

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
CHILD & ADOLESCENT
PSYCHIATRY

W W W . A A C A P . O R G

Clinical Essentials on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in Children and Adolescents

Course Design: This course includes 5 modules for a total of 5 hours and 40 minutes of video tailored to the course learning objectives, followed by a 25-question post-test. The materials for this course were reviewed and selected by AACAP's Autism and Intellectual Disability Committee and Clinical Essentials Committee in December 2025. This updated course replaces earlier versions and includes entirely new content selected from previously recorded AACAP meetings.

Learning Objectives: At the conclusion of this continuing medical educational activity, the participant will be able to:

1. Assess *DSM-5-TR* criteria through interview, exam, and screening measures.
2. Explain the practical application of clinical genetic testing in autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in everyday practice.
3. Discuss the evaluation of psychiatric and behavioral conditions in ASD.
4. Describe evidence-based behavioral interventions for core ASD symptoms.
5. Analyze evidence-based literature on psychopharmacological interventions for ASD.

Course Outline

Module 1: Prevalence, Assessment, Diagnosis, and Genetic Testing

- Prevalence, Assessment, and Diagnosis
- Recommendations and Limitations of Genetic Testing

Speakers:

- Rebecca Muhle, MD: Columbia University, New York, NY; Roma Vasa, MD: Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD

Module 2: Co-Occurring Psychiatric Disorders

- Prevalence
- Irritability
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

- Anxiety and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Mood Disorders
- Catatonia
- Sleep Disturbances

Speakers:

- Olivia Hinderer, MD: Washington University, St. Louis, MO; Gagan Joshi, MD: Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA; Beth Malow, MD: Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, TN; Robyn Thom, MD: Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA; Roma Vasa, MD: Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD; Jeremy Veenstra-VanderWeele, MD: Columbia University/New York State Psychiatric Institute, New York, NY

Module 3: Behavioral Interventions for Core ASD Symptoms and Associated Comorbidities

- Overview of Behavioral Therapies
- Therapeutic Interventions for Anxiety
- Therapeutic Interventions for Emotion Dysregulation
- Positive Behavioral Interventions
- Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS)

Speakers:

- M. Frampton Gwynette, MD: Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC; Megan R. Joy, PhD: Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health, Downingtown, PA; Amy Keefer, PhD: Kennedy Krieger Institute, Baltimore, MD; Elizabeth Laugeson, PsyD: University of California Los Angeles, CA; Rebecca Shaffer, PsyD: University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, Cincinnati, OH

Module 4: Pharmacological Interventions

- Overview and Data
- Mood and Bipolar Disorders
- Aggression
- Catatonia
- Sleep

Speakers:

- Beth Malow, MD: Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, TN; Alice R. Mao, MD: Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX; Robyn Thom, MD: Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA; Roma Vasa, MD:

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD; Jeremy Veenstra-VanderWeele, MD: Columbia University/New York State Psychiatric Institute, New York, NY

Module 5: Navigating Systems of Care Across the Lifespan

- Systems of Care
- Transition Planning
- Sibling and Caregiver Stress

Speakers:

- Ronald Lee Franzen, MD: University of Texas Health, Houston, TX; Nasim Khalfe, MD: Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX; Alice R. Mao, MD: Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX; Robyn Thom, MD: Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA; Lisa Yeh, MD: Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC