

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM: 2015 PA CONFERENCE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

ASERT
bringing autism resources together.

PA *autism.org*

Presented by:

Kate Hooven, MS, Justice System Consultant

November 5th, 2015

INTRODUCTION

AGENDA

1

- Introduction

2

- What is Autism?

3

- What does the ASERT data say?

4

- So What?

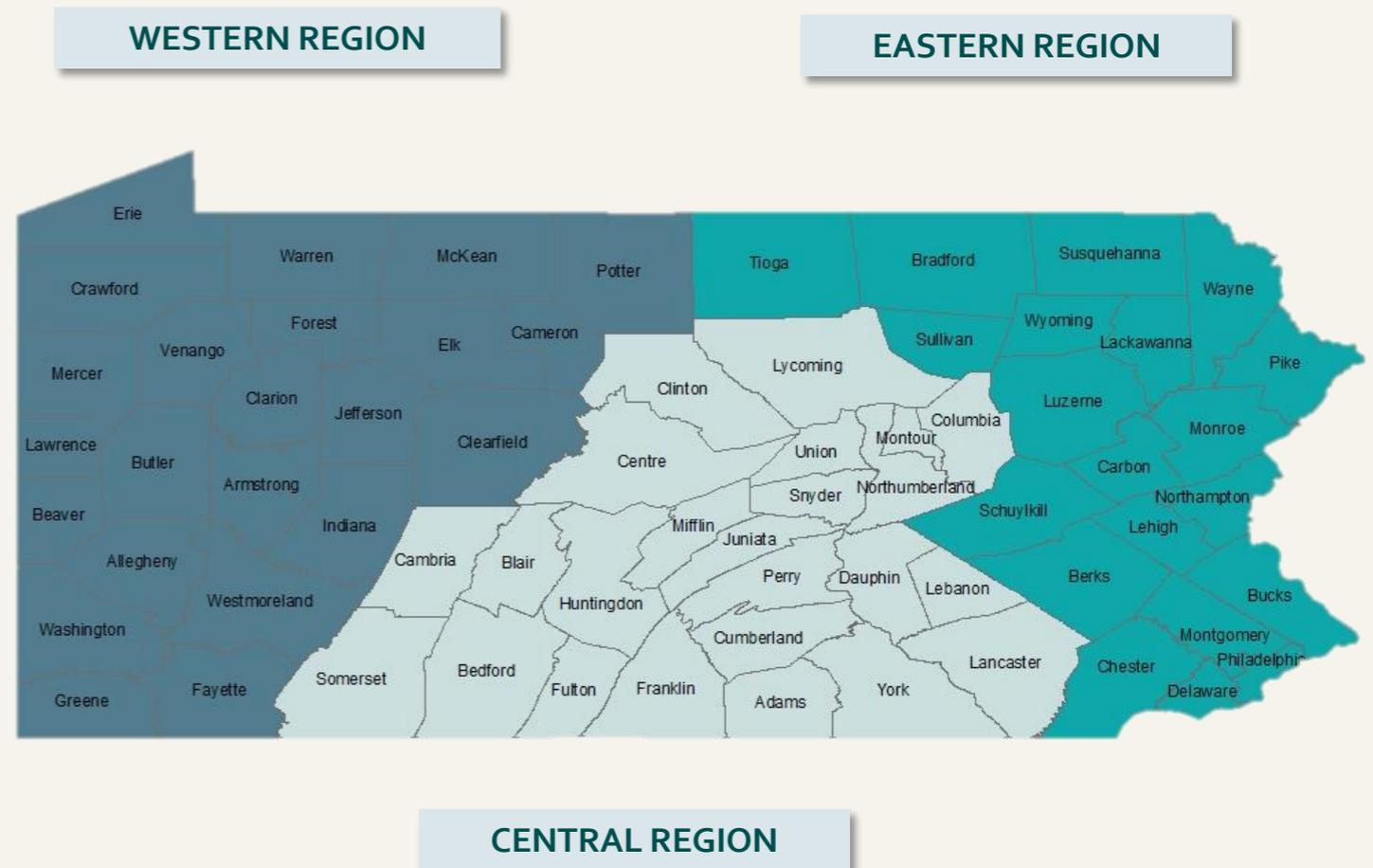
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- What's Next?

WHAT IS THE ASERT?

Autism Services Education Resources & Training

- Funded by the Bureau of Autism Services, Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.
- A unique partnership of public and private entities.
- A key component of the BAS strategy for supporting individuals with autism and their families throughout Pennsylvania.



ASERT EASTERN REGION PROJECTS



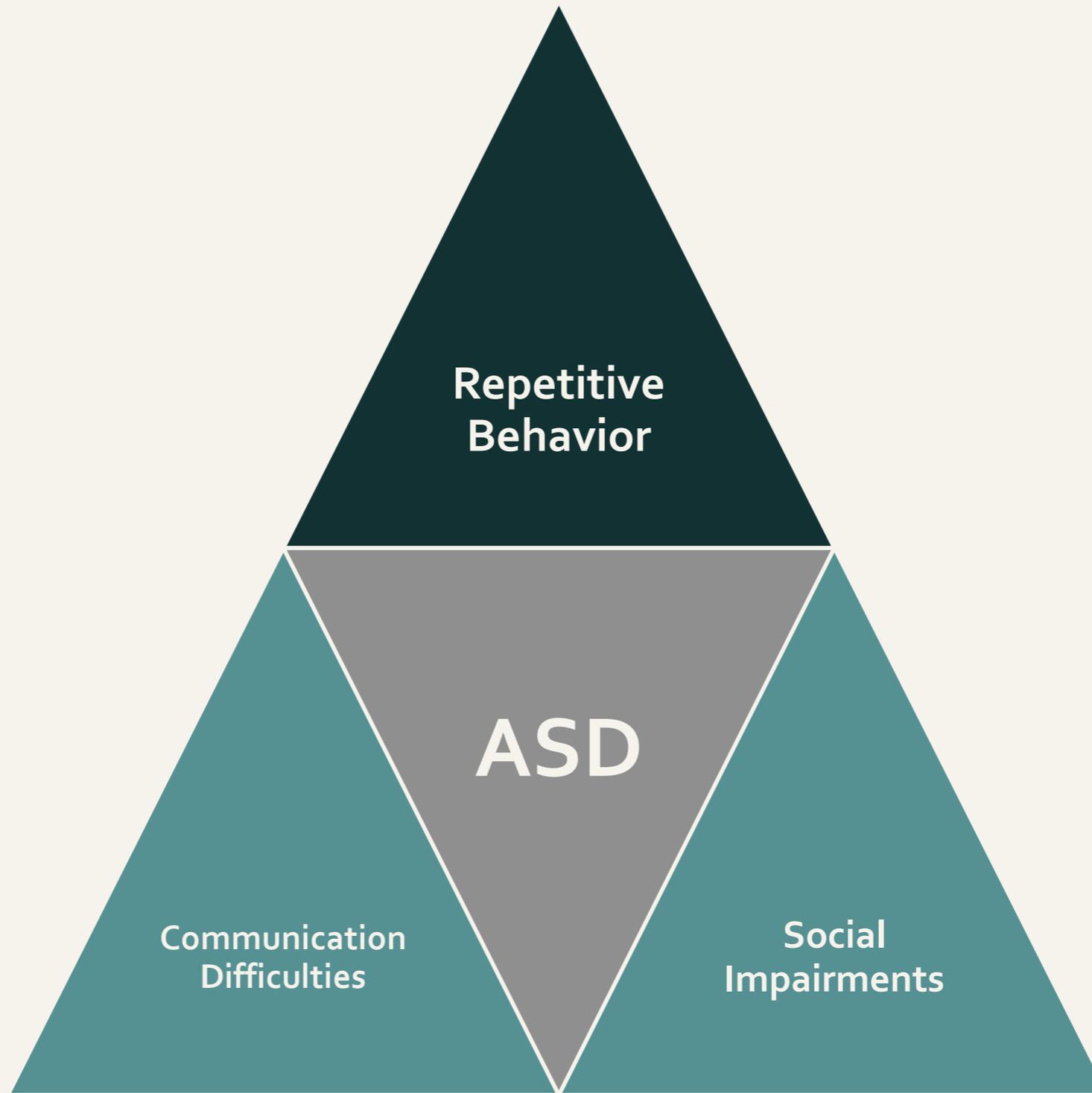
#THEDRESS





AUTISM 101

WHAT IS AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER?



