



## We offer counselling and support:

### Social counselling

The services of our social counselling are directed at parents and family members of children, adolescents and adults diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. It is also a place to go for people who suspect they themselves or a relative has autism.

### Topics

- + Answering questions and clarifying issues of parents, relatives and people diagnosed with autism themselves
- + Showing ways to get diagnosed
- + Counselling on managing and structuring the daily routine
- + Consultation on questions of financing and support in applications for benefits at funding agencies like, for example, nursing insurance companies
- + Support in filing objections to funding agencies' notices
- + Practical support in dealing with public authorities
- + Assessing how the Autismuszentrum can help you
- + Support in choosing a suitable living arrangement
- + Arrangement of and accompanying to further (if applicable, external) help

We are happy to schedule a free initial consultation with you.

### Contact

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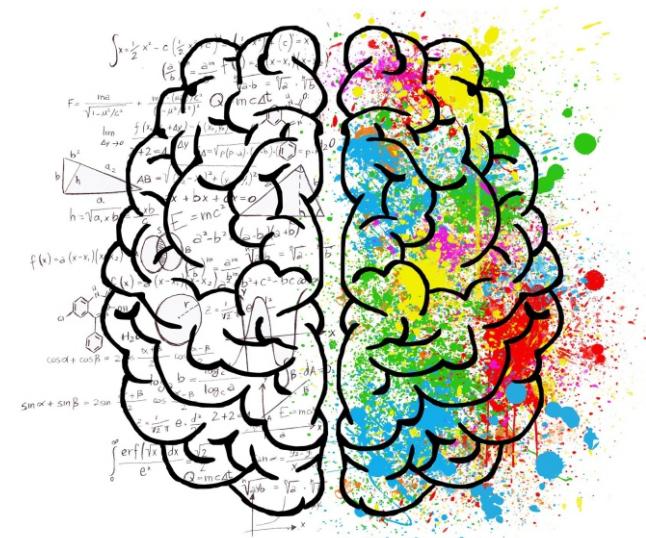


AUTISMUSZENTRUM  
CHEMNITZ und Außenstelle ANNABERG-BUCHHOLZ

# AUTISM

## BRIEFLY EXPLAINED



## WHAT IS AUTISM?

Autism is a congenital and genetically determined human neurological variant, which on various levels has deep, lifelong influences on development. Autism causes characteristic and untypical ways of thinking, moving and interacting as well as sensory and cognitive processing. (cf. Walker, 2015)

For an autistic child the sensory experience of the world is more intense and chaotic than that of a non-autistic child. Hence, the constant task of regulating and including these experiences requires more attention and energy from the autistic child. This means that the autistic child has less attention and energy at their disposal to focus on the subtlety of social interactions. The difficulty to meet social expectations of non-autistic people oftentimes leads to social rejection, which further intensifies social challenges and impedes social development.  
(cf. Walker, 2015)

## Prevalence

According to current estimations approximately one to two percent of the global population are autistic. Whereas the number of people being diagnosed with autism has risen constantly over the last decades, hypotheses point to this rise in diagnoses being a result of increased public and professional awareness instead of an actual increase in the prevalence of autism. (cf. Walker, 2015)

## Diagnostics in Germany

In the currently valid ICD-11 (International Classification of Diseases), developed by the WHO, the autism spectrum listed as a neurodevelopmental disorder with various levels of manifestation being distinguished in the areas of speech and intelligence. This classification is the basis for psychological diagnostics in Germany, which is offered by specially trained psychotherapists or child and adolescent psychotherapists as well as physicians.

According to scientific studies, people on the autism spectrum have, in general, an increased risk of suffering from mental and neurological illnesses. The most frequently occurring comorbid disorders are:

- + the condition of being depressive
- + Anxiety disorders
- + ADHD
- + Epilepsy
- + Tic disorders
- + Sleep disorders

(cf. Mannion & Leader, 2013)

Upon receiving the diagnosis "autism" various possibilities of therapeutic, pedagogic, and financial support arise like, for example, care benefits and health insurance benefits as well as integration assistance.

## Autistic characteristics and behavioural reactions

- + Different sensory hyper- or hyposensitivity
- + Unusual learning behaviour and problem-solving
- + Focused thinking and distinct interests in specific areas
- + Atypical, sometimes repetitive, movement patterns
- + Need for consistency, routine and order
- + Difficulties processing and using language as usually expected in communication situations (conversations)
- + Difficulties understanding typical social interactions and interacting with other people

(cf. Theunissen, 2020)