

Treating Autism Spectrum Disorder: The Options



Getting a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can be stressful for both the child and the parents. However, it is important to note that seeking help and treatment immediately after a diagnosis is pivotal to ensuring the best recovery outcomes for your child. As parents, we understand how difficult it can be for you to cope with the diagnosis and the implications, but time is of the essence.

Once you decide to seek help and treatment, the next question arises, what are the types of treatment options available and what is the best option among them. To be honest, there is no one-size fits all approach to treating ASD. Since the disorder can occur in varying severities and manifest as different symptoms, treatment options differ in efficacy from child to child. The key is to find a treatment approach that works for your child, and for you and to stick with it as long as your mental health professional suggests it.

Please do read on to understand the various treatment approaches available to treat Autism Spectrum Disorder, and remember that you and your child are never alone in this journey of recovery:

Treating Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism Spectrum Disorder has no definitive cure right now; hence treatment options focus on the reduction of symptoms that may interfere with a child's daily living, and impede their quality of life. Because ASD affects different children in different ways, treatment plans too must be tailor-made for each child. Treating ASD usually involves a multidisciplinary team that addresses the disorder comprehensively.

Treatment can be focused on a child's academic, social, and personal life, and as the child finishes their education and move on to a job or higher studies, the treatment can evolve to accommodate their changing needs. Some people may need assistance throughout their lives to continue employment, to train for a job, and in daily activities as well.

Treatments for Autism Spectrum Disorder can fall under one of the following verticals:

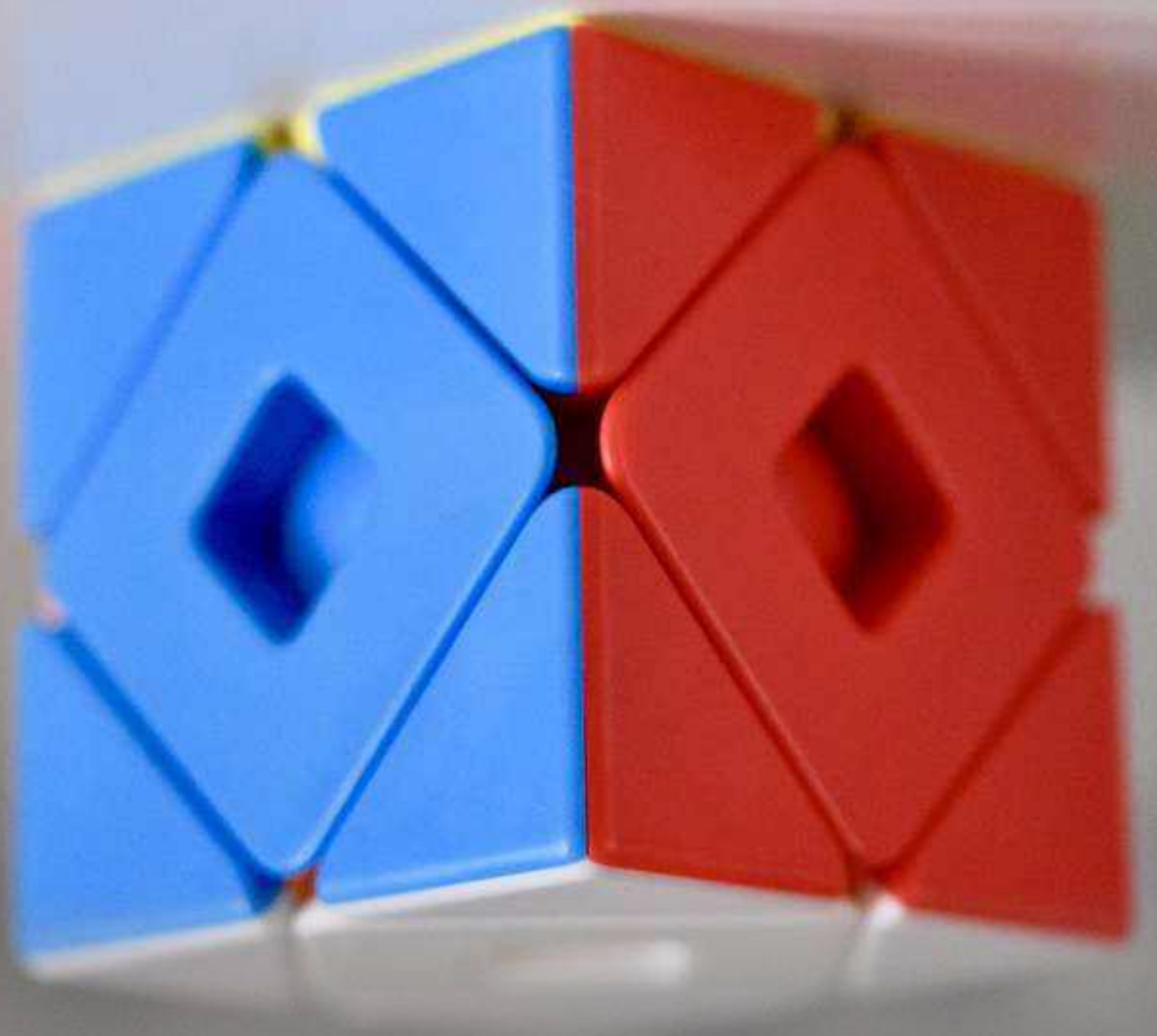
- Behavioral
- Developmental
- Educational
- Social-Relational
- Pharmacological
- Psychological



