



The New England
Center for Children®
Autism Education and Research



Learn More



AUTISM INFANT SIBLING STUDY

Ongoing Study Recruiting Participants

About

The New England Center for Children's research team, led by Dr. Rebecca MacDonald & Dr. Erin Michaud, is finding that infant siblings of children with autism may show symptoms **before** their first birthday.

Eligibility

- Newborn to 3-month-old infants
- Has a sibling diagnosed with autism

Participation

- Monthly in-home developmental screenings until 18 months old
- Coaching and support for parents of symptomatic infants

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Activities for Parents and Children *in the* First Year of Life

- Make eye contact with your baby; try smiling or making animated facial expressions
- While looking at your baby, imitate the sounds they make
- Talk to your baby and narrate what you are doing throughout the day (the more language they are exposed to, the better)
- Play peek-a-boo
- Play tickle games (e.g., creepy crawly)
- Sing songs (e.g., *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*; *Itsy Bitsy Spider*; *Row, Row, Row, Your Boat*; *Patty Cake*; *Open Shut Them*)
- Look in a mirror together and make animated expressions
- Play with rattles and other toys that make sound (e.g., have your baby track the rattle from side to side, hold the rattle, bang the rattle)
- Blow bubbles and make popping sounds
- Point something out in the environment and talk about it (e.g., something up on a shelf, a picture on the fridge, an airplane in the sky)
- Model actions with toys, and then give them a turn to imitate what you did (e.g., pushing a car, banging a drum, feeding a baby doll, pretending to drink from a cup, wearing a hat, brushing hair, putting a figurine down a slide, placing a block in a bucket, making a figurine/animal hop, flying an airplane)
- Make exclamations when something unexpected happens (e.g., “uh-oh” when you drop something, “oh no” when the tower of blocks falls)
- Allow your child to make choices (e.g., toys, mealtimes, snacks)
- Model language (e.g., water, help) when you know what your child wants or needs
- Give directions to your child (e.g., give me a high five, blow a kiss, get your shoes so we can go play outside, go to the table to have a snack)
- Play a game of chase