**Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Glossary**

*List is not inclusive of all terms associated with ASD*

**Conventional /Informational/Instrumental Gestures**

**Type of gesture that replaces the use of words (i.e., nodding head for “yes/no”, waving hand inward for “come here”, clapping hands for “well done/good job”, holding one finger to lip to indicate “be quiet”).**

**Descriptive Gestures**

**Those gestures utilized to show how big/small, which way, position, and location of something. (i.e., pointing to the door to indicate that a person came from that way).**

**Echolalia**

**Echolalia is the repetition of words, phrases, intonation, or sounds of the speech of others. Immediate echolalia is the exact repetition of someone’s speech; immediately or soon after the child hears it. Delayed echolalia may occur several minutes, hours, days, or even weeks after the original verbalization was heard. Echolalia was once thought to be non-functional but is now understood to often serve a communicative or regulatory purpose for children with ASD.**

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**Emotional Regulation**  
Emotional regulation is a child's ability to notice and respond to internal and external sensory input, and then adjust his/her emotions and behavior to the demands of the surroundings.

**Emphatic Gestures**

The use of gestures to give feeling to what is being verbally stated. Moving while speaking (using hands while talking) to give meaning/emotion to what is being said.

**Grammatical Markings**

The use of incorrect plurals, verb tense, and/or pronouns when speaking.

**Idiosyncratic Use of Words/Phrases/Neologisms**

Inventing own words/names for items or using an unusual verbal routine again and again (i.e., instead of asking for milk child may ask for jug in the refrigerators that spills on the counter when you pour it or calls an elevator flat stairs). Also can be an unusual way of describing something that has occurred (i.e., I got a hurt on my hair instead of I got hit on the head).

**Joint Attention/Shared Attention**  
Children seek to share attention with others spontaneously during the first year of life. Joint or shared attention is first accomplished by the caregiver looking at what the infant is looking at. Infants learn early to seek joint attention spontaneously by shifting gaze between an object of interest and another person and back to the object (also called 3-point gaze), following the gaze or point of others, and using gestures to draw others' attention to objects (e.g. holding out and showing an object or pointing to an object), either by pointing to it or by eye gaze. This desire to share attention on objects builds to sharing enjoyment by looking at others while smiling when enjoying an activity, drawing others attention to things that are interesting, and checking to see if others notice an achievement (e.g., after building a tower of blocks, looking up and clapping and smiling to share the achievement).

**Functional Play with Objects**

Functional play is when a child uses objects for their appropriate or usual purpose, like rolling a toy car or ball, stirring with a spoon, or brushing a doll's hair with a brush.

**Nonfunctional Routines**  
Nonfunctional routines are specified, sequential, and apparently purposeless repeated actions or behaviors that a child engages in, such as always lining up toys in a certain order each time instead of playing with them.

**Perseverative Speech**  
Perseverative speech refers to repeating the same phrase or word over and over or bringing up the same topic repeatedly with a sense of "getting stuck" when it is no longer appropriate.

**Pointing**  
Pointing is an important gesture of the index finger used to request an object or to draw attention to an object to comment on it or share interest in it. The ability to make pointing gestures typically develops by the age of 12 months.

**Pragmatics**  
Pragmatics are social rules for using functional spoken language in a meaningful context or conversation.

**Prosody**  
Prosody is the rhythm and melody of spoken language expressed through rate, pitch, stress, inflection, or intonation. Children with ASD can range from having no functional language (do not use words conventionally for communication) to having very proficient vocabulary and sentence structure. Usually, those who talk have odd intonation (flat, monotonous, stiff, or "sing songy" without emphasis on the important words), and those who do not yet talk make unusual sounds.

**Reciprocal Communication**

Reciprocal communication/interaction is a type of communication in which children use verbal and nonverbal behaviors to engage in mutual, interactive dialogue. Characteristics include (but are not limited to) asking one's conversational partner a question, adding additional information to a statement they make, and/or guiding a conversation to elicit additional remarks.

**Repetitive Motor Mannerisms**  
Repetitive motor mannerisms are stereotyped or repetitive movements or posturing of the body. They include mannerisms of the hands (such as handflapping, finger twisting or flicking, rubbing, or wringing hands), body (such as rocking, swaying, or pacing), and odd posturing (such as posturing of the fingers, hands, or arms).

**Restricted Patterns of Interest**  
Restricted patterns of interest refer to a limited range of interests that are intense in focus. This may also be referred to as stereotyped or circumscribed patterns of interests because of the rigidity and narrowness of these interests. This may be particularly apparent in very verbally fluent children with ASD/Asperger Syndrome who often become obsessed with a single topic for months or even years. Restricted interests, obsessions, and compulsions can interfere with a child's normal activity or social interaction, and can be related to anxiety. In young children with ASD, similar restricted patterns may be evident in repetitive movements with objects. Rather than playing with toys in simple pretend play, or using objects in appropriate ways, children with ASD line up or stack toys or objects in the same way over and over again, persistently knocking down and rolling objects, or wobbling or spinning objects, and/or may show an intense focus and interest in how these actions or objects look.

**Scripting**  
Echolalia, sometimes referred to as scripting, is the repetition of words, phrases, intonation, or sounds of the speech of others, sometimes taken from movies, but also sometimes taken from other sources such as favorite books or something someone else has said.

**Self-Stimulating Behaviors or "Stimming"**  
Self-stimulating behaviors or "stimming" are stereotyped or repetitive movements or posturing of the body. They include mannerisms of the hands (such as handflapping, finger twisting or flicking, rubbing, or wringing hands), body (such as rocking, swaying, or pacing), and odd posturing (such as posturing of the fingers, hands, or arms). Sometimes they involve objects. These mannerisms may appear not to have any meaning or function, although they may have significance for the child, such as providing sensory stimulation (also referred to as self-stimulating behavior), communicating to avoid demands, or request a desired object or attention, or soothing when wary or anxious.

**Social Overtures**

**Ability to initiate social interaction with another (ADOS focus on the quality of these attempts rather than just the ability to initiate overtures with another).**

**Social Reciprocity**  
Social reciprocity is the back-and-forth flow of social interaction. The term reciprocity refers to how the behavior of one person influences and is influenced by the behavior of another person and vice versa. Social reciprocity is the dance of social interaction and involves partners working together on a common goal of successful interaction. Adjustments are made by both partners until success is achieved. The skills involved in social reciprocity in very young children begin with showing interest in interacting with others and exchanging smiles. This builds to being able to share conventional meanings with words, and later topics, in conversation. Impairment in social reciprocity may be seen in not taking an active role in social games, preferring solitary activities, or using a person's hand as a tool or a person as if they are mechanical objects. This may lead to not noticing another person's distress or lack of interest in the focus or topic of conversation.

**Theory of Mind**

**The cognitive ability to recognize that one’s feelings, perceptions, beliefs, and desires may differ from others.**