Behavioral Approach to Treating Autism Spectrum Disorder

Children with ASD have multiple symptoms that affect their ability to communicate with other people, affect their behavior, and more. The behavioral approach to treating ASD focuses on the processes before an action is committed, and the aftermath of these actions. Research has shown that this is one of the more impactful treatment methods for ASD, and it has gained widespread acceptance among educators and mental health professionals. The major behavioral treatments for ASD fall under something called Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) in which desired behaviors are encouraged and undesirable behaviors are discouraged.

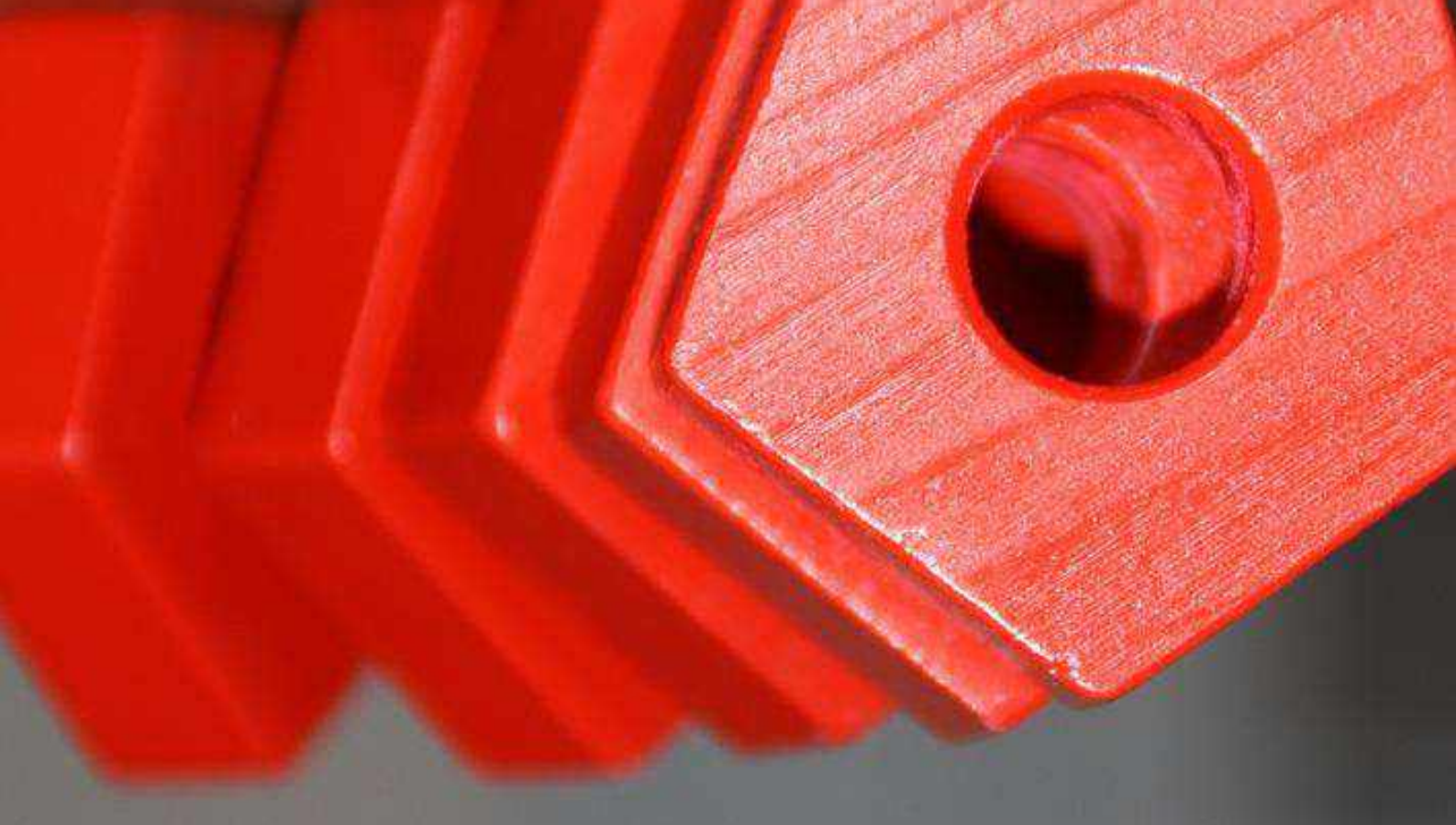




The progress a child makes is tracked. Under the ABA teaching style, there are two variations:

Discrete Trial Training: In this approach, a larger task is broken down into multiple simple steps that are easier for the child. During this task, desired responses are encouraged and rewarded, while the wrong or undesirable responses are ignored.

Pivotal Response Training: This is conducted in a day-to-day setting with the goal of improving some important skills that will help the person cope with daily life. A pivotal skill example is the ability to initiate communication or conversations with people.



Developmental Approach

Specific developmental capabilities, like language or physical skills, or a larger spectrum of integrated developmental abilities, are the focus of developmental methods. Behavioral and developmental techniques are often integrated.

Speech and Language Therapy is the most prevalent developmental therapy for persons with ASD. Speech and Language Therapy aids in the comprehension and use of speech and language. Some persons with ASD use words to communicate. Others may use signs, gestures, photographs, or an electronic communication device to communicate.

Occupational therapy provides skills that allow a person to live independently as much as is feasible. Dressing, eating, bathing, and interacting with others are examples of skills. Occupational therapy might also involve the following services:

