



For more information about the Autism Project, including a list of our locations, visit www.sccoe.org/specialed

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Office of Education

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6/11: 1,000

SPECIAL EDUCATION

THE AUTISM PROJECT

Intensive programming

Small class sizes

Collaborative service

Structured Teaching



Santa Clara County
Office of Education

Our Program

The Autism Project started in 1995 in response to needs identified by parents, school districts and the Santa Clara County Office of Education.

Supported by school districts and the community, the Project fulfills a need for more intensive programs for children with autism.

The Project's primary focus is to foster independence and communication development throughout every facet of the day.

The Project features many components:

- A preschool day that spans five-and-a-half-hours
- Classroom structure based on Structured Teaching
- Utilization of visual schedules, work systems, physical structure and independent work areas
- Infusion of a partner-assisted, visually aided system of communication
- Autism-specific teacher training

Multiple preschool Autism Project classrooms participate in the full Inclusion Collaborative with Head Start.

In collaboration with the California Diagnostic Center, the Project has developed model classrooms that will be replicated county-wide.



About Autism

According to the Autism Society of America, autism is a complex developmental disability that affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others.

Autism is a "spectrum disorder" that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. The key defining symptom that differentiates it from other syndromes and/or conditions is substantial impairment in social interaction.

Those affected by autism may exhibit various characteristics:

- Over- or under-responsiveness to sensory stimuli
- Delays or difficulty in developing and understanding communication
- Challenges in attention and focus
- Difficulty in regulating and controlling their behavior
- Repetitive body movements

Those affected by autism may demonstrate the following strengths:

- Visual thinking ability
- Extreme focus
- Precision and detail-orientation
- Excellent sense of direction
- Understanding and use of concrete rules and sequences