MALE V. FEMALE PREVALENCE



1 in 68

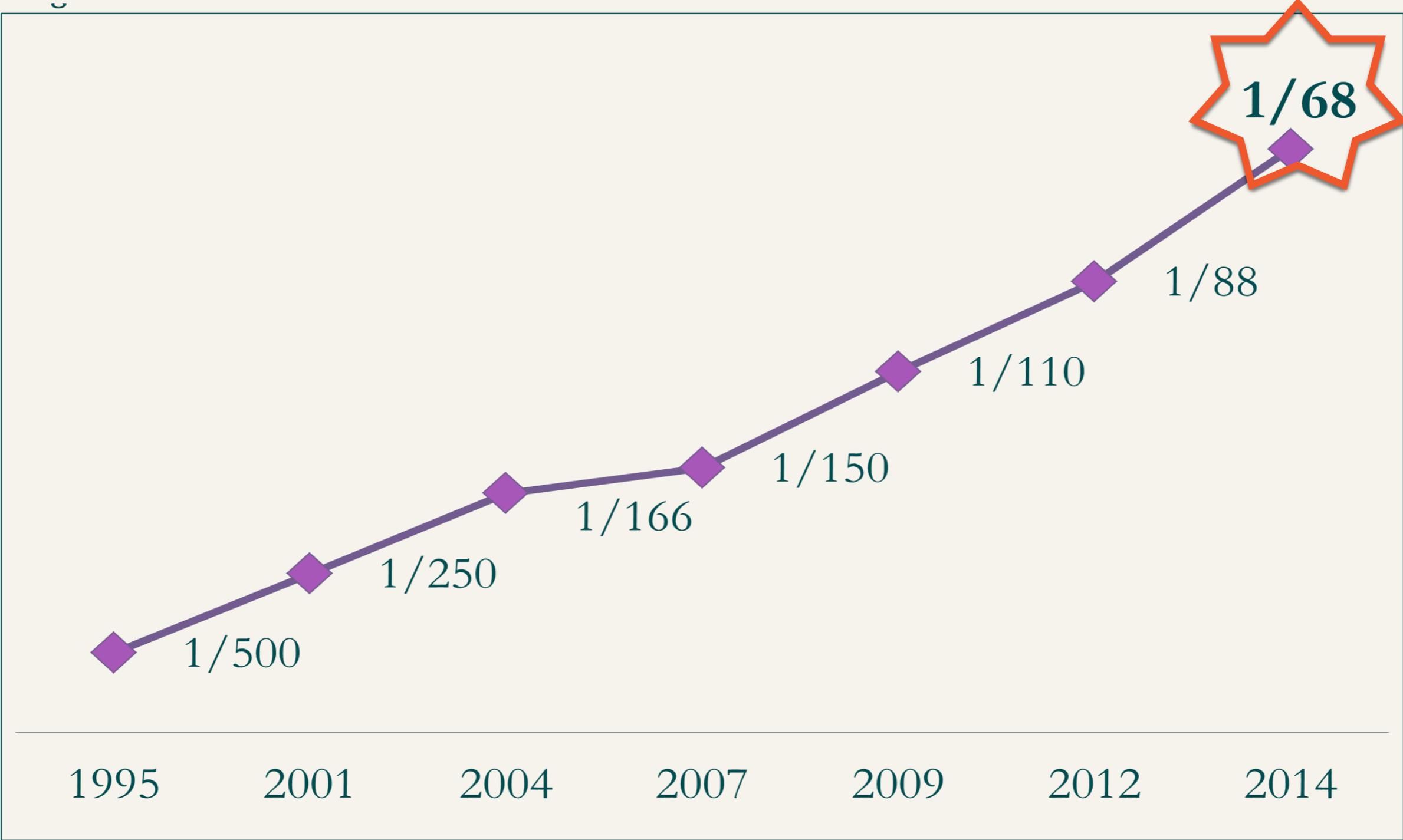


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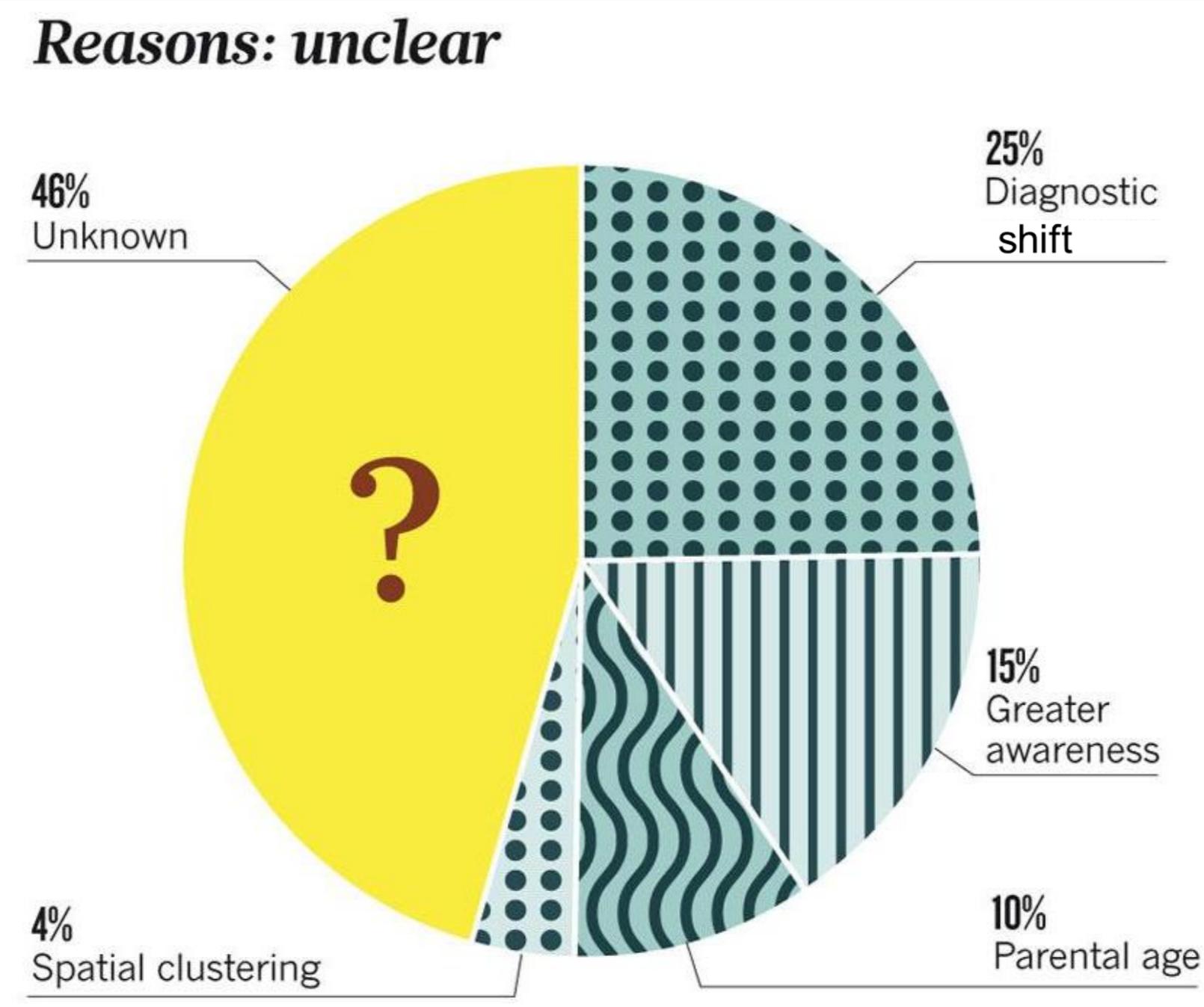


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INCREASING PREVALENCE

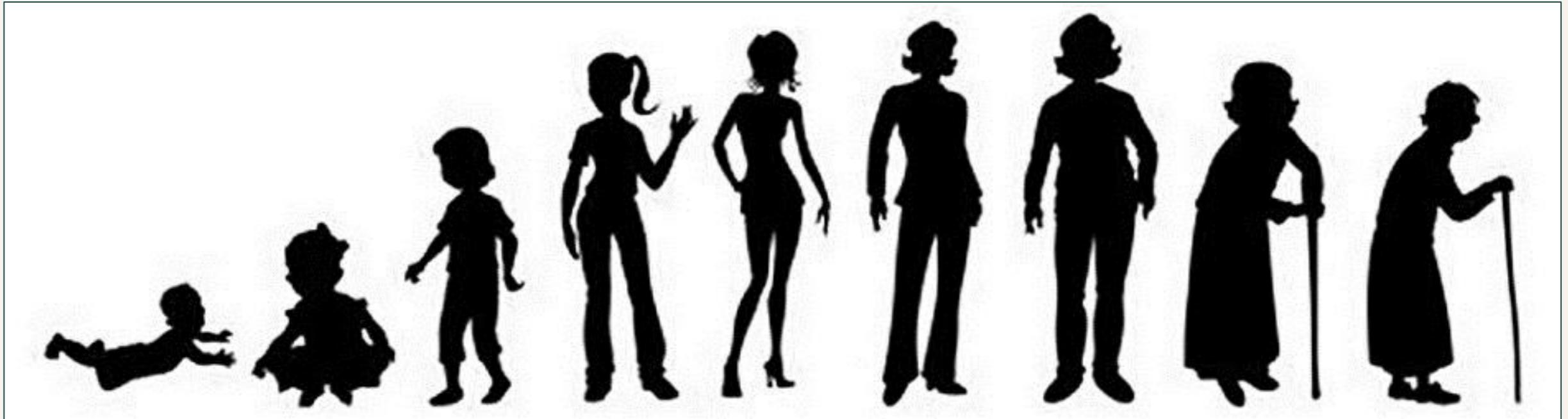


WHY IS THE PREVALENCE INCREASING?



Source: nature.com

AUTISM IS A LIFESPAN DISORDER



Autism is not a childhood disorder and does not go away in adulthood, though the symptoms and presentation may change.

SERVICE SYSTEMS ACCESS BY AGE

Pre-Elementary:

EI services are available until age 5

Elementary:

Special Ed and BHRS services

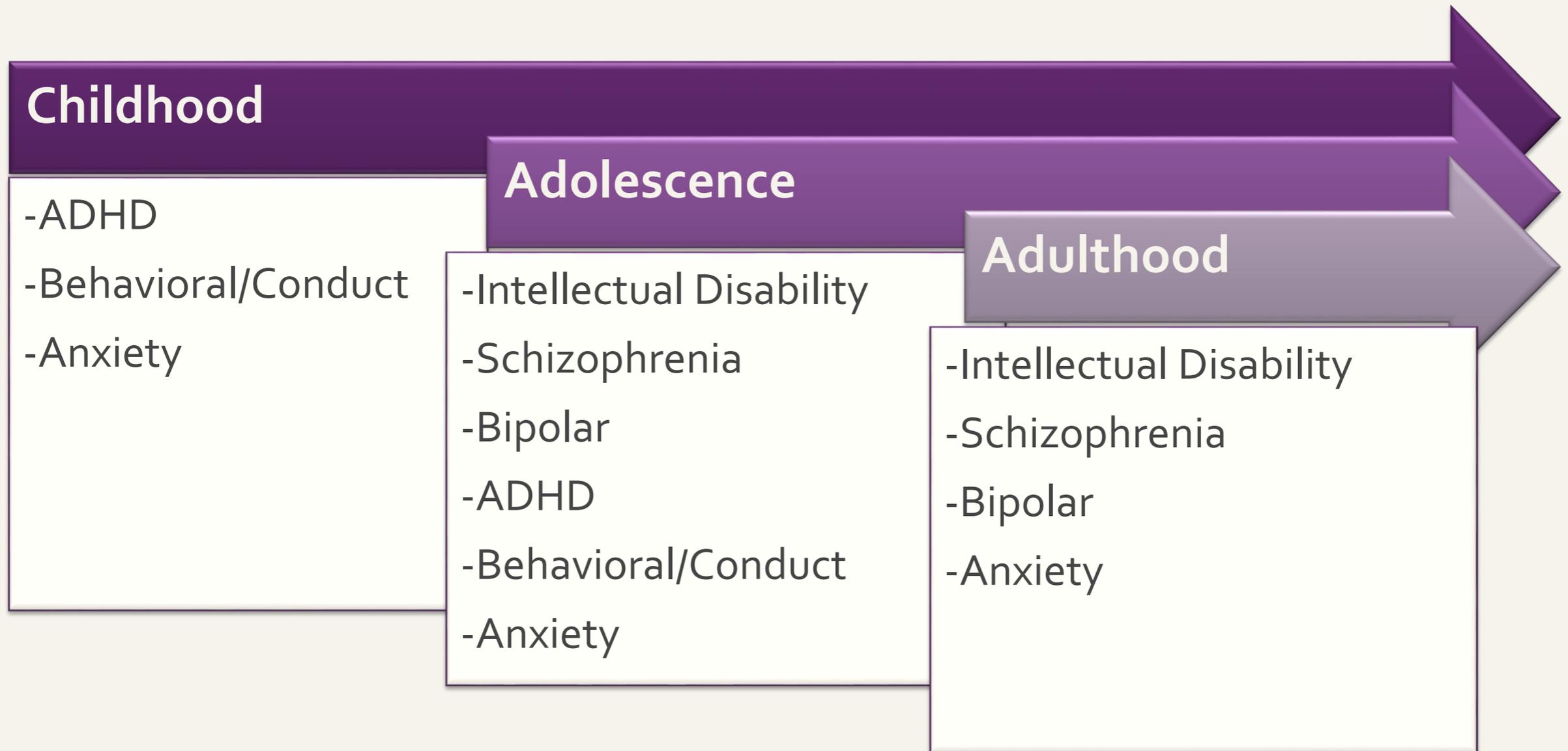
Middle/High School:

