

SPECTRUM

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Kailash Satyarthi: India's Nobel Peace Prize Winner for 2014



STOP
HARMFUL CULTURAL PRACTICES
EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO GOOD HEALTH

STOP
SEXUAL ABUSE
EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM ABUSE AND VIOLENCE

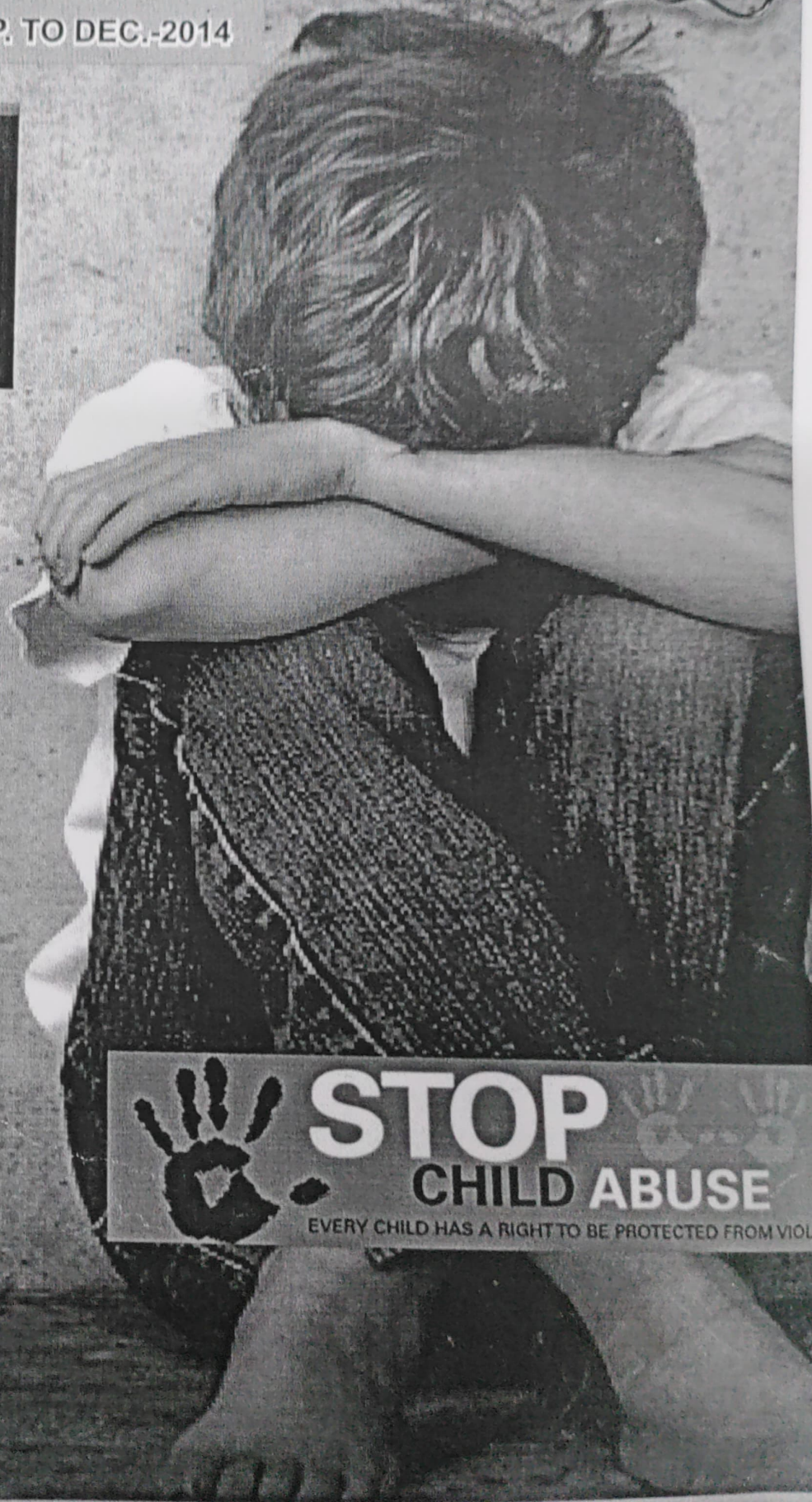
STOP
CHILD LABOUR
EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO GO TO SCHOOL

STOP
SEXUAL EXPLOITATION
EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

STOP
EARLY MARRIAGES
EVERY GIRL HAS A RIGHT TO COMPLETE HER EDUCATION

STOP
CHILD TRAFFICKING
EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO THEIR CHILDHOOD

STOP
CHILD ABUSE
EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED FROM VIOLATION



ROLE OF NURSE IN EDUCATING PARENT'S REGARDING AUTISM IN CH

Ms. Smita Warulkar M.Sc. (N)

In recent years, the incidence of autism has dramatically increased. Currently 1 in 68 children has nosed to be on the autistic spectrum. With incidence rates this high, it is likely you have a friend, neighbour or relative who has a child with autism.

Knowing the exact cause of autism is hard because the human brain is very complicated. The brain contains more than 100 billion nerve cells called neurons (say: NUR-ahns). Each neuron may have hundreds or thousands of connections that carry messages to other nerve cells in the brain and body. The connections and the chemical messengers they send (called neurotransmitters) keep the neurons working as they should. When they do, you can see, feel, move, remember, experience emotions, communicate, and do lots of other important stuff.

In the brain of a child with autism, some of those cells and connections don't develop normally or don't get organized like they're supposed to. Scientists are still trying to understand how and why this happens.

Autism Spectrum Disorders refer to a complex group of related disorders marked by impaired communication and socialization and by a limited (and often unusual) range of interests. Although sometimes not diagnosed until school age, Autism Spectrum Disorders develop early in life and are life-long conditions with implications for education, social development, and community adjustment.

The cause of Autism Spectrum Disorders is unknown and most likely results from many factors, such as a combination of heredity, environment, and brain functioning. Autism Spectrum Disorders are not the result of parenting style but, rather, are the results of changes in brain development that may occur before birth or shortly thereafter.

We realize that having a child being given a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a very stressful event for parents. It is very important that you realize that there is much you can do to help yourself and your child so that your child can develop

the skills they need to participate to their full in the family, school and community

Children with autism have problem core areas: socialization, communication, and patterns of behaviors and interests.

General characteristics of children with Spectrum Disorders include:

- **Cognitive:** Uneven development of skills; relative strength in processing visual information.
- **Social skills:** Difficulty understanding rules such as taking turns and sharing; understanding and reading the emotions; difficulty taking the perspective of people; problems initiating and maintaining conversations and conversations with other people.
- **Communication:** Trouble responding to information presented at a fast pace; understanding multiple-step commands; consistent understanding of verbal information; need for verbal information to be repeated; especially information that is new.
- **Organization/self-direction:** Difficulty ignoring distractions; difficulty completing activities independently and initiating activities; problems organizing free time; moving from one activity and moving on to the next; being flexible, shifting attention; focus; problems doing more than one thing at a time.

There is no cure for autism, but nurses, therapists, and special education can help kids learn to communicate better. They can learn sign language or get a message across using pictures. The care team also can help with the child's social skills, stuff like taking turns in a group.

Author Details

Lecturer

K.J. Somaiya College of Nursing, Mumbai



Some kids who have mild symptoms will graduate high school and may go to college and live on their own. Many will always need some kind of help. But all will have brighter futures when they have the support and understanding of their families, doctors, teachers, therapists, and friends. So be sure to be a friend!

Having a plan as to how to proceed to get the best possible help your child is probably the most important step you can take to relieve your stress and to help your child's development.

There are many things parents can do to help children with autism overcome their challenges. But it's also important to make sure you get the support you need. When you're looking after a child with autism, taking care of yourself is not an act of selfishness—it's a necessity. Being emotionally strong allows you to be the best parent you can be to your child in need.

When your child has autism: Tips for parents

- **Learn about autism.** The more you know about autism spectrum disorders, the better equipped you'll be to make informed decisions for your child. Educate yourself about the treatment options, ask questions, and participate in all treatment decisions.