- Sensory Integration Therapy is used to help people to modify their reactions to sensory input that is either too restricting or too overwhelming.
- Physical therapy can aid in developing physical abilities such as delicate finger motions or bigger trunk and body movements.

Educational Approach

In a classroom context, educational therapies are offered. The Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication-Handicapped Children (TEACCH) method is one form of educational strategy. TEACCH is founded on the concept that consistency and visual learning are beneficial to persons with autism. It gives instructors tools to change the organization of the classroom and enhance academic and other outcomes. Daily routines, for example, can be written or sketched and shown prominently. Learning centers can have boundaries put around them. Visual instructions or physical demonstrations can be used to supplement spoken instructions.



Medicine based Approach:

There are no drugs that can help with ASD's primary symptoms. Some drugs can help persons with ASD operate better by treating co-occurring symptoms. Medication might, for example, aid with excessive energy, inability to concentrate, or self-harming behaviors like head pounding or hand biting. In addition to physical illnesses including seizures, sleep difficulties, and stomach or other gastrointestinal problems, medication can assist in controlling co-occurring psychological diseases like anxiety or depression.

When contemplating the use of medication, it is critical to consult with a doctor who has expertise in treating patients with ASD. This is true for both prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Individuals, families, and physicians must collaborate to track development and reactions so that unwanted side effects are avoided.



Social Approach

The goal of social-relational therapy is to improve social skills and strengthen emotional ties. Parents or peer mentors are involved in several social-relational techniques.