Special Ed until age 22 and BHRS services until age 21

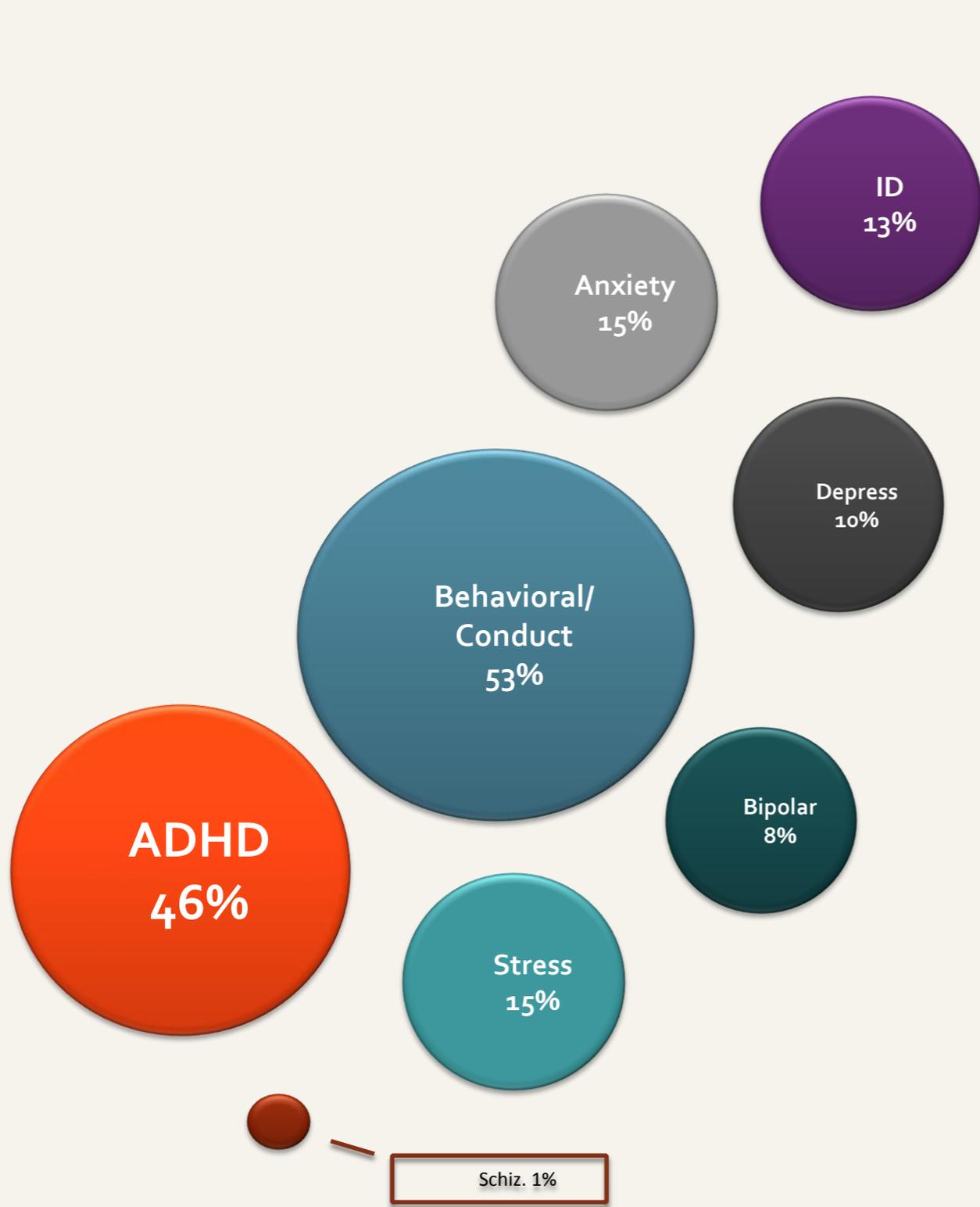
Adults:

~500+ slots for the Adult Autism Waiver and Adult Community Autism Program

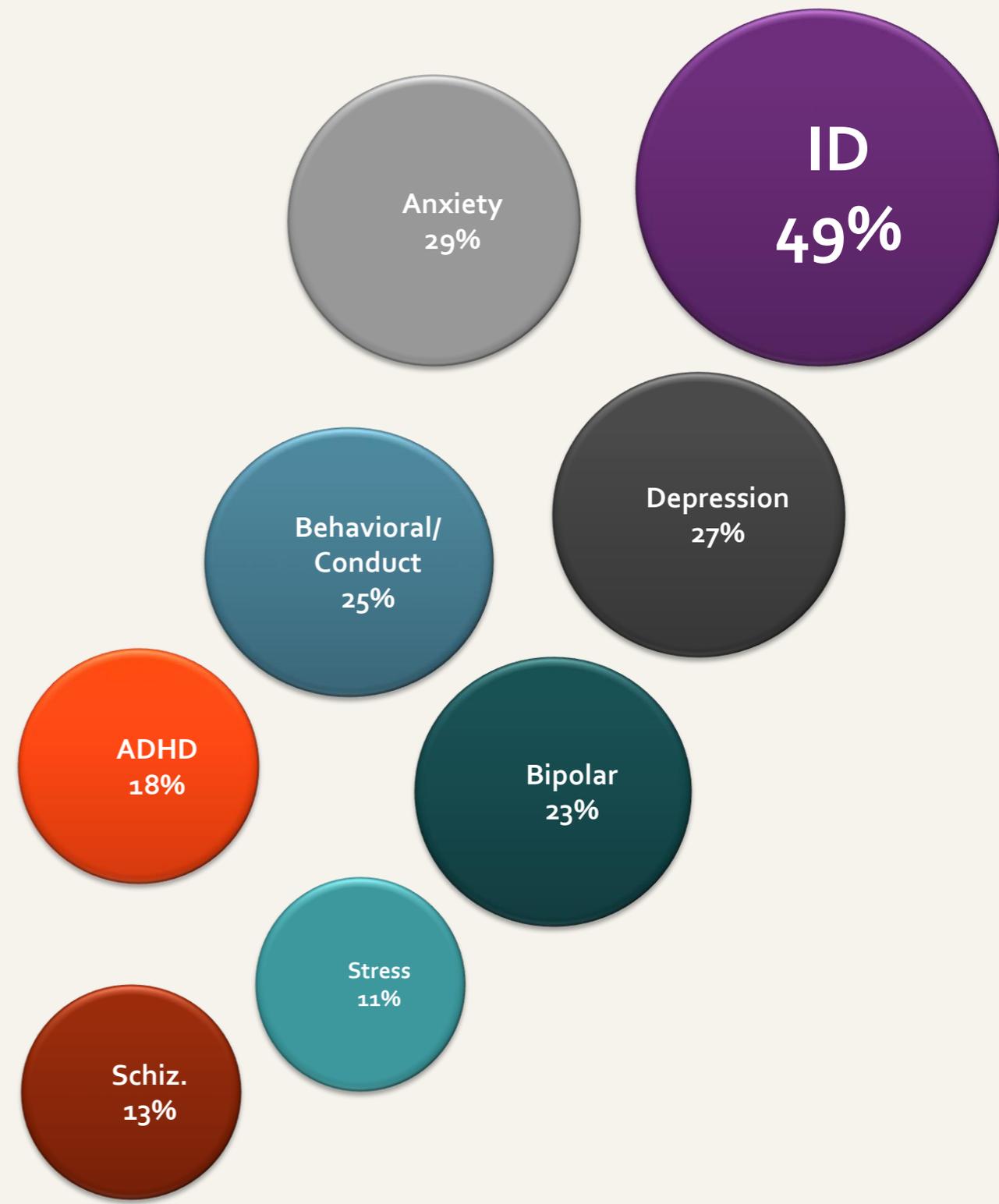
COMORBID CONDITIONS: WHAT AGES ARE WE SEEING THEM?



Source: pautism.org/census

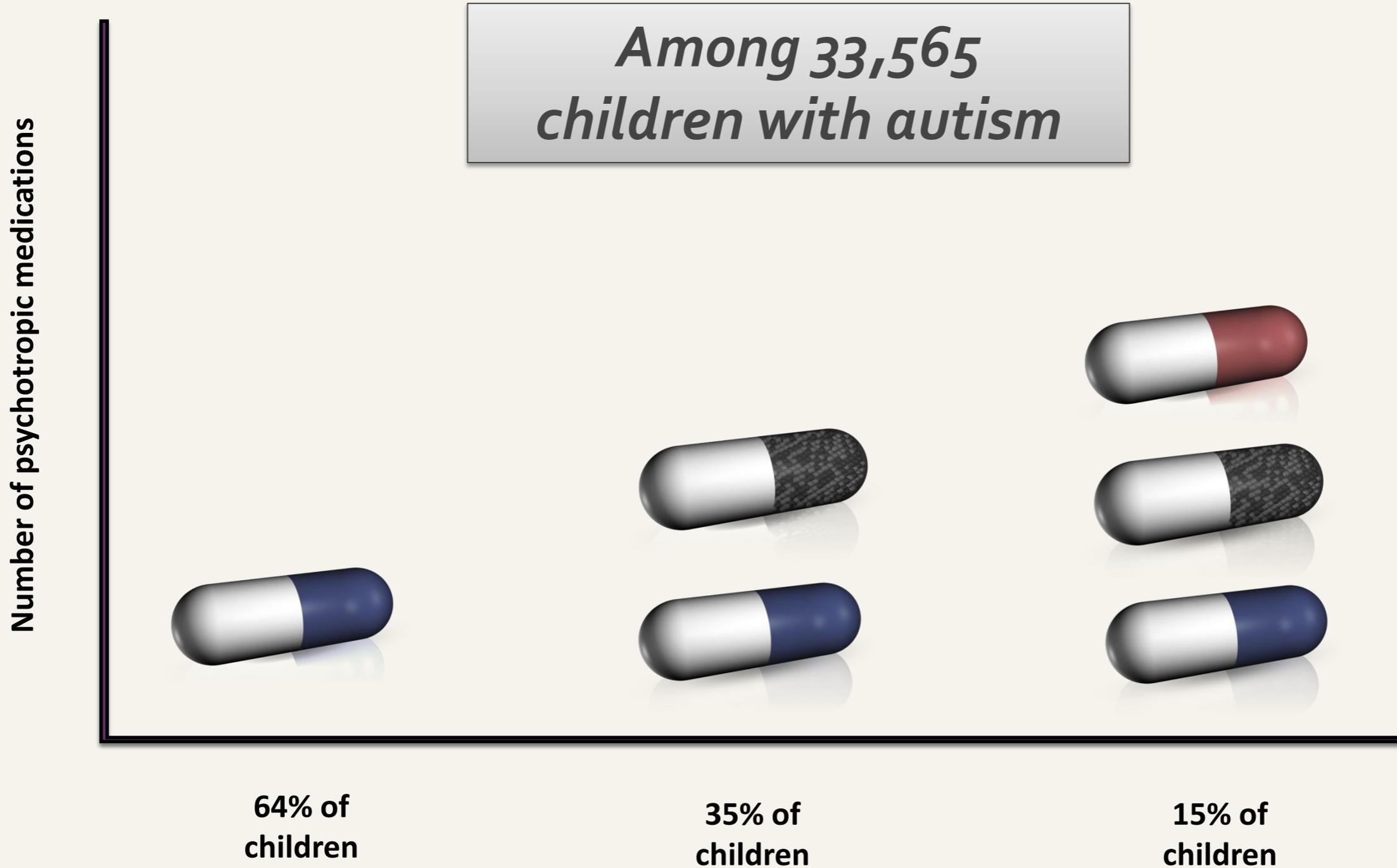


Children and Adolescents (under 21)



Adults (over 21)

POLY-PHARMACY



SYMPTOM DOMAIN #1: SOCIAL INTERACTION

1

Lack of Attention to Faces

2

Reduced Eye Contact

3

Lack of Social Reciprocity

4

Difficulty in Receiving and Expressing Emotions

5

Difficult in Developing Peer Relationships

6

Difficulty in Using Nonverbal Social Communication

SYMPTOM DOMAIN #1: SOCIAL INTERACTION

Tools/Strategies for Little/No Eye Contact



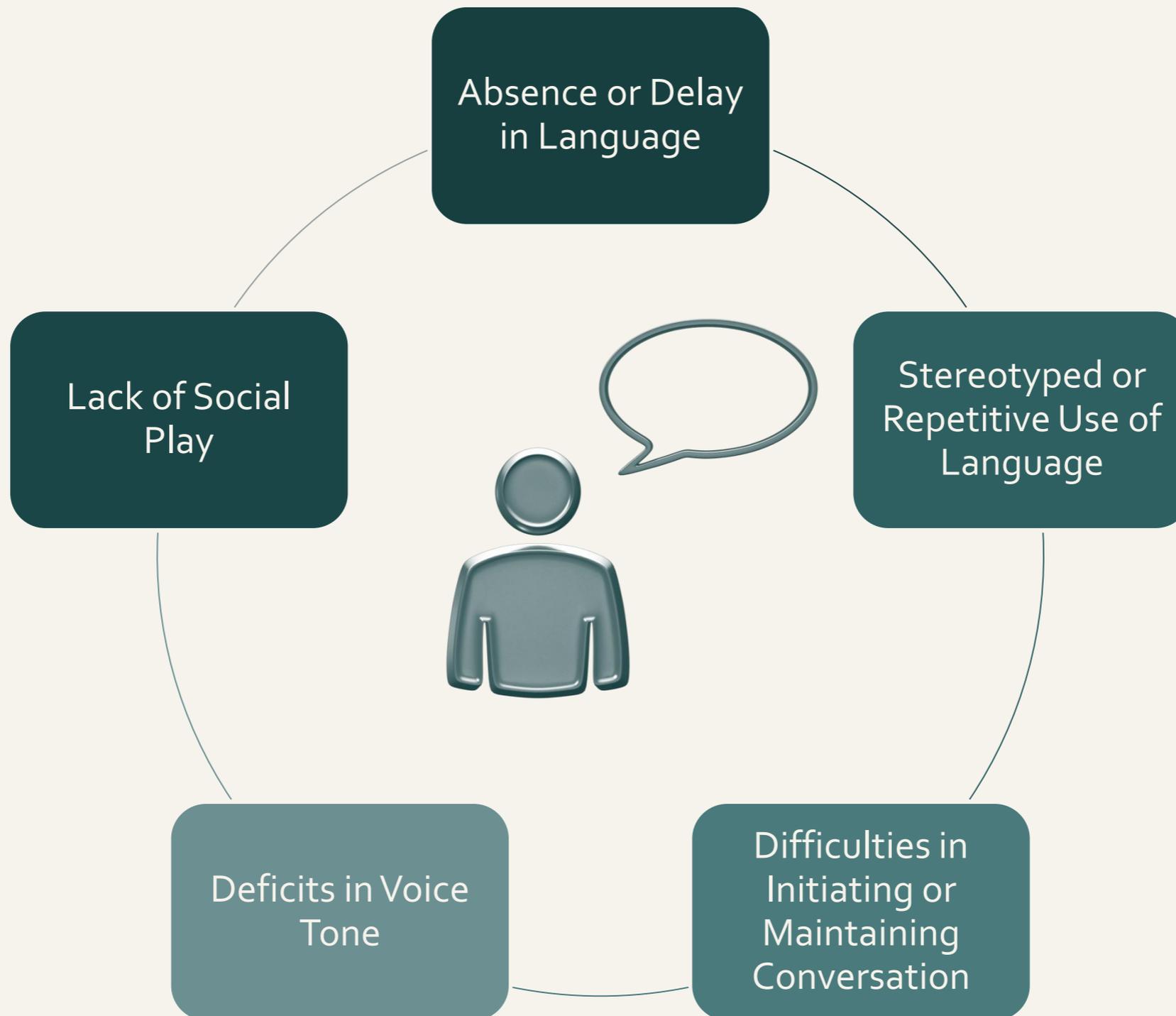
Does not mean they are not listening

Wait for their response first

Smile and engage

Try to capture attention, but do not force it

SYMPTOM DOMAIN #2: COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES



SYMPTOM DOMAIN #2: COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES

Tools/Strategies for Lack of/Delayed Language

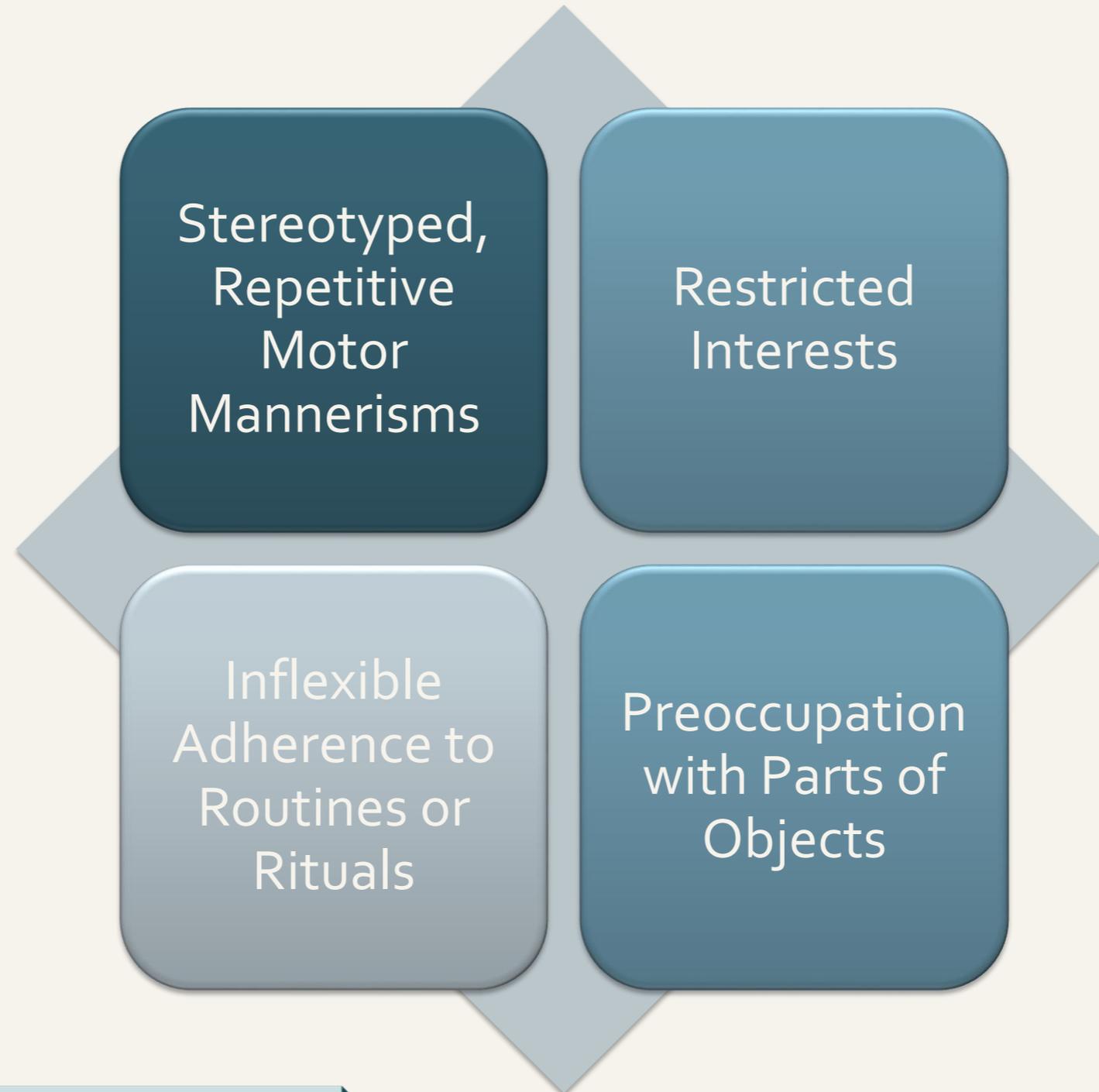
 I want		 I see		 thank you	
 drink	 biscuit	 apple	 coke	 crisps	 banana
 book	 sand	 bricks	 pens	 farm	 puzzle
 shoe	 jumper	 trousers	 coat	 sock	 hat

Picture exchange communication system (PECS)

