



Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Vol. III, No. 3

10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ **Provide positive guidance**
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

This Month's Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

Provide Positive Guidance

Understanding Autism

Many of our QCC providers have been asking for information and support related to caring for children with Autism. Much research has been done but there are still no answers as to what causes Autism. Most likely, Autism is related to brain development and functioning but there are probably multiple causes. Autism, in fact, may be several different disorders. In 2013, the American Psychiatric Association combined all the categories of Autism (Asperger's Syndrome, Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Disintegrative Disorder, Autistic Disorder) into one diagnosis: Autism Spectrum Disorder. Children with various challenges may fall anywhere on the Autism Spectrum from very mild to very severe. Three severity levels have been defined:

- Requiring support
- Requiring substantial support
- Requiring very substantial support

There is no cure for Autism but much can be done to support children in addressing some of the challenges associated with the condition. The earlier that the disorder is identified and intervention provided, the better it is for the child and family.

In this newsletter, we will provide information about typical issues related to Autism Spectrum Disorder, and offer some recommendations for management and support.



Behaviors Children May Display

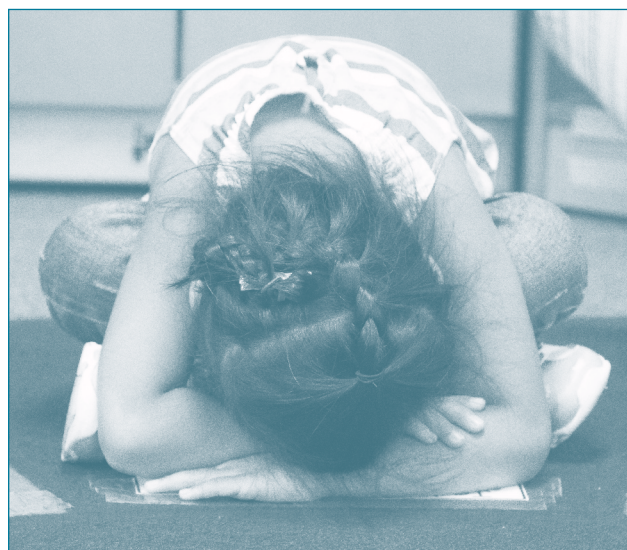
As child care providers, **we do not diagnose**; that is for pediatricians and other specialists to determine. However, it may be useful to know what behaviors a child may display:

Common Issues in Social Development

- Lack of interest in surroundings
- Difficulty engaging in give-and-take interactions
- Lack of consistent eye contact
- Lack of social awareness
- Limited play skills (high level of isolated play)
- Less likely to imitate or respond to emotions
- Resistance to affection and cuddling
- Difficulty regulating emotions

Issues with Communication

- Delays in initial forms of communication (e.g., babbling, speaking, using gestures)
- Not responding to people who talk to them
- Repetitive language
- Unintelligible words or gibberish
- Difficulty with imaginative concepts and figurative language
- Inability to understand body language, tone of voice, and expressions



Repetitive Behaviors

- Movements like hand-flapping, rocking in place, and head-banging
- Compulsive behavior (e.g., lining up toys in a specific way)
- Resistance to change
- Rigid schedules or rituals
- Pre-occupations or obsessions

Miscellaneous Behaviors

- Sensory issues (sensitive to noise and visual/auditory stimulation)
- Atypical eating behaviors
- Sleeping problems

Sharing your observations with parents

If you are seeing some of the behaviors listed above, it is important for you to talk with the parent(s). **Remember to not diagnose.** Here are suggestions:

- Share your observations of the child's behavior confidentially and ask if the parents have seen similar behaviors at home.
- Be sensitive to the parent's worries by saying: "I'm seeing x, y, and z. I believe it would be beneficial if you would share this with your child's health care provider."
- Be sensitive to what parents are thinking and feeling and what they may be experiencing in their personal lives.
- Reassure parents that you will work with them to support their child.

Tips for working with children on the Autism Spectrum

The following practices will help any young child feel secure and successful, especially a child who has been diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum by a health care provider.

- Keep a consistent schedule. See the *LTG Early Learning Activities for Young Preschoolers*, page 148 for activity “What Comes Next.” Create and display step-by-step photos of regular routines to cue the child on what comes next.
- Give verbal cues before transitions.
- Be aware of triggers to reduce or remove sensitivity.
- Give clear, consistent, concrete instructions.
- Use multiple modes of communication (oral and visual).
- Repeat instructions and allow time for a response.
- Work with the family and any support services to integrate consistent practices between home and your care.

Other considerations

- Observe the child and how she is in the environment and whether she is interested in the materials/ experiences provided. Does she know how to use the materials? Do the materials and experiences match her skills and abilities?
- Is the child new to your child care? Is this her first experience? If so, has she had time to settle into the routine? Has she formed a relationship with you and the other children? Does the child understand the expectations of being in child care?
- What are the child’s home circumstances? Circumstances at home contribute to a child’s behavior.



Resources

Hawaii Department of Health, Early Intervention Section

<http://health.hawaii.gov/eis/>

The Early Intervention Section (EIS) is a federal and state-mandated program that provides services to support the development of infant and toddlers from birth to three years of age. Information and support are also provided to parents to increase their knowledge about and ability to support their child’s development.

Hawaii Department of Education

<http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/TeachingAndLearning/SpecializedPrograms/SpecialEducation/Pages/home.aspx>

Special education is specially designed instruction and services to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities, and can include academic services, speech-language services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, and counseling services. The Department provides these services at no cost to families to anyone aged 3 to 22 who demonstrates a need for specially designed instruction, after an eligibility determination.

Centers for Disease Control

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/freematerials.html>

Free materials on Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Citations:

Autism Society of America. http://www.ninds.nih.gov/find_people/voluntary_orgs/volorg22.htm.

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/autism/detail_autism.htm.

Evidence-based practices for children, youth, and adults with autism spectrum disorders. <http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/>.

Radunovich, H. (2015). Special needs in the child care setting: What you need to know about ADHD and Autism Spectrum disorder. Webinar, University of Florida. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YaP4hLsGwe8>.

Wills, C. (2006, reprinted 2016). *Teaching young children with autism spectrum disorder*. Gryphon House. Lewisville, NC.



Reflection Sheet and Award Book

- To receive the award book for this month, fill out your caregiver's reflection sheet and return it to the Learning to Grow Program in the postage paid envelope by the deadline posted.
- Indicate on Question #8 if you would like to receive free technical assistance or support related to a child care issue.
- Update your address or contact information if any changes have taken place.

REMINDER: Registered QCC participants can use their participation in the program to fulfill the relicensing requirement of "increased knowledge." Ask your DHS Licensing Social Worker about the requirements today.

DID YOU KNOW?

Any time that you are submitting more than one reflection sheet at the same time, feel free to enclose them in a single envelope. It will save postage costs for our funder and facilitate efficient data entry when they arrive.



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Learning to Grow Quality Child Care for Registered Home-Based Providers is a project of University of Hawai'i, Windward Community College with funding from the Hawai'i Department of Human Services ★ 808-462-4700 ★ www.learningtogrowhawaii.org