**Developmental Signs of Autism**

**In the First Two Years of Life**

**Signs in the Second Year**

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| **MOTOR**  **MOTOR** | **SENSORY-PERCEPTUAL**  **SENSORY** | **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL**  **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL** | **LANGUAGE/**  **COMMUNICATION** | **MENTAL**  **REPRESENTATION** |
| Toe-walking  Rocking  Head-banging  Whirling without dizziness  Perseverative movements  Hand-flapping  Touches everything  May have difficulty planning and sequencing movements  May seem to move about without direction or purpose  May seem oblivious to people or objects when in motion (steps on toys on the floor, steps on caregiver’s hand playing together on the floor) | Withdraws from environmental stimulation  Engages in self-stimulation  Preoccupied with spinning objects  Suddenly ceases activity or stares into space  May show difficulty integrating senses across modalities - touching and looking, listening and looking  Doesn’t use gaze (eye contact) to regulate interaction (may turn away or move away when being touched and spoken to simultaneously) | Moves adult’s hand like a tool  Insists on sameness and ritualizes routines  Seems to prefer objects to people  May be content for long periods without interaction  Doesn’t play lap games, patty-cake, eensy-weensy spider  Doesn’t bring objects to show to caregiver  Doesn’t look to caregiver for approval, pleasure, or to indicate a desire  May not respond to caregiver’s overtures with reciprocal intention | Echolalia, delayed echolalia unrelated to social context  Pronoun reversals or omissions  Voice atonal, hollow, arrhythmic  May not wave or say “hi” or “bye” or shake head yes or no  May not point to gain caregiver’s attention to desired object  May not gesture or signal for more or to stop an activity  May not produce any recognizable words, may not use jargon or babble  May not imitate sounds or words  May not look to speaker when name is called  May not respond to “where is …” or “show me …” | No representational play  Little appropriate use of toys  Preoccupied with impersonal invariant information (e.g., television commercials)  May not look at books  May not imitate body movements, finger play with songs, movement with objects (e.g., pretend to talk on the phone, put a hat on)  May focus on repeated actions, routines (e.g., line up toys, dump baskets of small objects, repeat same button or lever on mechanical toy)  Doesn’t laugh appropriately at caregiver’s humorous or surprise action  Doesn’t repeat action that made caregiver laugh |

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