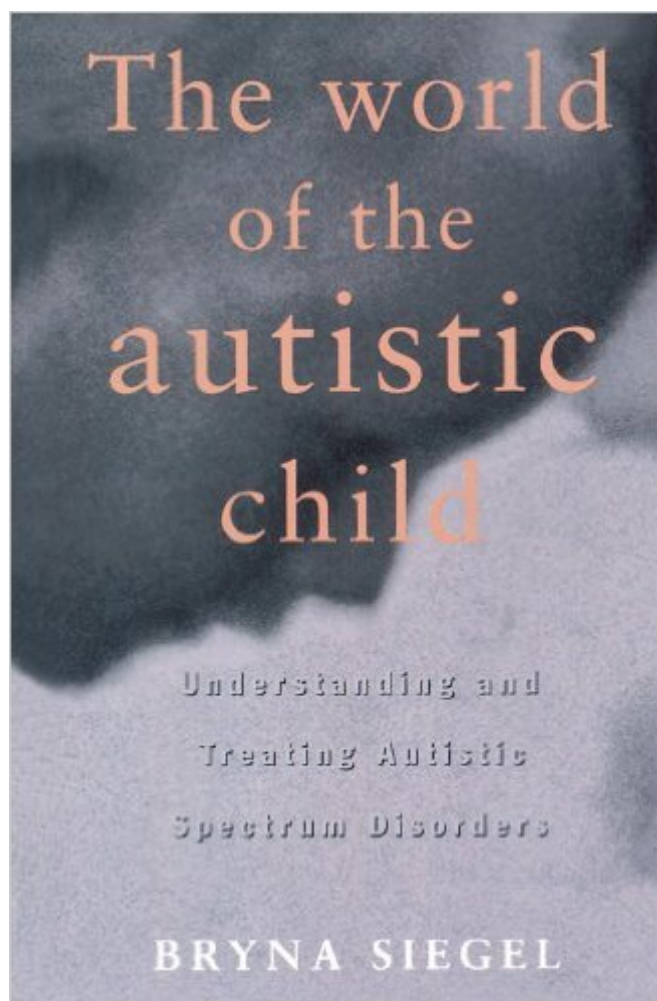


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# The World Of The Autistic Child : Understanding And Treating Autistic Spectrum Disorders



## **Synopsis**

For thousands of loving and concerned parents of autistic children, the suspicion that something may be wrong comes long before the clinical diagnosis of autism, PDD (pervasive developmental disorder), or Asperger's syndrome. When rounds of testing and consultations confirm parents' worst fears, their emotional turmoil is matched by an overriding practical concern: What do we do next? *The World of the Autistic Child* is by far the most complete and comprehensive book ever written for the parents of autistic children, and for the teachers, child specialists, and other professionals that care for them. Written by Dr. Bryna Siegel, a developmental psychologist and director of a large university clinic for autistic children, it provides help and hope not only for the children, but for their families--the parents, grandparents, siblings, and other caregivers who must come to grips with their own grief and confusion following a diagnosis of autism or other related disorder. Dr. Siegel believes that parents' best defense is to acquire, as early as possible, the knowledge and the parenting skills they will need to work with professionals to help their child fulfill his or her potential. This book, therefore, is about understanding the diagnosis of autism, the available treatments, and how to decide what is best for a particular child with autism or PDD. Straightforward and sympathetic, Dr. Siegel guides readers through the thicket of symptoms and labels, explaining the crucial importance of intensive early education, and how to find the resources and help that are available. Behavior modification, the development of daily living skills, guidelines for selecting and designing schooling, mainstreaming, the role for traditional academics in educating higher functioning children and young people, building effective parent-teacher relationships, psychoactive medications, and dealing with the possibility of residential placement are all covered. Dr. Siegel teaches parents and professionals to use their own common sense and personal observations in evaluating the many highly publicized but unorthodox and often untested treatments for autism, including the much-touted facilitated communication (F/C), holding therapy, auditory training, "Options" therapy, allergy treatments, and special diets. Pulling together a wealth of long-needed information on the latest educational and medical advances, *The World of the Autistic Child* is a superb guide and resource that no one who cares about autistic or developmentally disabled young people will want to be without.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 351 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; Revised ed. edition (January 29, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0195119177

