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## *Pediatric Pearl*

*Date: 12/8/23*

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As we discussed at the recent FP meeting, we are asking that pediatric patients be screened for autism using the MCHAT. While screening is informative, it is ultimately the most helpful if we have resources to provide to families when the screening comes up positive. In addition to considering additional assessment or treatment, the following resources may be beneficial to families who received a positive MCHAT screening, or to any other families/patients we work with who have an ASD diagnosis.

### **Websites:**

<https://www.autismspeaks.org>

Lots of great resources: articles, information about the diagnosis, how to access resources, etc.

<https://www.childrenshospital.org/programs/autism-spectrum-center/resources/family-education-support>

Boston children's hospital did a great job compiling a number of different categories of resources in MA for families of kids with ASD.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/school-aged-youth-and-special-education>

This article breaks down what parents can expect of a school in terms of supporting their school aged ASD youth.

### **Books:**

The following two books explore ASD from the perspective of someone with ASD and can be a helpful resource for parents or adult/adolescent pt's diagnosed with ASD:

<https://www.amazon.com/Look-Me-Eye-Life-Aspergers/dp/0307396185>

[https://www.amazon.com/Reason-Jump-Inner-Thirteen-Year-Old-Autism/dp/081298515X/ref=asc\\_df\\_081298515X/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=312154663427&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=16147912833909780607&hvpon=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9001741&hvtargid=pla-432564544453&psc=1](https://www.amazon.com/Reason-Jump-Inner-Thirteen-Year-Old-Autism/dp/081298515X/ref=asc_df_081298515X/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=312154663427&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=16147912833909780607&hvpon=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9001741&hvtargid=pla-432564544453&psc=1)

This is a book I recommend to parents with children who have intense outbursts and is also appropriate for presentations like ADHD, ODD, anger difficulties, etc.

[https://www.amazon.com/Explosive-Child-Sixth-Understanding-Chronically/dp/0063092468/ref=pd\\_bxgy\\_img\\_sccl\\_1/139-6709791-](https://www.amazon.com/Explosive-Child-Sixth-Understanding-Chronically/dp/0063092468/ref=pd_bxgy_img_sccl_1/139-6709791-)

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### **A few other thoughts...**

When presenting these resources to families, I would recommend using your clinical judgement to choose one or two areas in which they need the most support and provide 1-2 resources which align with those needs. Parents of kids with ASD are already likely feeling fairly overwhelmed. The best we can do is make the process as simple to navigate as possible.

If we do end up recommending further testing or dx a youth with ASD, early intervention can be an important step. EI is appropriate for kids birth through age 3 and is a good option for kids we notice are not meeting developmental milestones or otherwise showing symptoms of ASD. If the family has Masshealth, it may be beneficial to recommend they connect with one of the local community mental health organizations like CSO, CHD, Servicenet, etc. These organizations can provide wrap around services and include developmental supports.

### **A few other local resources include:**

Social skills groups in Amherst:

<https://www.tdsspeech.com/copy-of-social-skills-programs>

Applied Behavioral Analysis is one helpful tool in treating ASD. Beacon offers ABA out of their Springfield office:

<https://www.beaconservices.org/>

Always feel free to reach out to PCBH if families would like extra support, have any questions, or need a place to talk.

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