

## **Detecting Autism Amongst the Ever-Broadening Spectrum**

Presented by: Celine Saulnier, PhD

Autism Virtual Summit 2025

Delivery method: On demand

Instructional Level: Intermediate

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### **Overview**

The prevalence of autism spectrum disorder is currently 1 in 31 school-age children in the United States. Yet, the breadth of the spectrum is so broad and heterogeneous that it becomes perplexing as to how some individuals who are profoundly affected can carry the same diagnostic label as those with more subtle symptom expression. This session helps providers better understand the variability across the autism spectrum based on levels of cognition and language, age, sex/gender differences, and racial/ethnic disparities. The session also discusses how to identify and differentiate common co-occurring conditions.

### **Learner Outcomes**

*Based on the content of this session, participants will be able to*

1. List 3 key diagnostic features of autism spectrum disorder
2. Analyze and describe how autism symptoms vary among individuals, taking into account cognitive and language levels, age, gender differences, and racial/ethnic backgrounds.
3. Identify at least 2 reasons why it's important to evaluate adaptive behavior when working with autistic individuals

### **Time-Ordered Agenda**

10 minutes	Introduction and background
15 minutes	Exploring differences in presentation among autistic individuals
15 minutes	Impacts of cognition, language, age, sex/gender on diagnosis and behavior
10 minutes	Co-occurring conditions – identification and differentiation
10 minutes	Q&A

### **About the Presenter**

Dr. Saulnier obtained her doctorate in Clinical Psychology from the University of Connecticut. She trained and worked at the Yale Child Study Center's Autism Program for nearly a decade before relocating to Emory University School of Medicine and the Marcus Autism Center in Atlanta, GA, where she directed a large-scale clinical research program. In 2018, she opened her own company, Neurodevelopmental Assessment & Consulting Services, where she specializes in diagnostic assessment, as well as teaching and training for autism spectrum and related disorders. Dr. Saulnier has published numerous articles, written two books, and is an author on the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales (3rd ed.; Vineland-3).

## Disclosures

**Financial:** Dr. Celine Saulnier is the author of Vineland-3 and receives a fee for this presentation.

**Non-financial disclosure:** No relevant nonfinancial relationship exists.

NCS Pearson, Inc. is the sponsor of the ADHD Virtual Summit 2025. Pearson develops and distributes assessments and intervention tools for speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and psychologists.

## References

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  - Is credentialed by a state regulatory agency to practice audiology or speech-language pathology
  - Is credentialed by a national regulatory agency to practice audiology or speech-language pathology
  - Is a Clinical Fellow supervised by someone who holds the ASHA CCC

- Is currently enrolled in a master's or doctoral program in audiology or speech-language pathology

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