Alternative Communication

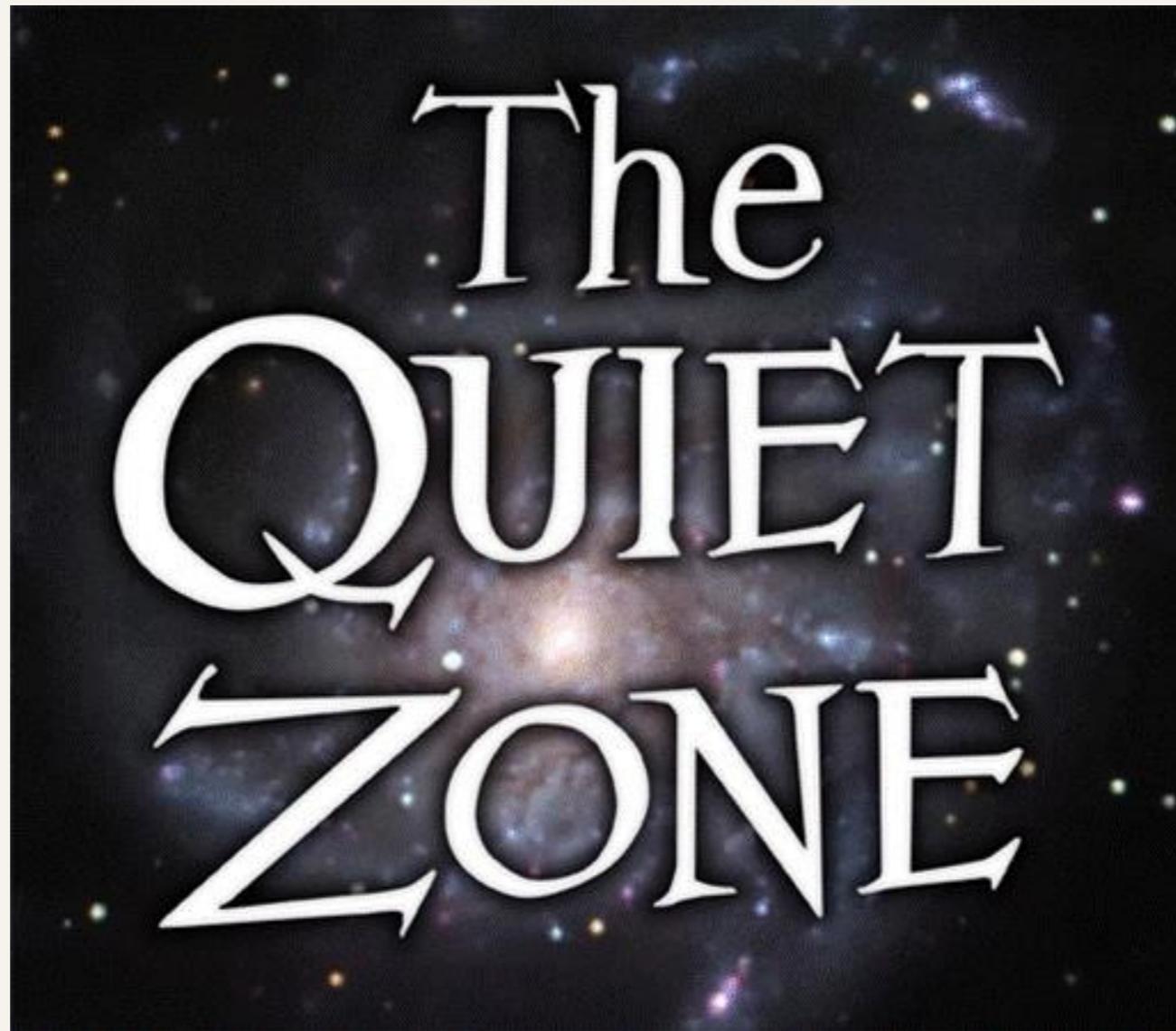


SYMPTOM DOMAIN #3: RESTRICTED OR REPETITIVE BEHAVIOR



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Tools/Strategies for Repetitive Behaviors

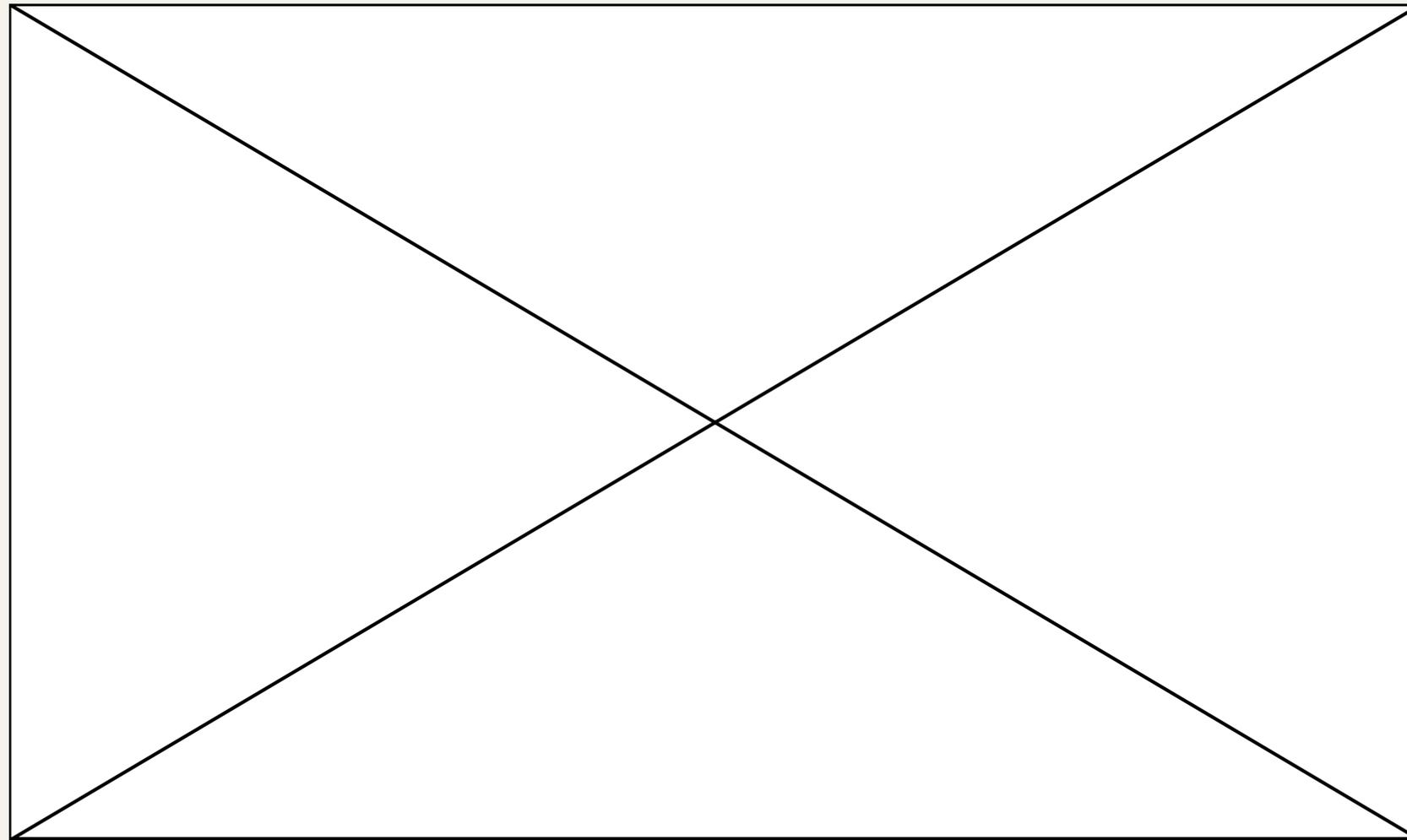


CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH AUTISM

Sensitivity to
Light

Sensitivity to
Touch

Sensitivity to
Sound



SIGNS OF POSSIBLE OVERSTIMULATION

Flapping

Pacing

Rocking

Scripting

Loud
Verbalizations

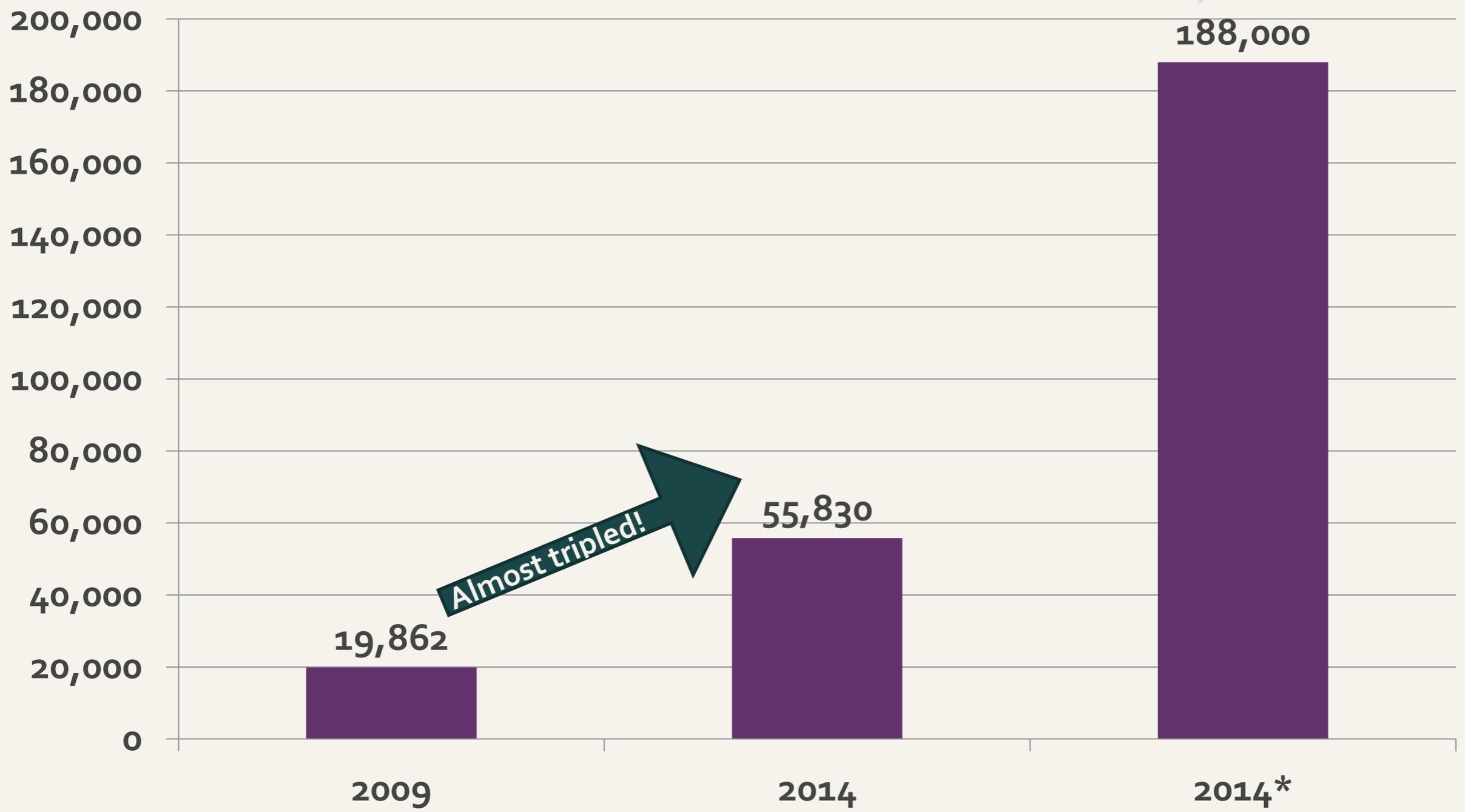
OVERSTIMULATION CAN LEAD TO...



