

## RESEARCH ROUNDUP:

# Autism Spectrum Disorder

Recent reports on the assessment, intervention, and socialization of students with ASD

*Compiled By Linda Fitch*



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that as many as 1 in 68 children have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and diagnoses are rising. Chances are good that your school already has programs designed for children with ASD, and research is paving the way to make assessment and intervention more effective.

### Diagnostic Assessment

“What About the Girls? Sex-Based Differences in Autistic Traits and Adaptive Skills” says that female students tend to be significantly more impaired in parent-reported autistic traits and adaptive skills, but those with higher IQs are less likely to meet ADI-R criteria, suggesting that diagnostic procedures in use today may miss certain autistic females.

Allison B. Ratto, et al. (2018). *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. Read the full report here: [bit.ly/2lsPoP5](https://bit.ly/2lsPoP5)

### Interventions

A “collateral intervention effect” is a positive behavioral change that wasn’t targeted during intervention, says “Systematic Review of Collateral Effects of Focused Interventions for Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder.” Some 14 desirable collateral effects merit further study, the review says, for students with limited communication and/or cognitive deficits and those with performance deficits.

Katherine Ledbetter-Cho, Russell Lang, Laci Watkins, Mark O’Reilly, and Claudia Zamora (2017). *Autism & Developmental Language Impairments*. Read the full report here: [bit.ly/2n2M2Cy](https://bit.ly/2n2M2Cy)

### Math Skills

Problem-solving is an important yet neglected mathematical skill for students with autism spectrum disorder and intellectual disability (ASD/ID). Examining three subjects, “Algebraic Problem-Solving for Middle School Students With Autism and



Intellectual Disability” finds a relationship between modified schema-based instruction (SBI) and mathematical problem-solving, and discusses the implications of this finding for practice and research.

Jenny R. Root and Diane M. Browder (2019). *Exceptionality*. Read the full report here: [fla.st/2mVaeqB](https://fla.st/2mVaeqB)

### School Transitions

When transitioning to a new school, children with ASD often struggle with anxiety and social pressure, parents feel overwhelmed, and teachers strive to provide appropriate supports, says “Broken Bridges—New School Transitions for Students With Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Systematic Review on Difficulties and Strategies for Success.” The most effective coping strategies involve helping the student adjust to the new setting, individualizing transition supports, clarifying the transition process for parents, and fostering communication between the sending and receiving schools and the home.

Heather Joy Nuske, et al. (2019). *Autism*. Read the full report here: [bit.ly/2n2iGnQ](https://bit.ly/2n2iGnQ)

### Socialization

To improve interaction between children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) educated in inclusive settings and their typically developing classmates, “An Interest-Based Intervention Package to Increase Peer Social Interaction in Young Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder” says that an intervention consisting of interest-based, structured play activities with adult instruction can be effective in increasing initiations, responses, and interactive play.

Laci Watkins, Mark O’Reilly, Michelle Kuhn, and Katherine Ledbetter-Cho (2019). *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*. Read the full report here: [bit.ly/2lqsfNb](https://bit.ly/2lqsfNb)

Testing the theory that difficulties in socialization among ASD youth are at the root of behaviors associated with lower quality of life in adulthood, “Social Functioning Predicts Externalizing Problem Behaviors in Autism Spectrum Disorder” finds that socialization scores account for 50 percent of the variance in externalizing behaviors among individuals with ASD.

N. Shea, E. Payne, and N. Russo (2018). *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. Read the full report here: [bit.ly/2nzC5wN](https://bit.ly/2nzC5wN)

### Teacher Preparedness

The prevalence of ASD has been increasing, says “Supporting Students With Autism,” meaning that most educators will deal with students with ASD at some point during their careers. With better understanding of the characteristics of individuals with ASD, educators can improve students’ educational experience and academic success.

American Federation of Teachers (2017). Read the full report here: [bit.ly/2nCw96l](https://bit.ly/2nCw96l)

**Linda Fitch** recently retired from her role as a librarian with Education Northwest, a nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming teaching and learning located in Portland, Oregon.