# Treatment Options for Children with Complex Needs

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### **Treatment Considerations**

- Disorders/Syndromes to be discussed
  - ADHD
  - Asperger's Syndrome
  - Autism
- Core signs/symptoms cannot be cured
- Treatment focuses
  - Managing symptoms
  - Improving functioning within home and school

### **ADHD**

- Stimulants
  - Fast, but temporary, improvements in
    - Approach to school work
    - Focus
    - Organization
    - Thinking before acting
    - Getting along better with others
    - Following rules


### **ADHD**

- Uncertainty regarding use of medication as sole treatment modality due to:
  - Impact of Side Effects
    - Height
    - Weight
  - Behavioral factors not improved by medication
    - Social deficits
    - Relationship difficulties
    - Learning challenges

### **ADHD**

- Especially true for females
  - Don't typically present with hyperactivity
  - Diagnosis often missed
  - Needs assistance in areas often not resolved with medication

### **ADHD**

- Once size does not fit all
  - Empirical support for use of medication AND behavioral management
  - Treatment plans target specific challenges
  - Reevaluate child if initial treatment goals not met


# **ADHD** ■ Behavioral Modification Strategies - For Parents and Teachers ■ Parent Education ■ Family Therapy **ADHD** Treatment Alternatives Ireatment Alternatives Healthy Diet Dietary Restrictions Dietary Supplements Interactive Metronome Training Sensory Integration Training Cerebellar Training Antimotion Sickness Training Candida Yeast Theory Neurofeedback Chiropractic Optometric Vision Training Thyroid Treatment Lead Treatment **Autism Spectrum Disorders** ■ Numerous Treatment Programs ■ Programs Have Similar Components - Communication/Skills Training - Cognitive Behavior Therapy - Symptom Reduction

- Application at School & Home

# **Autism Spectrum Disorders**

- Treatment begins as soon as child is identified
- If younger than 3, intervention occurs within the home and/or child care center
- If school-age, child may receive schoolbased individualized special education
- Regardless parents should be involved and apply strategies at home

# **Asperger's Syndrome**

- Communication and Skills Training
  - Learn unwritten social rules
    - Physical space
    - How to talk (rhythm)
    - How to interpret nonverbal communication
      - Eye contact
      - Tone of voice
      - Humor/sarcasm

# **Asperger's Syndrome**

- Cognitive Behavior Therapy
  - Helps with managing obsessions, meltdowns, angry outbursts
  - Train child to focus on:
    - Recognizing troublesome situations
    - Recognizing feelings
    - Learning strategies to cope with situations/feelings

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# **Asperger's Syndrome**

- Medication
  - No medication specifically for Asperger's
  - Many children with Asperger's have cooccurring disorders
  - Medications are used to address specific symptoms
    - Anxiety
    - Depression
    - ADHD

# **Asperger's Syndrome**

- School-based Interventions (also applies within facilities)
  - Small work groups with individual attention
  - Communication specialist with social skills focus
  - Opportunities for peer interaction within structured setting

# **Asperger's Syndrome**

- School-based Interventions (also applies within facilities)
  - Set Schedule
    - Minimize change
    - Prepare long in advance for changes
  - Managed Social Contact
    - Early passing period
    - Smaller lunch/break settings
    - Seating near teacher

# **Asperger's Syndrome**

- School-based Interventions (also applies within facilities)
  - Ways to Address Stimulus Overload
    - Time outs
    - Headphones
  - Visual and Verbal Prompts
    - Regular reminders to keep working
    - Behavioral and Academic Expectations Posted

#### **Autism**

- Educational/Behavioral Interventions
- Family Therapy
  - Helps parents and siblings cope
- Medications
  - Treats ASD-related symptoms

    - AnxietyDepression
    - Obsessive-compulsive
    - Severe Behavioral Problems

    - SeizuresAttention Deficits

### **Autism**

- Educational/Behavioral Interventions
  - Applied Behavioral Analysis
  - Pivotal Response Therapy
  - Verbal Behavior
  - Floortime
  - Relationship Development Intervention

# **Autism** ■ School-based Interventions Target Deficits: - Learning - Language - Attention - Imitation - Motivation - Compliance - Initiative of Interaction **Autism** ■ Typical School Day for Younger Children - Physical Activity ■ Develop coordination and body awareness - Social Interaction ■ During breaks and lunch provide structured opportunities - Academic Instruction ■ Learn by doing. Individual support. **Autism** Medication - No medication specifically for Autism - Medications are used to address specific symptoms Anxiety Hyperactivity Impulsivity Attention Difficulties - Evidenced effectiveness in addressing repetitive behaviors Anafranil ■ Luvox ■ Prozac

### **Autism**

- Treatment Options
  - Vitamins/Minerals
    - Malabsorption problems
    - Nutritional deficiencies
    - Vitamins A, B1, B3, B5, Selenium, Zinc, Magnesium, Copper, Calcium
  - Dietary Interventions
    - Food allergies not viewed as cause but exacerbates behavioral issues
    - Gluten & Casein

#### **Autism**

- Complementary Approaches
  - Art Therapy
  - Music Therapy
  - Animal Therapy

# Research into Causes & Treatment

- Children's Health Act of 2000
  - Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee
  - 5 NIH Institutes Working Together
  - Studies to Advance Autism Research & Treatment (STAART) – 8 centers
    - Yale, UCLA, UNC, Mt. Sinai...
  - Collaborative Programs of Excellence in Autism – 10 centers
    - Boston U, Yale, UCLA, UT Houston...


#### Resources

- www.chadd.org
- www.help4adhd.org
- www.autismspeaks.org
- www.autismsociety.org

# **Contact Information**

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