DATA

AUTISM PREVALENCE IN PENNSYLVANIA

Applying CDC Prevalence

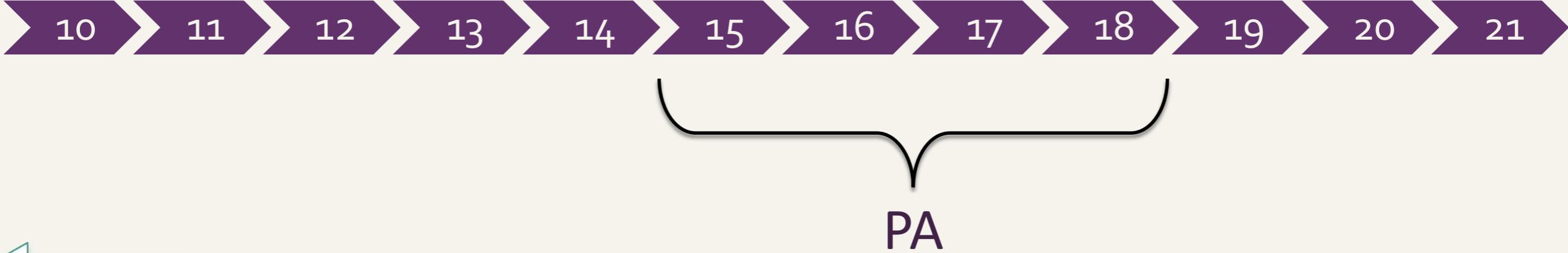


JUVENILE JUSTICE CHARGES:

Top 5 Charges

- 1. *Simple Assault-Bodily Injury*
- 2. *Harassment-Strike/Shove*
- 3. *Disorderly Conduct-Fighting*
- 4. *Simple Assault*
- 5. *Crime of Violence-Intent to Terrorize*

Ages with Highest Number of Charges



JUVENILE JUSTICE BY CHARGE TYPE:

Offense Against Person

- 48%
- Includes Assault, Harassment, Stalking etc.

Offense Against Property

- 30%
- Includes Arson, Theft, Trespassing etc.

Other

- 22%
- Includes Drug Charges, Driving Offenses, etc.

JUVENILE JUSTICE BY CHARGE SEVERITY:

Felony

- PA-27%

Misdemeanor

- PA-56%

Summary

- PA-17%

SURVEY DESIGN

Where?

Who?

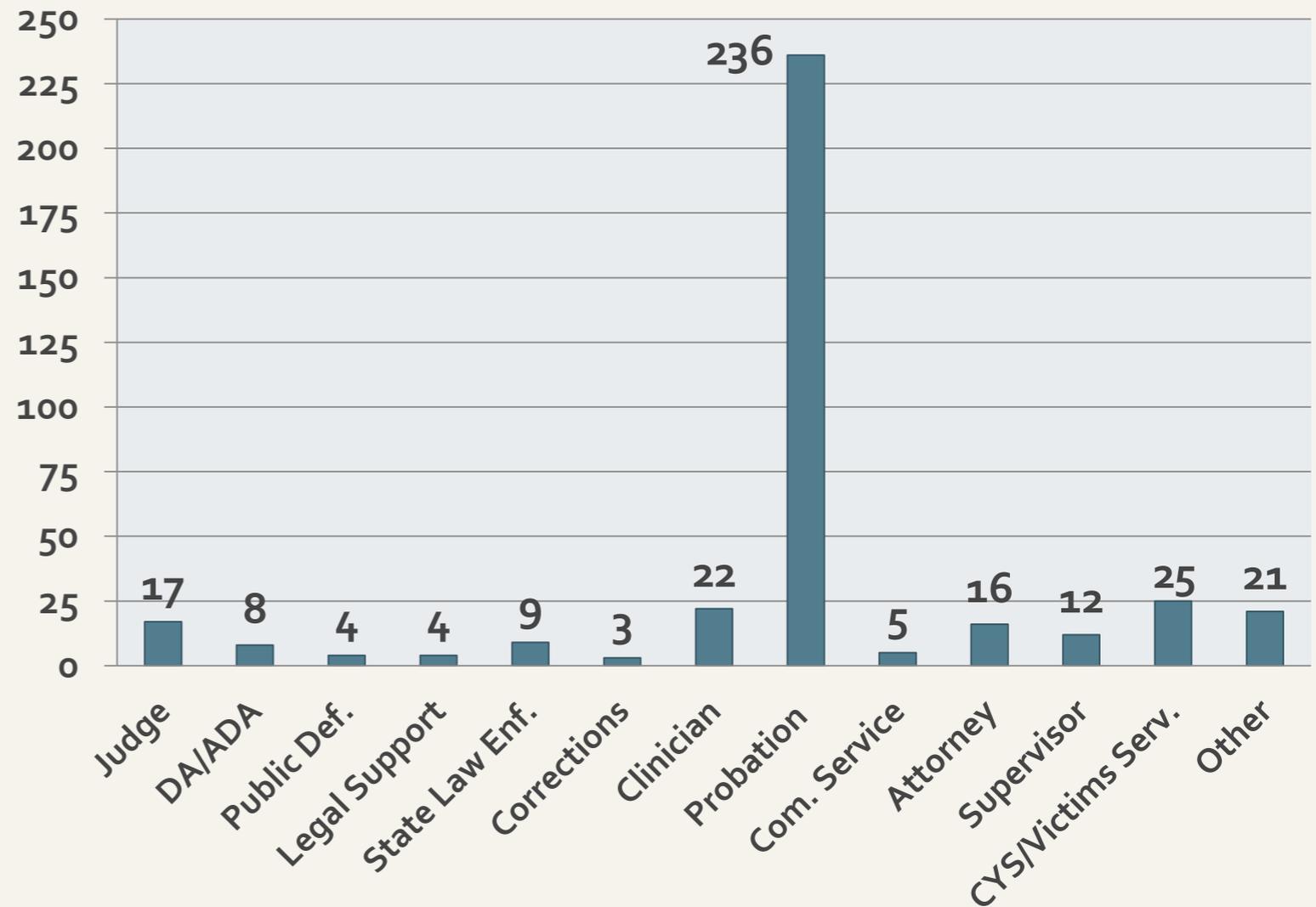
*What do
you need?*

*What do
you know?*

RESPONDENTS

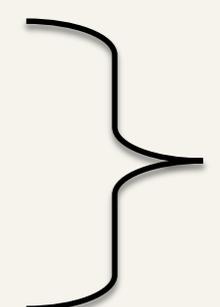
Characteristics

- 365 Respondents
- Representation from many systems and professions
- Largest proportion of respondents from probation

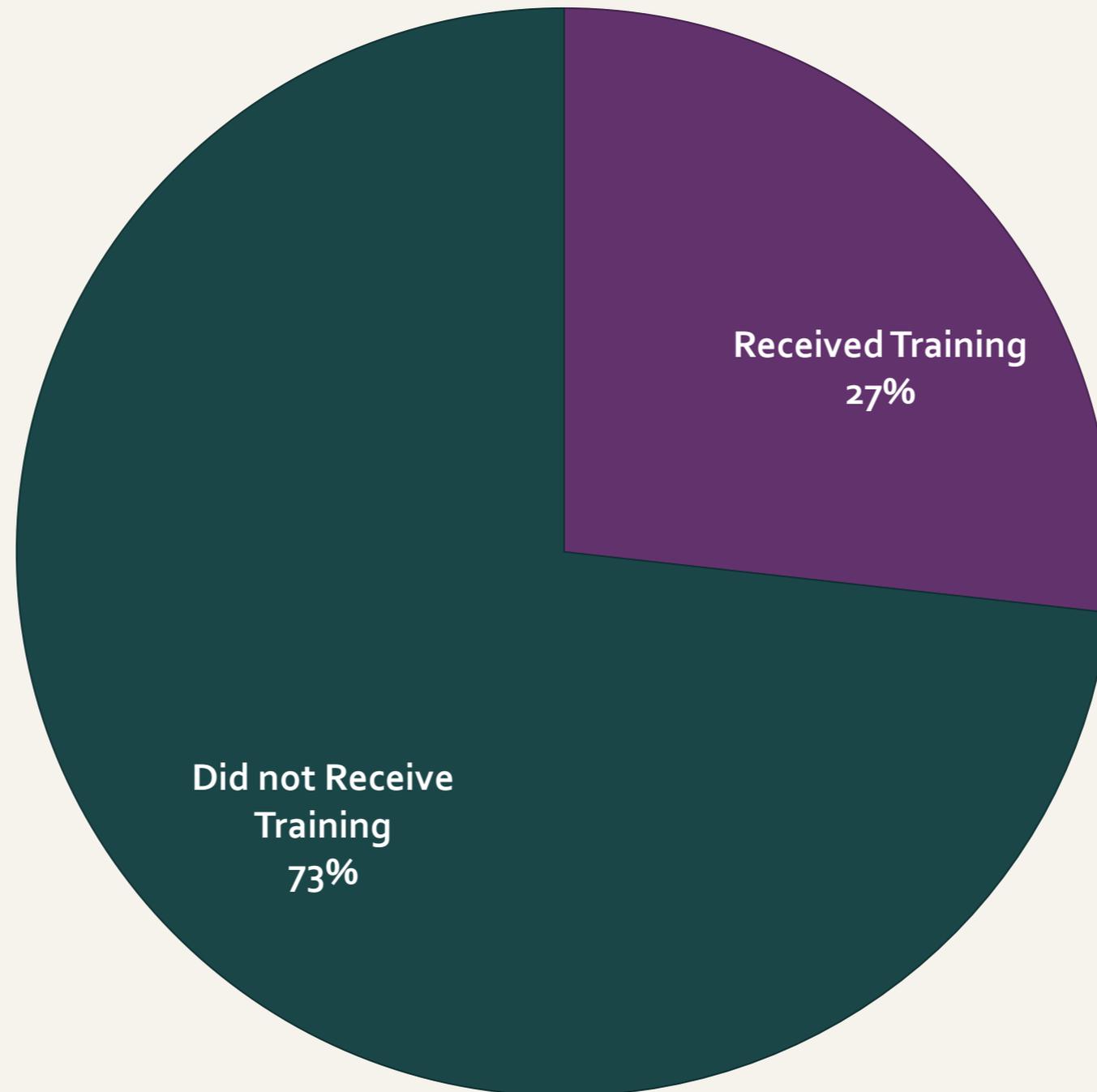


GENERAL AUTISM KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS

Question	Percent Agree
Reading facial expressions may be difficult for people with autism.	88%
Individuals with autism often have a set of focused and specific abilities or skills.	88%
Generally individuals with autism do not easily understand or relate to the feelings and thoughts of others.	78%
Autism affects both males and females equally.	54 %
Many individuals with autism do like being touched.	36%
The symptoms of autism do not change with age.	19%
Most people with autism can easily understand sarcastic language.	6%
People with autism generally make good eye contact with other people.	5%



TRAINING EXPERIENCE



TRAINING NEEDS

Training topic area by priority

Training Topic	Percent
How to communicate with individuals with autism	74%
How to navigate challenging behaviors related to autism	71%
Systems and services available to individuals with autism	70%
Broad training on the core deficits of autism	67%
How to interact with parents/caregivers of individuals with autism	65%
Identifying autism in adolescents	65%

Kate Hooven

SO WHAT?

