

BURSTING MYTHS RELATED TO AUTISM

Myth: Autism is caused by poor parenting.

Truth: In the 1950s, a theory called the “refrigerator mother hypothesis” arose suggesting that autism was caused by mothers who lacked emotional warmth. The development of autism has nothing to do with parenting style.

Myth: Autism is caused solely by environmental factors.

Truth: Genetic and twin studies have confirmed the role of genes in autism. However, environmental factors can contribute to symptom severity for some individuals.

Myth: Individuals with autism are violent.

Truth: Aggressive acts usually arise from sensory overload or emotional distress, and it is unusual for individuals with autism to act violently out of malice or pose any danger to society. Many individuals actually prefer to limit their exposure and interactions with other people because social situations can feel confusing and anxiety-provoking.

Myth: People with autism can't stand to be touched.

Truth: This can be true for some people who have high sensory sensitivities but many individuals with autism enjoy hugs, light massage, and other forms of touch.

Myth – Children with autism don't want to make friends

Truth: There are some children and adults who are very aloof and who choose to keep away from other people to a great extent. But the majority of children and adults on the spectrum do like to socialise. Being social may make people on the spectrum feel very anxious, especially if they have had failures in the past. But the desire to connect is often there.

Myth – Children with autism cannot learn.

Truth: They absolutely can. There are some individuals for whom learning is difficult, and for whom progress will be very slow.

Myth: Autism is contagious.

Truth: It is a neuro-developmental disorder, you are either born with it, or you are not. If a typical child or adult interacts with an adult or a child with autism, he or she will not develop autism.



WHAT IS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AND HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM PHYSICAL THERAPY?

Occupational Therapy gives people the “ skills for the job of living “ that are needed for independent and satisfying lives.

OT uses exercises, activities, strategies and accommodations to help kids develop the skills they need to become more independent.

Some people may think that occupational therapy is only for adults; kids, after all, do not have occupations. But a child's main job is playing and learning, and occupational therapists can evaluate kids' skills for playing, school performance, and daily activities and compare them with what is developmentally appropriate for that age group.

What makes Occupational Therapy different from Physical Therapy?

Occupational Therapy deals with -
fine motor skills
visual-perceptual skills
cognitive skills
sensory-processing deficits

Physical Therapy deals with -
pain
strength
joint range of motion
endurance
gross motor functioning

OT can help kids with various needs improve their -
Motor skills
Eye-hand coordination
Severe developmental delays
Development of positive behaviours
Physical disabilities
Sensory issues
Learning and attentional issues
Focus
Organizational skills
Enhancing self esteem and sense of accomplishment



STRESS AWARENESS IN CHILDREN AND HOW CAN WE HELP ?

Childhood stress can be present in any setting that requires the child to adapt or change. Stress may be caused by positive changes, such as starting a new activity, but it is most commonly linked with negative changes such as illness or death in the family.

Causes -

Worrying about schoolwork or grades ,Juggling responsibilities, such as school and work or sports, Problems with friends, bullying, or peer group pressures
Changing schools, moving, or dealing with housing problems or homelessness,
Having negative thoughts about themselves, Going through body changes, in both boys and girls, Seeing parents go through a divorce or separation. Money problems in the family, Living in an unsafe home or neighborhood.

How to help :

1. Recognize signs of unresolved stress in your child.
2. Encourage physical activity.
3. Learn to listen. Listen to your child without being critical or trying to solve the problem right away.
4. Build your child's feelings of self-worth.
5. Keep your child informed of anticipated changes such as in jobs or moving.
6. Provide a safe, secure, and dependable home.
7. Family routines can be comforting. Having a family dinner or movie night can help relieve or prevent stress.
8. Be a role model. The child looks to you as a model for healthy behavior. Do your best to keep your own stress under control and manage it in healthy ways.
9. Be careful about which television programs, books, and games that young children watch, read, and play. News broadcasts and violent shows or games can produce fears and anxiety.
10. Seek help or advice from a health care provider, counselor, or therapist when signs of stress do not decrease or disappear.



SCREEN-FREE WEEK !!!

Excessive screen time poses a legitimate threat to a child's visual health, school performance, and overall behavior.

Ideas for Limiting Screen Time, From Short-term to Long-term:

Read books

Eat screen-free meals together and talk

Play word games

Tell stories

Make up songs and Karaoke

Do some arts and crafts

Play board games

Go fly a kite

Listen to music and play musical instruments

Volunteer for service work in your community

Walk a pet

Play your favorite sport

Participate in or go to a play or a dance performance



Do more, watch less...
together!





Early Intervention programme at ASHA HAI & why is early intervention important?

The ideal treatments include behaviour modification, physical exercises, support groups, occupational therapy, counselling and supportive psychotherapy that can be used along with the medications. At Asha Hai, we offer :

Developmental Therapy to identify and focus on developmental delays for global development.

Occupational Therapy to teach and perform activities of daily living.

Dance Movement Psychotherapy to promote healing and achieve intellectual, emotional, motor functionality through movement.

Home- based support to help parents modify the environment at home and develop homework routines.

Family/Parental counselling to help parents cope and deal with guilt, stress and provide consistent care.

The team of special educator set some common goals according to the child's level which caters building positive behaviour, improving academic skills, and regulation of a conducive environment.

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"Your support today may be the reason behind their success tomorrow"

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RASHI BIJLANI Founder & Director

**Asha Hai
(Dance Movement
Psychotherapist and Clinical
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My Vision is of a society where we are able to look at all our children with equity so that they can receive the respect every individual deserves.

My mission of Asha Hai is to bring all students together under the same roof in a shared community regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area. Through this, we at Asha Hai seek to maximize the potential of all students. We are trying to make sure that each and every child feels welcome and that their unique needs and learning styles are not only addressed but also valued.

Every child has some extra needs, some more than the others. An inclusive environment is beneficial for each and every child.

 **SITARAM BHARTIA**
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Centre For

Dance Movement Psychotherapy