Jokes



Angie: In what sport does a pancake compete?

Arthur: Stack and field!

Eco Note



A new device designed for U.S. military personnel living in and around tents can provide hands-free and automatic protection against bites from mosquitoes for extended periods of time. It may be used in backyards and camping sites. The device is made up of small plastic tubes that are about 1 inch long. They drip the insecticide transfluthrin, which is said to be safe for use around humans and wildlife at the recommended doses, across the tent's entrances.



adapted with permission from Earthweek.com

Cook's Corner

Wrap 'n' Bake Hot Dogs

You'll need:

- 1 tube refrigerated pizza dough
- Cooking spray
- 1 package low-fat precooked hot dogs

- 4 cheese sticks, cut in half lengthwise



What to do:

1. Spread out pizza dough and divide into 8 equal pieces.
2. Spray baking sheet with cooking spray.
3. Make a lengthwise slit in each hot dog and place half a cheese stick inside.
4. Wrap each hot dog in pizza dough, pinching seams together. Place on baking sheet.
5. Bake in oven at 400 degrees for 15 to 18 minutes until lightly browned.
6. Serve with mustard, relish and ketchup if desired. Serves 8.

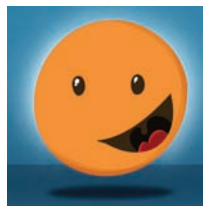
* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

1. the shape of a globe (5) _____
2. nice quality (8) _____
3. what you take pictures with (6) _____
4. show with clowns (6) _____
5. loud sounds (5) _____
6. forgive (6) _____
7. mom of your mom or dad (11) _____

CUS	USE	RO	GRAN
DNE	NOI	DMOT	CIR
UND	ERA	SS	KIN
HER	SE	CAM	EXC



Answers: round, kindness, camera, circus, noise, excuse, grandmother.

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For later:

Look in your newspaper for articles about Autism Awareness Month.

Teachers: Follow and interact with The Mini Page on Facebook!



The **NEW Mini Spy Booklets** volumes 4 and 5! Features 48 of your favorite puzzles from The Mini Page! Volumes 1, 2 and 3 are still available!

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