

## **First signs of Autism/Asperger's in babies and toddlers – text book language**

- Doesn't make eye contact when being fed or changed
- Doesn't smile when smiled at
- Doesn't respond to his/her name or to the sound of a familiar voice
- Doesn't point or wave goodbye or use other gestures to communicate
- Doesn't follow objects visually
- Doesn't follow the gesture when you point things out
- Doesn't make noises to get your attention
- Doesn't initiate or respond to cuddling
- Doesn't imitate your movements and facial expressions
- Doesn't reach out to be picked up
- Doesn't play with other children or share interest and enjoyment
- Doesn't ask for help or make other basic requests

## **Early signs of Autism/Asperger's in babies and toddlers – parent language**

- Can have a large head circumference
- Can have tongue tie
- Feeding problems – breast and bottle – arching body away from nipple/teat
- Gastric reflux
- Arching body backwards when picked up (from 1 month)
- Bathing problems – not liking baths or hair washing (from birth)
- Sleep problems – not sleeping for more than an hour at a time
- Crying isn't soothed by parent picking up
- Light sensitive
- “Flat” facial expression (facial affect)
- Easily startled by new objects or sounds
- Frequent ear infections
- Texture affected with solid food
- Needing to stand up to poo (in the same spot in the house)
- Lining up cars and other objects
- Likes to do things over and over – robot like actions
- Likes to watch spinning objects – fans, wheels on cars
- Doesn't learn from other children modeling e.g. how to ride a tricycle
- Wanting to wear the same clothes every day
- Distressed by changes in routine

The following list of developmental delays do warrant an evaluation by your child's pediatrician:-

By 6 months: No big smiles or other warm, joyful expressions.

By 9 months: No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles, or other facial expressions.

By 12 months: Lack of response to name.

By 12 months: No babbling or “baby talk.”

By 12 months: No back-and-forth gestures, such as pointing, showing, reaching, or waving.

By 16 months: No spoken words.

By 24 months: No meaningful two-word phrases that don't involve imitating or repeating.

I hope this helps identify those first signs. Remember the best outcome is with early intervention!

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