

## Studies

### [Risk of Alzheimer's disease in Down syndrome: Insights gained by multi-omics](#)

Individuals with Down syndrome (DS) are highly susceptible to Alzheimer's disease (AD). The integration of genomics, transcriptomics, epigenomics, proteomics, and metabolomics enables unprecedented understanding of DS-AD, offering a detailed picture of this complex issue. The vast -omics data also present challenges that reflect the complexity of genetic information flow.

### [Behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia and Alzheimer's disease progression in Down syndrome](#)

Adults with Down syndrome (DS) have a 90% lifetime risk for Alzheimer's disease (AD), with neurobiological pathology present decades prior to dementia onset. The profile and timing of cognitive decline in DS is well-documented. However, there is a small body of research on whether Behavioral and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD) occur early on in the progression of AD in DS and are associated with early AD pathology (i.e., amyloid-beta [ $A\beta$ ] and neurofibrillary tau tangles [NFT]).

### [A systematic review of sexual health, knowledge, and behavior in Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects social interaction, communication, and behavior, with significant challenges in sexual experiences, relationships, and victimization. This review consolidates findings to improve understanding of sexual health in ASD.

### [The effect of exercise intervention on balance and executive function in children with autism spectrum disorder: a meta-analysis](#)

This study primarily evaluated the effects of exercise intervention on balance and executive function in children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

### [Is Autism a Disability? The Perception of Autistic Adults in Quebec](#)

Autism spectrum disorder has long been characterized as a series of deficits. Terms like "person with autism spectrum disorder" emphasize the disorder rather than the individual. This negative perception of autism is beginning to change.

### [Neurodivergent Pupils' Experiences of School Distress and Attendance Difficulties](#)

Evidence suggests that neurodivergent pupils are disproportionately impacted by school distress and attendance difficulties in mainstream schools in the United Kingdom. Research on school distress and attendance has predominantly consulted parents and teachers and neglected the pupil voice. This qualitative, online interview study involved neurodivergent adolescents (n = 30; 11–16 years), who were currently experiencing school distress and attendance difficulties, to understand their lived experiences.

### [Self-reported symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\), autism spectrum disorder \(ASD\), and affective lability in discriminating adult ADHD, ASD and their co-occurrence](#)

To diagnose and manage adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), or their co-occurrence (ADHD + ASD), clinicians must identify specific features that differentiate these diagnostic categories. Self-report questionnaires targeting specific features are widely used and, together with clinical assessments, provide reliable diagnoses.

### [‘Read My Lips, Not My Body’: A Thematic Analysis of Autistic People's Social Communication Preferences, Experiences, and Expectations](#)

This study explores how autistic people communicate differently from non-autistic people, and how these differences can lead to misunderstandings. Research has often assumed that autistic people have communication difficulties, but more recent research has emphasised how differences between autistic and non-autistic people might lead to mutual misunderstandings.

### [Oral health of individuals with intellectual disabilities: a global cross-sectional study from the special olympics world games 2023](#)

The aim of this study was to analyze the interrelationships between oral health status and dental visits among athletes participating in the Special Olympics World Games Berlin, Germany 2023.

### [‘We are the engine’: a focus group study on clinical practice guideline development with European patient advocates for rare congenital malformations and/or intellectual disability](#)

Individuals living with rare congenital malformations and/or intellectual disability often face challenges in accessing appropriate healthcare. Clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) may serve as a tool to provide evidence-based care for rare diseases, but their development is complex, and the views of affected individuals and families often remain unknown.

### [Leveraging artificial intelligence for diagnosis of children autism through facial expressions](#)

The global population contains a substantial number of individuals who experience autism spectrum disorder, thus requiring immediate identification to enable successful intervention approaches. The authors assess the detection of autism-related learning difficulties in children by evaluating deep learning models that use transfer learning methods along with fine-tuning methods.

### [Genomic and Developmental Models to Predict Cognitive and Adaptive Outcomes in Autistic Children](#)

Question: What is the predictive performance of combining genetic variants and developmental milestones to predict intellectual disability (ID) in autistic children?

### [Transcranial Pulsed Current Stimulation and Social Functioning in Children With Autism: A Randomized Clinical Trial](#)

Question: Is prefrontal-cerebellar transcranial pulsed current stimulation (tPCS) a safe and efficacious therapy for social functioning in children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)?

