

What are issues faced by parents as a child with autism is growing up...

toddler to age 17-18 prior to graduation...

Eren Says:

Parents with children with autism often try to make sure their kid is given a diagnosis check at age 2-4. That testing can be expensive, but it's better than being unprepared...still, it's expensive, and many people are rightfully worried. However, the sooner a child gets checked...if they're diagnosed early enough, enough support and therapy can make major changes.

Raising a toddler is hard enough without the behavior issues. Children on the spectrum will have to literally learn social skills and other things from scratch since they cannot instinctively grasp many skills. Teaching them to be going to the bathroom will be harder (in addition to doing different body functions). There are therapists who can help...but this leads to the next issue...

Parents are not often aware of resources available for autistic children. They also need financial support or resources to utilize them...furthermore, there are many resources out of reach for many parents unless they are given vocational rehabilitation program money, which many must be forced onto a waiting list to have...

Next up...schools...they don't always know how to work with autistic individuals, and have used seclusion or discipline methods without understanding the needs of students with autism. Sadly there is still a lot of work to be done on many legislative levels, including the current US Attorney General, Jeff Sessions, (link <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2016/12/02/sen-sessions-once-linked-special-education-law-to-decline-in-civility-in-classrooms/> face...Never mind that children with autism, with their lack of instinctual social skills, make them the perfect target for bullies and scammers....they need friends, and support systems in schools to help them reach improvement...

Traditional values: Many parents aren't willing to acknowledge the difficulties of raising a spectrum child or willing to deal with it...some parents feel that autism can be "disciplined out of a child"...doesn't really work that well.

Because children with autism struggle with certain senses that may get overwhelmed by certain stimuli...and with difficulty being able to communicate, they may not necessarily be understood, and the problems might not necessarily get solved...

Another issue parents face is stigma...just by having a child on the spectrum, they can be stereotyped and discriminated against by the community.

They need hope and information and resources and support...all of these things many community members aren't always willing to give.

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“Self-advocates serve as voices containing knowledge and hope....it is the job of people like myself to help parents and adults find these things.”

Different therapies, especially speech, are needed to help a child growing up...I used to point and grunt, with limited speech, for a long part of my childhood before I was 10...took a lot of therapy to get me to have a vocabulary that I could use.

Suppose another one would be figuring out ways to explain things to their children...one idea I've thought about, thanks to the suggestions of friends, is the idea of video game analogies and metaphors, because describing things through a video game perspective, such as teamwork, organizational planning, strategies, budgeting, etc make more sense that way to a lot of kids.

Eren Niederhoffer is a self advocate who offers information and support on the topic of self advocacy. He has contributed this advice in collaboration with the Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership. The information provided on the Georgia Parent Mentor website and on this document is intended as general information only and does not take into account your objectives, situation and needs. is General Information only, so does NOT take into account your objectives, financial situation and needs. Before acting on any information contained in this website you should consider the appropriateness of the advice having regard to your objectives, situation and needs.