YOUR ROLE IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

SENSORY EXPERIMENT



BALANCED APPROACH TO RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Community Protection

- Right to safe and secure community
- Being more educated about autism helps to provide safe environment

Accountability

- Accountability to community and victim may look different in person with autism v. neurotypical person

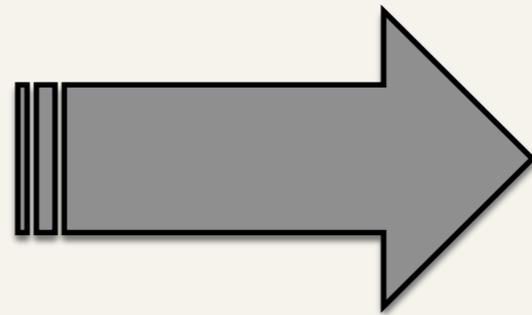
Competency Development

- Competencies will need take to diagnosis into account

Individualization

- Each case presents unique circumstances and the response by the system must be individualized

SAFETY IS THE GOAL



A better understanding will help prepare you for interacting with individuals with autism to better support them and their families.

WHAT MAY IMPACT SAFETY

Misreading Social Cues

May not understand sarcasm

May not understand seriousness

May not understand friendliness

Difficulty understanding Social Rules

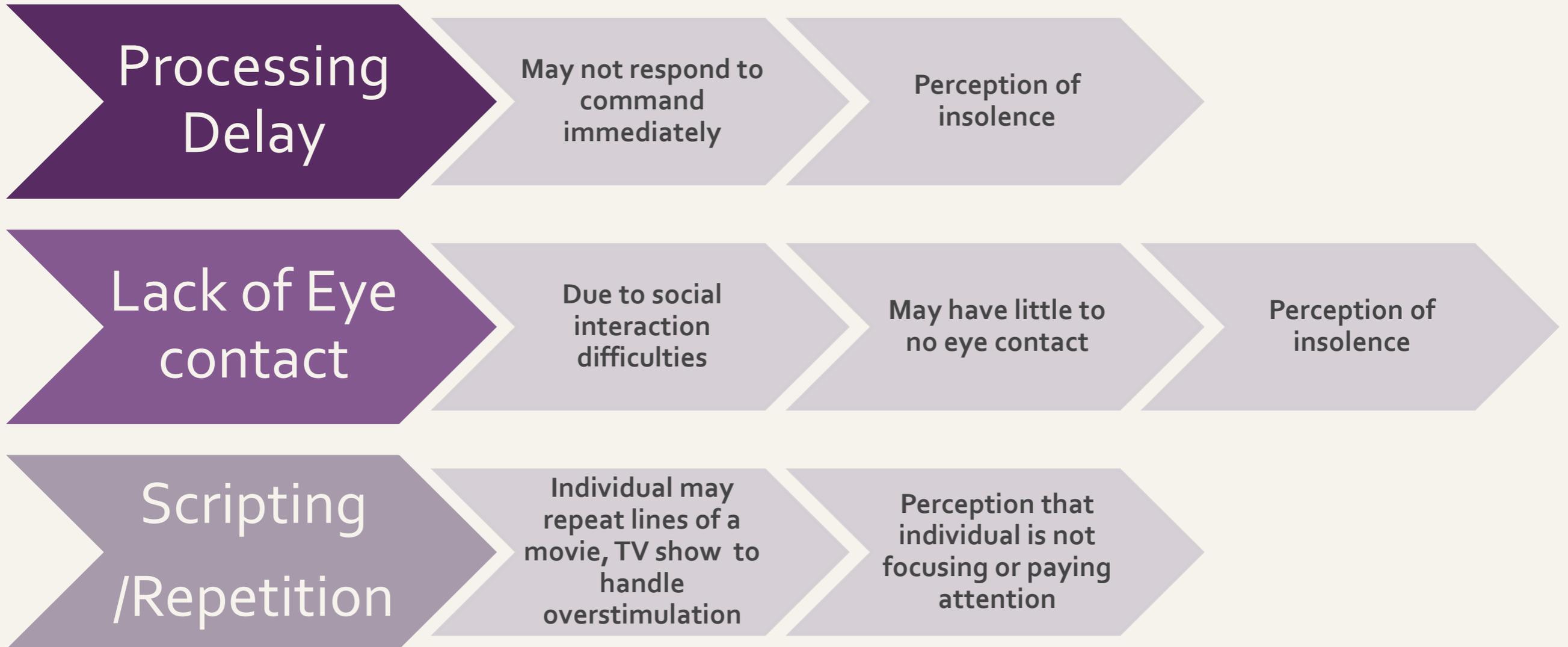
Difficult to respond appropriately

Sensory Issues

Self-stimulating behavior

Perception of being inebriated or high

WHAT MAY IMPACT SAFETY (CONT.)



WHAT MAY IMPACT SAFETY (CONT.)



TRAUMA

Consider Possible Traumas to an Individual with Autism

Bullying

Physical Abuse

Emotional Abuse

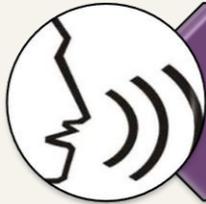
History of Restraints

QUESTIONS?

HOW TO APPROACH SOMEONE WITH AUTISM



Slowly and cautiously



Give verbal warnings



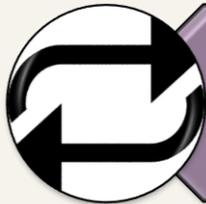
Keep your voice quiet and calm



If possible, do not put your hands on the individual



Ask if they understand what you are saying



Ask to repeat back what you said

IN OTHER WORDS...

Be

S.

Stay
calm

A.

Ask
clearly

F.

Facilitate
Understanding

E.

Explain the
Process

R.

Repeat
commands

SAFETY: EXAMPLE



MIRANDA RIGHTS

"..anything you said can and will be held AGAINST you..."



- **Miranda Rights are extremely wordy**
- **Language is vague and could be confusing**

SEARCHES

Provide adequate warning and thorough explanation

Sensitivity to touch make body search difficult

Disrupting property in searches may upset need for routine

SEARCHES (CONT.)

Additional Considerations

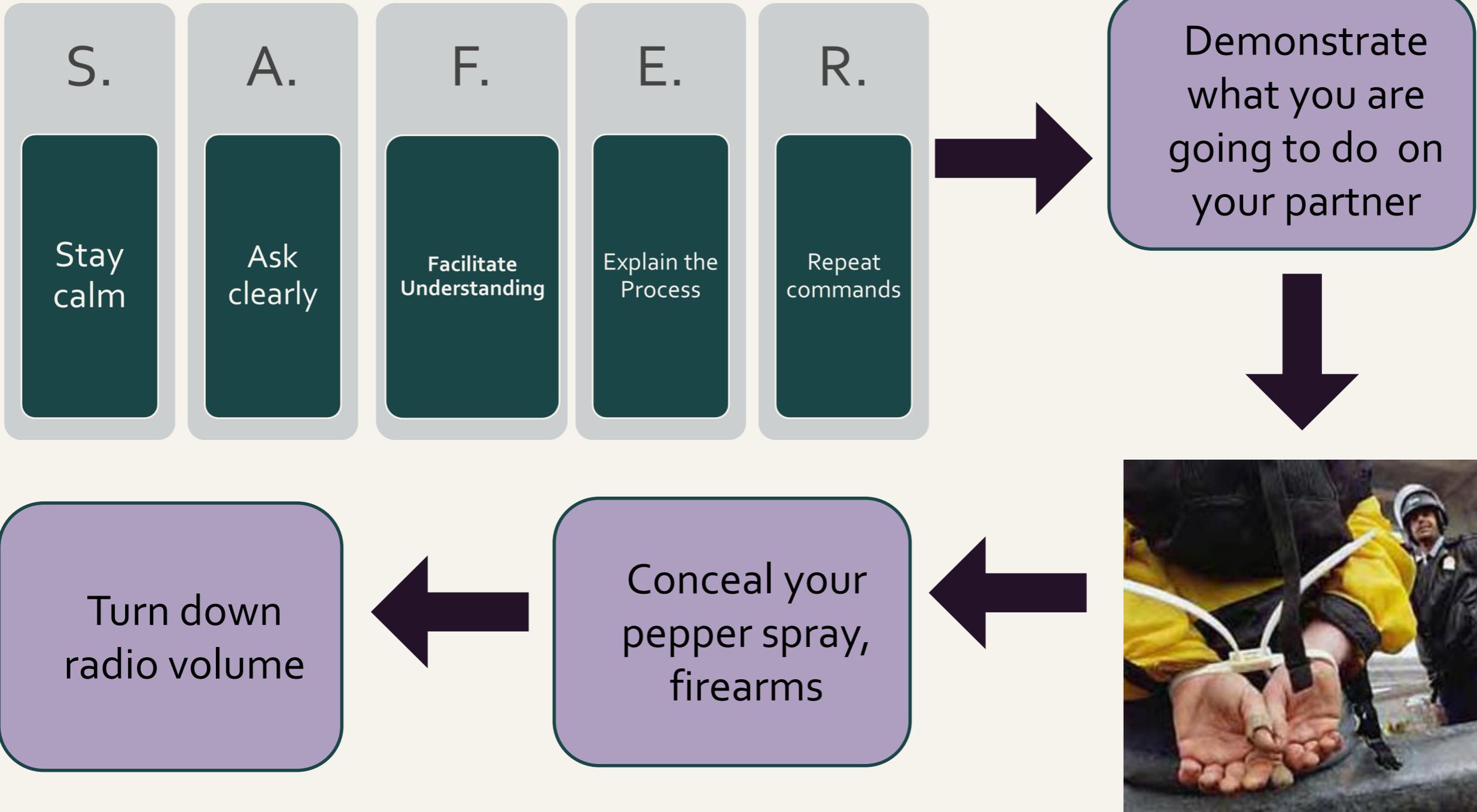
Language Difficulty
May Play a Role

May Need Extra Time
to Process Information

Consider
Item
Fixation

QUESTIONS?

CUSTODY/ARREST



TRANSPORT



To decrease anxiety:

Turn down radio volume

Turn off siren

TRANSPORT (CONT.)

Do not be alarmed if you witness the following coping mechanisms:

- Spinning
- Flapping
- Scripting
- Atypical body or facial movements

PROCESSING



Fingerprinting/swabbing
may present sensory issues for an individual with autism

SENSORY OVERLOAD: EXAMPLE



QUESTIONS?

