

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENTS

WHAT IS AUTISM?

Autism is a brain-based, developmental condition which impacts the way a person may experience and interact with their environment and others in their environment. Common difficulties include poor communication skills, unusual ways of socialising, displaying narrow interests and engaging in repetitive behaviours.



WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

Every child with autism is different, there is no 'one size fits all'. This means that the characteristics of autism may differ significantly from one person to another, which is why it is called a spectrum.

Parents are typically the first to notice that their child is behaving differently to other children or showing unusual and challenging behaviours that can be hard to understand.

Some early signs can include: failing to make direct eye contact; not responding to his/her name; dislikes being cuddled or touched; doesn't use 'chatter' or 'babble'; doesn't use gestures such as pointing or waving in context; has little interest in 'pretend' or 'imaginative' play; and shows little interest in other children.

CAUSES OF AUTISM

There is no single, known cause of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). We do know that ASD isn't caused by anything that parents do or don't do while raising their child. Causes of ASD might include genes, brain development, family history and other factors. Multiple studies have shown no association between vaccinations and ASD.

DIAGNOSIS

Receiving a diagnosis of autism can be an emotional time for families. However, research currently indicates that the earlier the intervention is implemented, the more effective the outcome in the long-term. Early intervention and support is best when based on developmental, behavioural and educational principles.

HOW TO ASSESS FOR ASD

Best practice clinical guidelines suggest that the assessment and treatment of children with autism involves a team of professionals, including paediatrician/child psychiatrist, psychologist, speech pathologist, and occupational therapist.

There is no single test that measures autism.

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Our psychologist conducts a comprehensive and objective assessment to better understand whether your child meets criteria for a diagnosis of autism.

The referrer may also request additional testing to better understand your child's level of cognitive functioning and adaptive behaviour. This can assist with both an application for school inclusion support funding, and to better understand your child's learning needs.

The total assessment package costs \$3000 and includes:

- the administration of several assessments listed opposite;
- communication with kinder/school teachers and any other professionals; and
- comprehensive feedback & report with recommendations

STANDARD ASSESSMENTS USED:

- Autism Diagnostic Interview - Revised (ADI-R) is a structured parent interview used to obtain information about your child's history;
- Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule 2nd Edition (ADOS-2) is used to clinically evaluate your child's play in the Clinic;
- Autism Spectrum Rating Scale (ASRS) is a teacher questionnaire used to assess your child's behaviour in the school setting.

ADDITIONAL TESTS & COSTS:

- Cognitive/IQ Assessment (WISC-V or WPPSI-IV) (2 hour appointment; \$800)
- Observation of your child at preschool/primary school (1 hour; standard fee plus travel time)
- Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales 2nd Edition (no cost)

THINGS TO CONSIDER

The assessment conducted at GLOW will be objective in determining whether your child's behaviour and overall presentation warrants a diagnosis of autism.

In some cases, an assessment may reveal that a child's behaviour and difficulties are reflective of autism, and in other instances a diagnosis of autism may not be appropriate. The reasons for the outcome of the assessment will be discussed with you in full during the feedback session.

REBATES FOR ASSESSMENTS

- Medicare rebate under 'Helping Children with Autism' initiative
- NDIS, if already registered
- Private health insurance (contact your insurer for more information)
- Carer Allowance (after diagnosis is made)

HOW TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT

Please ensure you have a valid referral from the Paediatrician or Child Psychiatrist

Call our reception team at GLOW Clinic on 9769-5606 to book your child's Autism assessment.

Dr Penelope Polioudakis is a Clinical Child Psychologist with a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

Penelope has extensive experience in assessing and treating preschool and primary school aged children with a range of emotional, social and behavioural difficulties, including conducting cognitive and educational assessments.



Suite 1, Stephenson House,
8 - 14 Gibb St Berwick VIC 3806

Parking and entrance at rear of
building

Ph 9769 5606
Fax 9769 5821

reception@glowclinic.com.au

glowclinic.com.au

Prices correct as of August 2024



We pride ourselves in providing a transparent, ethical and professional service to families.

Contact us for further information relevant to your child's individual circumstances.