

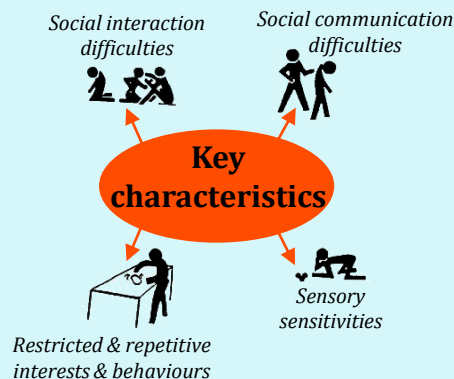
Mental health and autism spectrum conditions

Dr Eilidh Cage, Royal Holloway

eilidh.cage@rhul.ac.uk

What is autism?

- ↳ Autism is a life long **neurodevelopmental** condition, meaning the brain develops differently.
- ↳ The autism **spectrum** is made up of lots of different people who show the key characteristics of autism in different ways.



Mental health in autism: Facts and figures

- ↳ **77%** of young autistic adults followed up from childhood had mental health difficulties¹
- ↳ **Mood disorders** are the most common mental health difficulty²
- ↳ Incidence of **depression** in autism could be as high as 34%³
- ↳ Rates of **anxiety** much higher in those with autism compared to those without autism⁴
- ↳ **Intolerance of uncertainty** could contribute to anxiety in autism⁵
- ↳ Other co-occurring conditions include **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, panic disorder and agoraphobia**⁶

Autistic adolescents and mental health

- ↳ Adolescence is from the start of puberty to when an individual has a stable adult role⁷
- ↳ Adolescents with autism have to contend with the pressures of being a **teenager**, like their non-autistic peers⁸
- ↳ One study found that autistic adolescents were as affected by **ostracism** as their non-autistic peers, feeling more anxious⁹
- ↳ **Social anxiety** appears to be higher in autistic adolescents¹⁰

Take part in research looking at mental health and autism acceptance:
email eilidh.cage@rhul.ac.uk

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