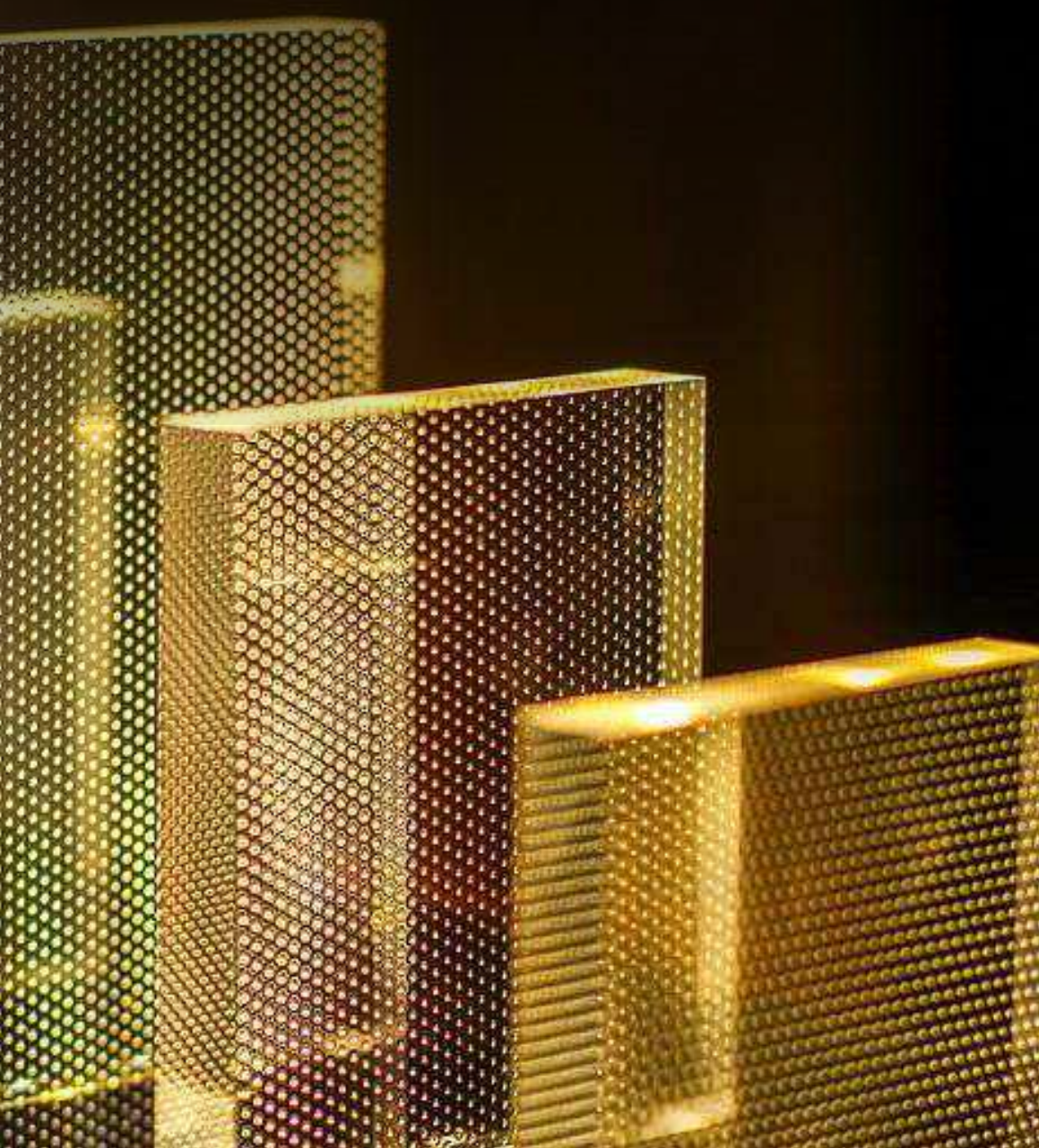
- The Developmental, Individual Differences, Relationship-Based paradigm (also known as "Floortime") encourages parents and therapists to follow the individual's interests to increase communication possibilities.
- The Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) paradigm entails activities that boost motivation, enthusiasm, and capacities to engage in shared social relationships.
- Simple explanations of what to expect in a social scenario are provided in Social Stories.
- People with ASD can practice social skills in a structured environment by participating in Social Skills Groups.



Psychological Approach

People with ASD can benefit from psychological interventions to help them manage anxiety, depression, and other mental health difficulties. CBT (Cognitive-Behavior Therapy) is a psychological treatment that focuses on understanding the relationships between ideas, feelings, and behaviors. A therapist and the individual collaborate to set objectives and then modify how the person thinks about a circumstance in order to change how they react to it.

All of this is meant to be informational in nature. Your mental health professional or doctor will be able to advise you best on how to progress. But, keep in mind the most necessary part of any recovery journey is patience and optimism! With continued support and effort, your child will be able to lead a happy and contented life!



At Cadabams, we combine the best mental health professionals with advanced infrastructure to offer accelerated recovery journeys. Our expert mental health professionals ensure that individuals get the recovery journey they deserve!





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