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING: CHALLENGES



Open ended questions may be challenging



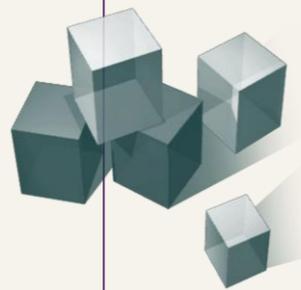
“Chatting” may be difficult due to language deficits



Individuals with autism may be rigid in their thoughts and behavior



Eliciting empathy may be a challenge



Cognitive behavioral skill building techniques may not be as effective for someone with autism.

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Tools/Strategies for Motivational Interviewing



Positive reinforcement versus confrontation will be the best motivator



Find some type of activity, hobby, interest that the person has and use that as a motivator.



Make an appropriate referral to an expert who has experience working with people living with autism.



Take into account the impact autism has in all areas when developing a case plan.

INTAKE INTERVIEW



SEEKING AN AUTISM REFERRAL



County Psychologist or
Standard Referral
Process

ASERT Resource
Center
877-231-4244

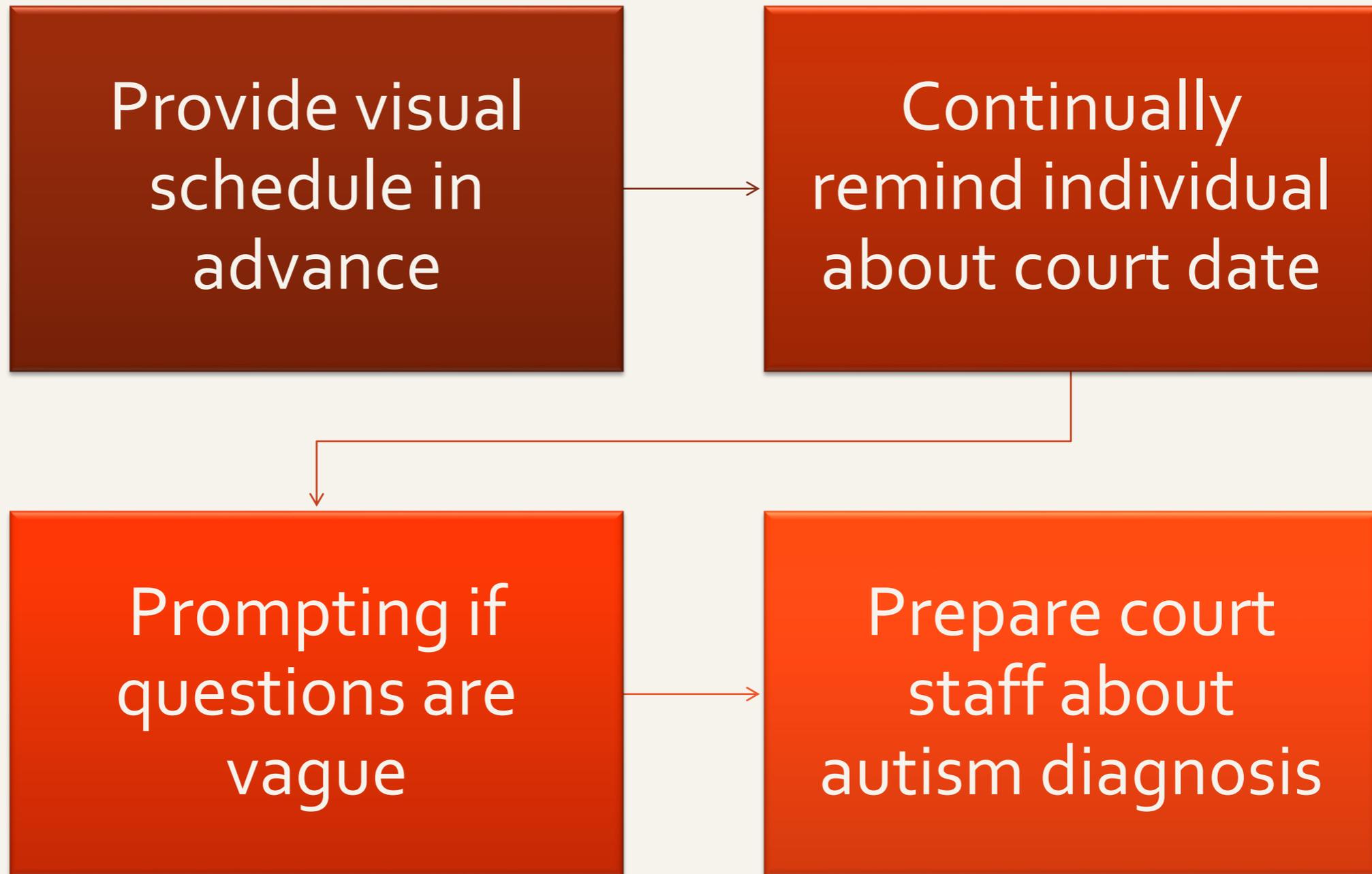
QUESTIONS?

APPEARING IN COURT



APPEARING IN COURT (CONT.)

Tools/Strategies for Supporting Individual in Court



DETENTION/SHELTER: INTAKE

Aspects of the Intake Process may be stressful and challenging

- Strip search
- Exam
- Urinalysis
- Questioning
- Locking doors

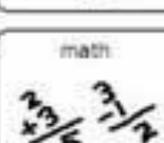
May need a quiet room to decompress

Provide warning and visual process if possible

DETENTION/SHELTER: NEW ROUTINE

Tools/Strategies for Coping with a New Routine

Daily Schedule

1	arrive at school 	7	Journal 
2	check in 	8	P.E. 
3	reading 	9	lunch 
4	writing 	10	art 
5	math 	11	shared reading 
6	recess 	12	bus 



DETENTION/SHELTER: NEW ROUTINE

Tools/Strategies for Easing Transition



Allow individual to shower alone or with few others around



Provide extra supervision in the gym



Allow individual to be in the front or back of the line



Allow for alone time after group activities



Assign appropriate chores

DETENTION/SHELTER: NEW ROUTINE (CONT.)

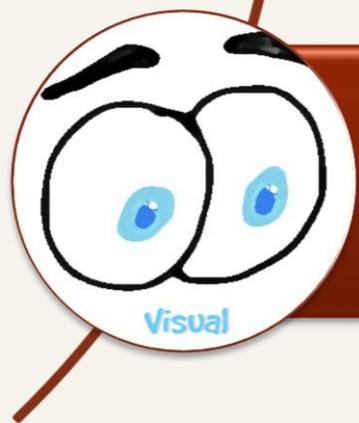
Tools/Strategies for Easing Transition



During room search, try to keep the room as it was



Understand, hygiene may be a challenge



Provide visuals as much as possible

DETENTION/SHELTER: ATTENDING SCHOOL



Make staff aware of individual's diagnosis

Provide visual schedule and supports during school hours

Communicate with home school

Allow for breaks



QUESTIONS?

RULES OF PROBATION

Be specific

- Provide examples
- Be literal

Provide Visuals

- Next to each rule

Sensory issues

- Electronic bracelet may be a challenge
- Consider community service options



WRAP UP

DOING YOUR OWN RESEARCH

The amount of information on ASD available can be overwhelming.

Make informed decisions while doing your research.



ASAT
Online
www.asatonline.org

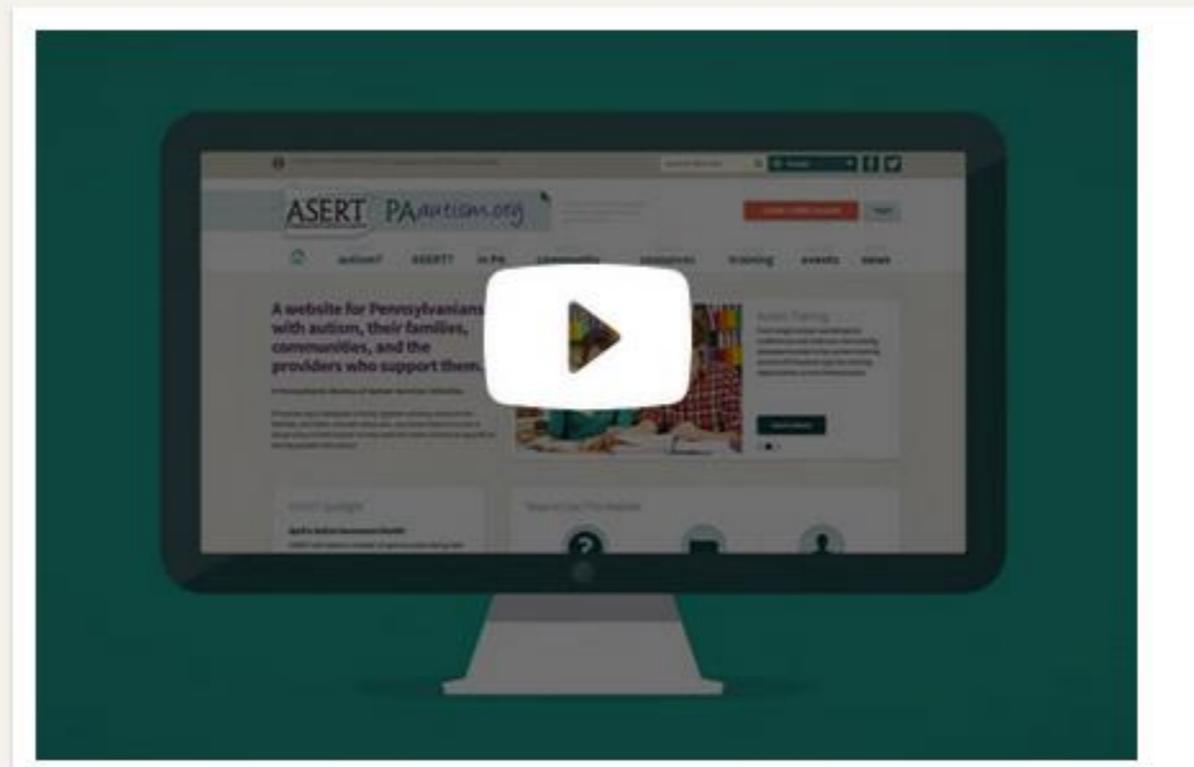
ASERT
www.paautism.org

CDC
www.cdc.gov

CREATING A PAAUTISM.ORG ACCOUNT



A website for Pennsylvanians with autism, their families, communities, and the providers who support them.



FOLLOW-UP TRAINING?



Email us!
ASERT@drexel.edu

Call us!
215-571-3181 or
215-571-3449





*Pennsylvania's leading source of
autism-related resources and information.*

877-231-4244

Website: www.PAautism.org

Email: info@PAautism.org

ASERT@drexel.edu

*ASERT is funded by the Bureau of Autism Services, PA
Department of Human Services*

