

# Autism today

Business



Children with autism need special services in order to reach their full potential in schools. According to the Autism Speaks organization, 1 in 68 children in the United States has autism. This number has grown 30 percent over the last two years.

According to Informa Healthcare, "autism is a behavioural syndrome of multiple neurological injuries associated with a wide variety of medical conditions." Medical News Today also defines autism as "a complex developmental disability that presents itself during the first three years of a person's life." From both of these sources, it's clear that autism is a delicate disorder that needs to be handled with care. There are also many different forms of autism. Since it is such a fragile disorder it is important for schools to accommodate to autistic children's needs. Having autism can also affect how a child learns.

Since there are different forms not every child with autism is the same. The challenge schools face is how to accommodate students' learning to help autistic children reach their full potential? Melanie Gettling has two children ages four and six that are both autistic, but they have different forms. "I have a teaching degree so when I had my first child, Isabella, I watched for milestones that she should be hitting. I realized that she was not crawling, and that's one of the signs that I picked up on when I thought she may have autism." However with her son, William, she says that she suspected he had autism when she realized that he did not talk, and it was very hard for her to communicate with him.

This shows how autism presents itself in children in different ways. Both of Melanie's children are in school, and they attend a special school for autistic children. She says that it has given them a better quality of life and overall helped them with their learning and social skills. Melanie faces a lot of struggles with having two children with autism. One of the main struggles that Melanie has faced with her children is their anxiety.

Since they suffer from bad anxiety, she is not able to leave her kids with just anyone, and they "do not just like anyone." Another struggle she faces is finding a good therapist and the right medication. Her daughter Isabella also suffers from anger issues, and ADHD. Since she has all of those disorders, all of the medication that she takes "flip flops with each other" and does not do what it is supposed to. Also since her daughter has high functioning autism and her son has low functioning autism, they both have different needs, and that means she has to accommodate them in different ways.

Nicole Watts has experience working with children with special needs in an afterschool program. She works with a boy named Alexis and her degree in psychology helped her to know the best way to work with him. "He speaks, but when he talks he talks very quietly and it is difficult to understand what he is saying" said Nicole when I asked her what struggles she faces when dealing with Alexi. Having autism means that your way of living life is different from other people. "The disorder covers a large spectrum of symptoms, skills, and levels of impairment.

It ranges in severity from a handicap that somewhat limits an otherwise normal life to a devastating disability" according to WebMD Autism varies in

severity and its symptoms; it also varies in its types. Some of the types include Asperger's syndrome, Pervasive developmental disorder, Rett syndrome. Many of the symptoms that are associated with autism are symptoms that can affect how a child interacts in school on a day to day basis.