Autism is prevalent
• 1 out of 6 children are identified with a developmental disorder and/or behavioral problem
• Approximately 1 in 88 children are diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder
• Developmental disorders have subtle signs and may be easily missed

Listen to parents
• Early signs of autism are often present before 18 months
• Parents usually DO have concerns that something is wrong
• Parents generally DO give accurate and quality information
• When parents do not spontaneously raise concerns, ask if they have any

Act early
• Make screening and surveillance an important part of your practice (as endorsed by the AAP)
• Know the subtle differences between typical and atypical development
• Learn to recognize red flags
• Use validated screening tools and identify problems early
• Improve the quality of life for children and their families through early and appropriate intervention

Refer
• To Early Intervention or a local school program (do not wait for a diagnosis)
• To an autism specialist, or team of specialists, immediately for a definitive diagnosis
• To audiology and rule out a hearing impairment
• To local community resources for help and family support

Monitor
• Schedule a follow-up appointment to discuss concerns more thoroughly
• Look for other conditions known to be associated with autism (eg, seizures, GI, sleep, behavior)
• Educate parents and provide them with up-to-date information
• Advocate for families with local early intervention programs, schools, respite care agencies, and insurance companies
• Continue surveillance and watch for additional or late signs of autism and/or other developmental disorders
• Continue to provide a medical home


The recommendations in this document do not indicate an exclusive course of treatment or serve as a standard of medical care. Variations, taking into account individual circumstances, may be appropriate.

This project was initially funded by a cooperative agreement between the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
**Surveillance and Screening Algorithm: Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs)**

1a: Pediatric Patient at Preventive Care Visit

1b: Extra Visit for Autism-Related Concern, ASD Risk Factor, or Other Developmental/Behavioral Concern

2: Perform Surveillance
   - Score 1 for Each Risk Factor:
     - Sibling with ASD
     - Parental Concern
     - Other Caregiver Concern
     - Pediatrician Concern

3: What is the Score?
   - Score = 2+
   - Score = 1
   - Score = 0

3a: Is the Patient at Least 18-Months Old?
   - No
   - Yes

5a: Evaluate Social-Communication Skills

5b: Administer ASD-Specific Screening Tool

5c: Administer ASD-Specific Screening Tool

6a: Are the Results Positive or Concerning?
   - No
   - Yes

6b: Are the Results Positive or Concerning?
   - Yes
   - No

7a: 1. Provide Parental Education
     2. Schedule Extra Visit Within 1 Month
     3. Re-enter Algorithm at 1b

7b: 1. Schedule Next Preventive Visit
     2. Re-enter Algorithm at 1a

8: 1. Provide Parental Education
   2. Simultaneously Refer for:
      a. Comprehensive ASD Evaluation
      b. Early Intervention/Early Childhood Education Services
      c. Audiologic Evaluation
   3. Schedule Follow-Up Visit
   4. Re-enter Algorithm at 1b

Legend
- Start
- Action/Process
- Decision
