

Autism Timeline: A History of Autism

In the 110 years since Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler coined the term autism, much has changed over the years. The journey of understanding autism continues to grow and while the autism has changed over the years, there are still many more things to discover. Hopefully we are moving from awareness to getting to a place of simply accepting people who bring special gifts to the world.

1908- Swiss psychiatrist, Eugene Bleuler is the first to use the autism to describe individuals with schizophrenia who lost contact with reality.

1912- Dr. Bleuler publishes “Das Autistische Denken” in a journal of psychiatry and presents his thoughts on how a person with autism experiences the world.

1938- Dr. Hans Asperger presents a lecturer on child psychology. He adapts Bleuler’s term “autism” and uses the term “autistic psychopathy” to describe children showing social withdrawal and overly intense preoccupations.

1938- Beamon Triplett writes a thirty-three page account of his 4 year- old Donald’s unusual behavior and sends it to Leo Kanner.

1943- Dr. Leo Kanner describes a childhood disorder involving social and language impairments and the presence of restricted or repetitive behaviors. The account of 11 children leading to a distinct syndrome.

1944- Dr. Hans Asperger reports on 4 children with a pattern of behavior he terms autistic psychopathy- behaviors include reduce empathy, difficulties with forming friendships, impairments in the ability to maintain reciprocal conversations.

1952- The first edition of DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual) is published.

1959- LSD is used as treatment for autistic schizophrenic children.

1962- The National Autistic Society was created- The first autism organization.

1965- National Society for Autistic Children was founded.

1966- South African psychologist, Victor Lotter publishes the first prevalence study on autism in England.

1966- 4.5 in 10,000 are diagnosed with autism in the United States.

1966- Childhood autism rating scale introduced.

1967- Bruno Bettlheim publishes infantile autism and the *Birth of Self* becomes bestseller; blames mothers for autism.

1969- Dr. Kanner exonerates parents of responsibility for their children.

1970- Lorna Wing uses the term autistic spectrum to describe a concept of complexity rather than a straight line from severe to mild.

1972- Dr. Eric Schopler founds Division TEACCH at the University of North Carolina.

1977- National Society for Autistic Children added sensory processing as one of the definitions.

1979- Autism spectrum first used by Lorna Wing and Judith Gould

1980- The prevalence is estimated 4 in 10,000

1980- Autism added to DSM-III

1980- Autism is listed as a mental disorder for the first time in the DSM.

1986- Temple Grandin publishes *Emergence: Labeled Autism*

1988- The movie *Rainman* popularized and awareness of the disorder increases among the general public.

1991- Sally Ozonoff suggested executive functioning impairs individuals with autism.

1994- The American Psychiatric Association adds Asperger's disorder to DSM.

1996- Australian sociologist, Judy Singer coins the term *Neurodiversity*

1998- Andrew Wakefield reports an association between autism and MMR and bowel disease.

2000- 1 in 50 children according to the CDC are diagnosed with autism

2006- Autistic Self-Advocacy Network founded. A non profit organization run by and for autistic people.

2009- 1 in 110, children according to the CDC are diagnosed with autism

2012- 1 in 88 children are diagnosed with autism.

2013- Asperger's disorder is dropped from the DSM-5

2014-1 in 68 children in the U.S. have autism.