## Study Summaries

### [“Life-changing”: adults receiving an autism diagnosis after BPD \(mis\)diagnosis](#)

Autistic adults who were undiagnosed in childhood have reported a range of negative experiences associated with their missed diagnosis, including social isolation, diminished self-understanding, and inadequate mental healthcare (Huang Y. et al, 2020; Leedham A. et al, 2020). However, for many late-diagnosed autistic adults, receiving an autism diagnosis brings a sense of relief, self-acceptance, and improved management of mental and physical health conditions (Lilley R. et al, 2022; Stagg SD & Belcher H, 2019).

## Editorials

### [Vaccines work... and do not cause autism](#)

Vaccines have saved millions of lives, yet their importance and safety is repeatedly in question. We cannot let disinformation campaigns get in the way of global public health—it is not time to defund, but rather invest in these life-saving tools.

## Calls for Evidence

### [Shaping the national cancer plan \(easy read\)](#)

We want to hear your ideas about how to make cancer care better for everyone. Your ideas will help the government to make a national cancer plan for England.

## Blogs

### [The Role of Siblings: A Lifelong Bond That Shapes Us](#)

April 10th is National Siblings Day – Learning Disability England echos the words of member Sibs who say 'we know what a valuable role siblings play in the lives of their disabled brothers and sisters, how unique their relationship can be and how they need to be recognised and celebrated in their own right'.

### [What Matters To Me: Effective Voice for People with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities](#)

On the 13th March, I went to the Challenging Behaviour Foundation's launch of the 'What Matters to Me' project at the House of Commons.

## News

### [1,435 autistic people remain locked away in mental health hospitals](#)

It's been one year since the NHS and Government failed to meet their target to reduce the numbers of autistic people and people with a learning disability in mental health hospitals in England. Yet new data released today shows 2,025 autistic people and people with a learning disability remain locked away, and 1,435 (71%) of these people are autistic.

### [Number of autistic people in inappropriate mental health settings has increased](#)

A group of charities have written to the Minister of State for Care, Stephen Kinnock MP, urging swift action as new data shows 2,025 autistic people and people with a learning disability remain locked away in mental health hospitals.

### [BBC News at Ten Broadcast on Seclusion](#)

On Wednesday 9th April, the BBC broadcast an item on the News at Ten featuring a child being held in a prone restraint within a seclusion room at Springwell Leeds Academy North. His mother shared the footage of the room which she said resembled "a holding cell." She added, "This is a child, and these are five grown adults in a school where he's supposed to be safe."

### ['I'd named my autistic son in my will – I didn't realise that would only cause problems'](#)

In this extract from her book, Rhiannon Gogh says parents often aren't aware specialist planning is needed if you leave money to a vulnerable dependant.



### [Young people with SEN face more bullying and discrimination](#)

Young people with special educational needs (SEN) experience much higher rates of discrimination and bullying than their peers, leading to worse outcomes in mental wellbeing, life satisfaction, self-esteem and emotional difficulties.

### [Services for carers could go 'to the wall' due to national insurance hike](#)

Vital services for carers could go "to the wall" due to the Government's hike in employer National Insurance contributions, according to the Carers Trust.

### [Autistic people's experiences of periods are under-researched – here's why that needs to change](#)

Periods can be painful, unpredictable and disruptive. And for autistic people, they can present additional challenges. From sensory sensitivities to barriers accessing healthcare, the experience of autistic menstruation remains under-explored in research.

### [Thousands of children and young people on "hidden" ADHD and autism waiting lists in Scotland](#)

Thousands of children are on "hidden" waiting lists for autism and ADHD assessments in Scotland, BBC Scotland reports. This is despite the Scottish government hitting its waiting times target for young people's mental health services for the first time last month.

### [Autism diagnosis rises to one in 31 school-age children, according to CDC](#)

New data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that one in 31 children in the United States is diagnosed with autism before the age of eight.

### [RFK Jr giving families 'false hope' on autism, says outgoing US vaccine official](#)

The US health secretary, Robert F Kennedy Jr, should not offer "false hope" to families by boasting he can figure out what causes autism as soon as September, says the physician who resigned as the nation's top vaccine official amid what he called anti-vaccination misinformation from the Trump administration cabinet member.

### [Pro baseball player Tarik El-Abour is everything RFK Jr says he can't be](#)

The US health and human services secretary dismissed autistic people in recent comments. It's not hard to disprove his theories.