- **Become an expert on your child.** What triggers your kid's "bad" behaviors and what elicits a positive response? What does your autistic child like? Calming? Uncomfortable? Enjoy? Understand what affects your child's behavior at troubleshooting problems in situations that cause difficulties.
- **Accept your child, quirks and all.** Focus on how your autistic child differs from other children and what he or she is "doing," practice acceptance. Enjoy your child's quirks, celebrate small successes, stop comparing your child to others. Your child is loved and accepted more than anything else.
- **Don't give up.** It's impossible to predict the course of an autism spectrum disorder. Don't jump to conclusions about what life will be like for your child. Like everyone else, people with autism have an entire lifetime to live and develop their abilities.
- **Be consistent.** Children with autism learn by time adapting what they've learned in one place (such as the therapist's office or school) to other places.



ers, including the home. For example, your child may use sign language at school to communicate, but never think to do so at home. Creating consistency in your child's environment is the best way to reinforce learning.

Stick to a schedule Set up a schedule for your child, with regular times for meals, therapy, school, and bedtime. Try to keep disruptions to this routine to a minimum. If there is an unavoidable schedule change, prepare your child for it in advance.

Reward good behavior. Positive reinforcement can go a long way with children with autism, so make an effort to "catch them doing something good." Reward them for good behavior, letting them play with a favorite toy.

Create a home safety zone. Carve out a private space in your home where your child can relax, feel secure, and be safe. Visual cues can be helpful (colored tape marking areas that are off limits, labeling items in the house with pictures).

Look for nonverbal cues. If you are observant and aware, you can learn to pick up on the nonverbal cues that children with autism use to com-

municate. Pay attention to the kinds of they make, their facial expressions, and tures they use when they're tired, hurt want something.

☞ **Make time for fun.** A child coping with is still a kid. For both children with aut their parents, there needs to be more to l therapy. Schedule playtime when your most alert and awake. Figure out ways fun together by thinking about the thi make your child smile, laugh, and com their shell

☞ **Pay attention to your child's sensory s ities.** Many children with autism are hyp tive to light, sound, touch, taste, and Other children with autism are "under-se to sensory stimuli. Figure out what sounds, smells, movements, and tactil tions trigger your kid's "bad" or di behaviors and what elicits a positive r What does your autistic child find st Calming? Uncomfortable? Enjoyable? understand what affects your child, you'l ter at troubleshooting problems, prevent

ations that cause difficulties, and creating successful experiences.

- **Learn about assistive technology (AT)** that can help your child. This may include a simple picture communication board to help your child express needs and desires, or may be as sophisticated as an augmentative communication device.
- **Work with professionals** in early intervention or in your child's school to develop an IFSP or an IEP that reflects your child's needs and abilities. Be sure to include related services, supplementary aids and services, AT, and a positive behavioral support plan, if needed.
- **Be patient and stay optimistic**, your child, like every child, has a whole lifetime to learn and grow.

Your child's treatment should be tailored according to his or her individual needs. You know your child best, so it's up to you to make sure those needs are being met. You can do that by asking yourself the following questions:

A good autism treatment plan will:

- Build on your child's interests.
 - Offer a predictable schedule.
 - Teach tasks as a series of simple steps.
 - Actively engage your child's attention in highly structured activities.
 - Provide regular reinforcement of behavior. Involve the parent
 - ❖ What are my child's strengths?
 - ❖ What are my child's weaknesses?
 - ❖ What behaviours are causing the most problems?
 - ❖ What important skills is my child lacking?
 - ❖ How does my child learn best (through seeing, listening, or doing)?
 - ❖ What does my child enjoy and how can those activities be used in treatment?
- Finally, keep in mind that no matter what autism treatment plan is chosen, your involvement is vital to success. You can help your child get the most out of treatment by working hand-in-hand with the autism

treatment team and following therapy at home.

Conclusion

Being a nurse it is our health team member to educate with child with autism. It is important to have skill acquisition trials throughout the day. The need a lot of repeated practice to do. The structured learning environment is key. Parents learn not only in the structured environment but also during daily activities (such as eating, taking a bath). Parents have to teach critical skills to their child and they are helping them through these activities.

Parents are the key teachers in the home. They need to know what skills are important and well as how to teach them. Don't expect the school systems or professionals to provide all the answers. You, the parent, know your child best. You need to know what your child needs to learn and how to teach them. You be able to evaluate what services are available and by others.

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