

Autism is...

a perplexing life-long mental disability affecting about 600,000 people in Britain today.

Isolated in a world of their own, people with autism need help to fit in.

The first step towards progress is recognition of the condition.

These pin people illustrate *some* ways in which autism is displayed.

Displays indifference

Joins in only if adult insists and assists

One-sided interaction

Indicates needs by using an adult's hand

Does not play with other children

Talks incessantly about only one topic

Echolalic - copies words like parrot

Bizarre behaviour

Inappropriate laughing or giggling

Handles or soins objects

No eye contact

Variety is not the spice of life

Lack of creative, pretend play

But some can do some things very well, very quickly but *not* tasks involving social understanding

- Difficulty with social relationships
- Difficulty with verbal communication
- Difficulty with non-verbal communication
- Difficulty in the development of play and imagination
- Resistance to change in routine

Early diagnosis is essential if people with autism are to achieve full potential. It is only when their handicap is understood that they can be helped to maximise skills and minimise problems.

