Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental disability; signs typically appear during early childhood and affects a person’s ability to communicate and interact with others. ASD is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a “spectrum condition” that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. There is no known single cause of autism, but increased awareness, early diagnosis/intervention, and access to appropriate services/supports can lead to significantly improved outcomes.

**NUMBERS**

- 3.5 million Americans live with Autism Spectrum Disorder.*

**SIGNS**

- Learning disability such as delayed speech development
- Inappropriate language
- Social withdrawal
- Difficulty expressing needs; may use gestures

**Best Practices** for Students with Autism

- Use simple sentences and bullets when possible
- Use concrete visual methods to teach number concepts
- When possible avoid fluorescent lights due to the flicker
- Students with autism are literal; do not use figures of speech
- Do not use bright colors
- Avoid long blocks of text
- Avoid sensory overload such as strong odors and loud noises in enclosed classrooms
- Give the student extra time to process spoken language

* Autism Society Organization
** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[http://traviselearning.net](http://traviselearning.net)