

## Autism and communication

This brief factsheet highlights some of the main impacts of autism on communication. It is based on information from The National Autistic Society.

It identifies general practical action you can take to remove barriers to participation that people with autism may face. Remember every person is different.

People with autism can find unfamiliar people and situations uncomfortable. They might find talking overwhelming and may choose to withdraw from a conversation completely.

Other difficulties can include:

- understanding what other people's facial expressions, body language and gestures mean
- following conversations and jokes
- waiting for other people to finish speaking.

People with autism may:

- talk at length about their own views
- not talk enough
- start speaking before the other person has finished
- use little eye contact or emotion when talking to you.

### Key actions

To enable a person with autism to engage more fully, make sure they have:

- time to adjust to new people and new situations
- assistance if they need it – for example, an individual may choose to be accompanied by an advocate
- meetings in a place where they feel comfortable.

### Further information:

The National Autistic Society ([www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk))