



Family  
Outreach

Helena — 1212 Helena Avenue, 443-7370  
Butte — 641 Sampson, 494-1242  
Bozeman — 1315 E. Main Street, 587-2477

Missoula — T-214 Fort Missoula, 549-6413  
Kalispell — 1725 MT Highway 35, 755-2425



## Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS)

The ADOS is a semi-structured, standardized assessment of communication, social interaction, and play for individuals referred to discount or consider a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The ADOS consists of structured activities and materials that allow CDC's evaluation team an opportunity to observe the child's behaviors that are important in making an ASD diagnosis.

Administration of the ADOS is completed by CDC's evaluation team which consists of a child psychologist, speech therapist, and either an occupational or physical therapist. CDC's Intake Coordinator or Family Support Specialist will videotape the evaluation. This is done in case the team needs to substantiate the observation of a behavior. (The videotape will be returned to the family with the final evaluation report.) The ADOS generally takes about an hour to administer and parents may be asked to participate. Further assessment (e.g., speech and language, sensory, problem solving, medical) may be reviewed or completed in conjunction with the ADOS to discount other possible diagnoses.

CDC will evaluate children using the ADOS who are between the ages of two and six. All children referred for an ADOS need to be screened first on the Social Communication Questionnaire (SCQ), receiving a score that suggests further evaluation. Prior to the evaluation, all children referred need to be identified as either having no speech and/or simple phrases **or** minimally using flexible, three-word phrases (regular, spontaneous, meaningful use of three-word utterances to include a verb). This indicates which module on the ADOS the team will use.

CDC's ASD evaluation packets must be completed on all children referred prior to the day of the evaluation. Pre-staffing to review the information and to set-up the environment is mandatory for all team members and occurs 30 minutes prior to the evaluation. **Timeliness is imperative.** The Intake Coordinator or Family Support Specialist is the evaluation facilitator and the liaison between the team and the family. Their role is integral because they have not only observed the referred child but have reviewed all of the relevant information.

Diagnostic results are always discussed with the family directly following the evaluation. The licensed Clinical Psychologist is responsible for the formal diagnosis. ASD evaluation reports are completed collaboratively between the team members and are due to the Administrative Assistant no more than two weeks following the evaluation date. They should be written in family-friendly terminology. Recommendations should be brief and individualized, avoiding elaborate treatment options.

The ADOS is only administered once to an individual. It was not developed to measure change over time.

*Helping children with developmental delays reach their potential*