

## Autism Criterion Timeline

**Mid-1800's:** Interest in child development and psychiatry begins.

**Late 1800's:** Psychiatric diagnoses receive their official titles. Within the diagnosis of schizophrenia, the concept of “autistic thinking” exists. Children who exhibited any sign of withdrawal, rigidity, or repetitive movement are considered to have a psychiatric condition.

**1943:** Leo Kanner coins the term ‘infantile autism’ to describe children who seem socially isolated and withdrawn.

**1940's - 1960's:** Autism is thought to be the first stage of psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia.

**1967:** Research by Bettelheim suggests that autism is caused by pathological parenting.

**1980:** “Infantile Autism” is accepted as a diagnosis in the American Psychiatric Association’s (APA) diagnostic manual. Infants or children had to meet every criterion established by the APA to receive a diagnosis.

**1987:** A revision by the APA changes the diagnosis to “autistic disorder” and expands the criteria. Children now need to meet 8 of 16 criteria for a diagnosis.

**1991:** The U.S. Department of Education rules that a diagnosis of autism qualifies a child for special education services. Furthermore, autism can also be diagnosed by educators.

**1994:** The definition of autism broadens even further to include children with Asperger’s syndrome. Many children who previously didn’t qualify for the diagnosis of autism now do.

**2006:** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends screening all children for autism during routine wellness visits at 18 and 24 months of age.

**2013:** The APA changes the diagnostic criteria of autism in the DSM V (the diagnostic manual used for psychiatric disorders). Instead of three categories (social reciprocity, communicative intent, restricted and repetitive behaviors), there are now two categories (1) social communication/interaction, and 2) restricted and repetitive behaviors.

### References:

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