

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



What is an autism screening?

The Easy Access Autism Screening is for parents who might have concerns about their young child's development or functioning. These parents have not yet sought any guidance from their pediatrician or another professional, or they have already, but they do not agree with the results.

The screening is a simple process that will determine the need for an autism diagnosis. The results are entirely based on your responses to our questions.

How is an autism screening different than an autism diagnosis?

An autism screening is brief and based on just one source of information, usually the parent. The results can only suggest that parents seek an evaluation for more definitive information.

DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATIONS ARE BASED ON MULTIPLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION INCLUDING:

- *In-depth historical information from the parent*
- *A direct observation or interaction with the child*
- *Skills-based assessments*

The process can result in a formal diagnosis from a licensed practitioner, a diagnostic report and guidance on treatment.

What is the Communication and Symbolic Behavior Scales (CSBS) assessment?

Generally, this is a parent report questionnaire, but we are conducting the screening in an interview format for this project. The CSBS is strictly a screening tool and the only outcome will be a recommendation to seek a formal diagnostic evaluation for your child, or not. This specific assessment was chosen because it asks questions regarding the development of typical social, communication, and play behavior. The assessment consists of 24 questions and can be completed in about 10 minutes.

Who will conduct the screening?

While our screening will be conducted by staff members who have a great deal of experience working with individuals with autism and their parents, it is important to note they are not licensed professionals that can provide feedback regarding your child's functioning. The information you get from this process will be completely dependent upon your responses and the results of the screening questionnaire.

An autism screening can be completed over the phone in about 10 minutes.

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How long does the autism screening take?

Approximately 10-30 minutes, depending on the age of your child and the responses to our questions.

What is the cost?

There is no cost to participate in the Easy Access Autism Screening program.

How do I know if I should participate?

A parent may be concerned about their child's development for many reasons. If you have any questions about your child's development, notice that your child is not doing things other children are doing, or you see behaviors that seem different or odd, you should call for a screening. This screening process may support your concerns or put your mind at ease. It can also make you aware of behaviors and developmental milestones to monitor.

Are there age limitations to receiving an autism screening at SARRC?

This screening is best suited for children ages 12 months to 3 years. For children outside of this range, parents should pursue an autism evaluation. Please contact a SARRC Intake Specialist for evaluation options.

Contact our team at **602.606.9806** or learn more at autismcenter.org/diagnosis.

What are the benefits of completing an autism screening?

- **Accessibility:** More accessible than a formal evaluation.
- **Low commitment:** It's easy to make a phone call, no appointment is necessary.
- **Dedicated attention:** There is no other purpose to the call.
- **Free:** There are no costs or insurance involved.
- **Important results:** Puts you on a track to pursue a formal diagnosis, if necessary.
- **Peace of mind:** Screening will validate your concerns or let you know there is nothing to worry about at this time.

If the screener indicates signs and symptoms of autism, what is next?

Parents will receive a resource packet that outlines the steps for seeking a formal evaluation through SARRC or another community provider. The staff member who completes the screening will offer to connect parents with our diagnostic network coordinator to assist with the process of scheduling a formal evaluation.

The next steps are up to the parents who can choose to pursue a direct evaluation at SARRC, in the community, get a second opinion, or do nothing. Parents will be provided with resources and contact information if needed.