ISBN-13: 978-0195119176

Product Dimensions: 7.9 x 0.7 x 5.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (35 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,009,879 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #22 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Children's Health > Special Needs Children](#) #534 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Specific Demographics > Disabled](#) #822 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Children's Health > Autism & Asperger's Syndrome](#)

## Customer Reviews

I have read the paperback version of this book. I found the descriptions of autism, pdd & other autistic spectrum disorders a little confusing - I do not have a Phd in Psychiatry or Psychology and at some points felt like I needed one to understand the terminology, charts, etc. I also found the separation of autism & pdd to be confusing. I was also suprised to learn that most autistic children are also mentally retarded (I have seen no evidence of this with my son). The author seems to be against mainstreaming autistic children, as with all autistic children, the decision should be made on an individual basis & what is best for the child. I did find the chapters on teaching extremely helpful and the author does give parents info on how to get a diagnosis & where to go from there - I wish I'd had that 2 yrs ago. Anyway, I think this would be a very good book for parents of newly diagnosed autistic/pdd children or parents who feel their child may be autistic/pdd but need more info.

Dreadful book--I read this in the early days of looking for information on my daughter, and I found it depressing and unhelpful. There are a lot of books out there now that can help you help your child. This emphatically is not one of them. Read Steven Gutstein, Stanley Greenspan, and Catherine Maurice if you want to teach your child using behavioral interventions: there are so many sources online now to help parents new to the diagnosis. She's also way too negative about the possibility for the child's improvement, and I think she condescends to both parents and autistic children. I've read much of what's out there, and this is nowhere on my list of recommended books for parents.

As a mother with a child 'on the spectrum,' I hope the people who provide services to my son don't think of me, my son, or my family so poorly. Ms. Siegle groups all members of various ethnic groups together. "Latino Fathers," "African Grandmothers," "Asian Community," and "Immigrant Families"

are all tried and judged by the author as being hysterical, judgemental, shamed, or completely clueless by their child's medical condition. While all families react to devastating news differently, the author confidently tells her readers that this is how a person is going to react. The author also LOVES the words "mental retardation" and uses it far too frequently in such a short book, perhaps this is the way she explains why her interventions fail. IQ is not the only way to judge a person Ms. Siegal. In the years since this book was written, several interventions have shown great promise, and a child labeled 'mentally retarded' may actually possess average, or above average intelligence. Her tales of the lives of autistic children and adults are nothing short of a 'shock jock' radio personality's material. EXAMPLE "So this guy, he's autistic. He can't even handle a job at K-Mart. He goes nuts every time the loud speaker goes on--then he runs out of the store screaming." The guy has Sensory Issues, you should have noticed that before putting him into a potentially difficult situation. If you are looking for the "World" of an autistic child I'd suggest a story WRITTEN BY a person with autism, not by a person passing judgement and only in 'the business' apparently to gather information for her next book.

Overall, I thought this book was well written with a lot of information regarding autistic spectrum disorders. I am though somewhat concerned about the accuracy of the information as it compares to all the other information that I have read over the last few months. It seems as though the research may be either out-dated or not applicable to a lot of the children who are being diagnosed on the spectrum these days. From what I read, in some parts of the country, 1 out of 400 children are being diagnosed under the spectrum. Certainly, the 80% and 50% mental retardation rates given to autistic and PDD groups, respectively, doesn't seem correct given the current "evolving definition of autism and related disorders." Given the array of differing diagnoses a child can receive I would be very careful in reading this book and thinking that this is what the future holds for your child.

This book is terribly out of date, depressing and a HORRIBLE thing for a parent of a newly-diagnosed child to read! I do NOT recommend this book. Her now-dated standard dismissal of the emerging bio-chemical research on autism and its physical causes is nothing short of criminal. Our child has responded extremely well to a gluten-free, dairy-free diet. He has also responded extremely well to an ultra low dose of prozac. Both of these were suggested by leading, main-stream autism neurology researchers. MANY children respond well. There IS HOPE for your child. Many autistics are not permanently mentally retarded, as the author claims. The last five years

have seen amazing progress in the treatment of autism!!! You must have a balanced approach of both behavioral intervention and bio-chemical intervention. This book will lead you to believe your child is doomed. No, not at all.

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