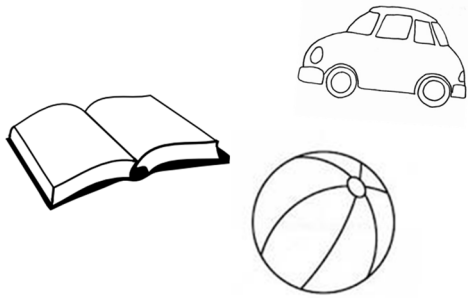


## WHAT TO TELL YOUR CHILD

If it is decided that your child is going to have an assessment, they will attend an appointment with a professional who will administer the assessment. Your child might not be familiar with this professional, so it is important to prepare them for this by telling them about it beforehand.

If you think your child would benefit from knowing a bit more about the assessment, you can tell them that it will last between 30 and 60 minutes and will involve them playing with some toys, looking at some pictures, and chatting to another adult about things.



## ADVICE FOR PARENTS/CARERS

It is important that we give your child the best possible chance to do as well as they can on the assessment. This means reducing the number of distractions for them. For younger children completing modules 1 and 2, parents will need to accompany their child in the assessments. It is important that parents follow the examiner's instructions around appropriate involvement.

Modules 3 and 4 are administered individually with children, so parents are kindly asked to wait in the waiting room. The outcome of the ADOS will be fed back at a later date.



ADOS leaflet

Pennine Care   
NHS Foundation Trust

# Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule



Healthy Young Minds,  
Bury



## What is the ADOS?

The ADOS stands for Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule.

It is an instrument used for the assessment and diagnosis of autism or other pervasive developmental disorders (PDDs).

It is a semi-structured assessment of communication, social interaction and play that looks at behaviours typically associated with an autism or PDD diagnosis.

In Tameside, we assess children from age 3 or those who have a cognitive ability of at least 12 months.

There are four different modules that contain standardised activities. These activities comprise of both structured and unstructured tasks. The module is selected by the examiner based on the individual's expressive language level and age.

Participants' responses are recorded, along with observations by the examiner, and ratings are made at the end of the assessment. These ratings are used to inform diagnosis.\*

## THE MODULES

### Module 1

This module is for individuals who do not use *phrase speech*. Phrase speech is non-echoed, three-word utterances that are meaningful in some way. Module 1 is usually for younger children.

### Module 2

Module 2 is for individuals who have some phrase speech, but are not verbally fluent.

### Module 3

This is intended for individuals who are verbally fluent. Being verbally fluent means the individual has a range of vocabulary and can use a range of sentences. Module 3 involves playing with toys that are age-appropriate and is generally for children up to 12/16 years of age.

### Module 4

Module 4 is similar to module 3, but also includes additional interview items that ask questions about daily living. It is generally for verbally fluent adolescents or adults.

Activities from the four modules overlap. The aim is to observe social behaviour and communication through how the child interacts with the examiner. Activities range from a child asking the examiner to blow up a balloon, to conversations about social relationships.

## HOW IS IT USED TO DIAGNOSE AUTISM?

Participants' responses are recorded, along with observations by the examiner, and ratings are made at the end of the assessment. These ratings are used to inform diagnosis.

The ADOS is an evidence-based assessment that has been found to have good reliability and validity across several populations.

## HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

The assessment takes between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on the age and developmental level of the individual.

## WHO CAN ADMINISTER THE ASSESSMENT?

To be qualified to administer the assessment, professionals have to undergo specialist training. Professionals including clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, speech & language therapists, and **other specialist professionals** can have this training and then be qualified to administer the



*\*Information taken from:  
the ADOS manual, Western Psychological Services  
(2001)*