

## Autism Behavioral Considerations and Helpful Responses

*Autism 10/13*

Behavior	Common Response	Autism interpretation	Helpful Responses
Child is rigid and inflexible, wanting sameness	Child has to learn to adjust and fit in, everything can't be her way	Child is trying to keep her world manageable and relies on sameness to cope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce change slow</li> <li>• Use schedules</li> <li>• Provide choices</li> <li>• Provide accurate information BEFORE the change</li> </ul>
Child insists on having things his way without regard for others	Child is demanding, obstinate, and selfish.	Child only views the world from the perspective of self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach social interaction</li> <li>• Reinforce turn taking</li> </ul>
Child prefers repetitive actions and forgets activities with longer sequences	Child does not concentrate and pay attention	Child may have attention diverted during longer sequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide visual cues for sequences</li> <li>• Build on child's preferred by adding one step at a time</li> </ul>
Child leaves task before it is completed	Child is lazy and non-compliant	Child does not understand what completion means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use visual cues to teach the concept of finished</li> </ul>
Child does not move when asked to do something	Child is non-compliant and stubborn	Child may not know what's going to happen next or may not have processed the information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow processing time</li> <li>• Provide cues</li> <li>• Use schedules</li> </ul>
Child needs help but does not ask for it	Child has limited initiative	Child does not know how to initiate asking for help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach a means to ask for help</li> <li>• Use visual cues</li> </ul>
Child wants to do things immediately	Child is selfish	Child does not have understanding of the passage of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach beginning, middle and end of activities</li> <li>• Use timers and/or visual cues</li> </ul>
Child follows certain rituals compulsively	Child is obsessive compulsive	Child is trying to create order and structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide visual reminders of routines, including beginning, middle, and end</li> </ul>
Child's abilities seem to fluctuate from day to day	Child is trying to fool you	Child functions differently from day to day perhaps due to the way he feels. Subtle changes & external stimuli affect the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be consistent</li> <li>• Be attune to the environment and changes that may be affecting the child's behavior</li> </ul>
Child pulls back when physically assisted	Child is uncooperative	Child is sensitive to touch, especially when not expecting the touch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide tactile experiences that gradually desensitize</li> <li>• Analyze the communicative intent of the child's action</li> </ul>
Child has a narrow range of emotions	Child is inconsiderate of others	Child is not able to take the perspective of someone else	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Label and express emotions</li> <li>• Provide visual cues of emotions</li> </ul>
Child becomes so agitated he injures himself or destroys property	Child is dangerous to himself and others	Child is trying to communicate something	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze the communicative intent of the behavior</li> <li>• Consider environmental contributory factors</li> </ul>
Child does not express wants and needs	Child does not want to be with others or to interact with others	Child has difficulty initiating interaction with others. The outcome is uncertain to the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positively reinforce communicative attempts</li> <li>• Teach a visual means for the child to express herself</li> </ul>
Child stares at lights and fans, and flaps arms, spins objects	Child is off in her own world	Child needs sensory stimuli or may be using the activity as a way to cope with the confusing world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide functional sensory experiences</li> <li>• Provide functional, interesting activities to engage attention</li> </ul>
Child gets upset by large spaces, stairs, and elevators...	Child is difficult to take anywhere	Child has difficulty with depth and spatial perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare the child</li> <li>• Choose times when going to such places</li> <li>• Provide sensory activities</li> </ul>
Child has unusual sleeping patterns	Child is spoiled	Child's internal clock may work differently. Child may be sensitive to certain cues at night (fan, furnace...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow a set bedtime routine that is calming and dependable</li> <li>• Provide consistent background noise</li> <li>• If the child wakes follow a set back to bed routine</li> </ul>