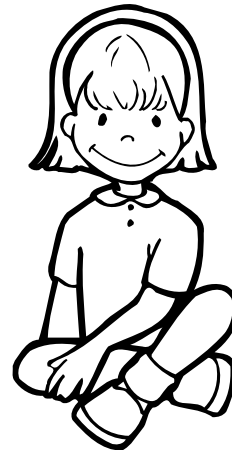


Facts about Angelman Syndrome

By Lisa Priddy MS, CCC-SLP

What is Angelman Syndrome?

Angelman Syndrome (AS) is a genetic, neurological disorder. Children with AS are missing a part of chromosome 15. It usually occurs one in every 10,000 to 25,000 children. Harold Angelman, a pediatrician, first identified AS in 1965. Typically, diagnosis of Angelman Syndrome occurs between ages three to seven.



Physical and Developmental Features of AS

- Facial features may include a wide, smiling mouth, thin upper lip, prominent chin, and deep set eyes.
- Below average head size.
- Jerky body movements.
- Delayed motor development, including delay in sitting and walking.
- Fair hair and blue eyes.
- Speech delays.
- Mental retardation.
- Severe learning disabilities.
- Poor feeding problems, including difficulties sucking and limited weight gain.

Behavioral Characteristics

Children with Angelman Syndrome exhibit similar behaviors. They are typically very happy, affectionate, sociable, and may laugh at inappropriate times. It is also common for children with Angelman Syndrome to be hyperactive and have a limited attention span. These children require far less sleep than their peers.

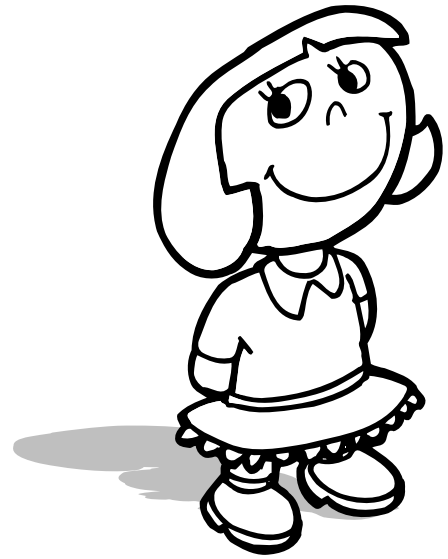
Communication Skills

Children with Angelman Syndrome tend to have problems with speech development. Most children have limited speech (up to four words) or no speech at all. They may develop single word use between 10-18 months of age (i.e., mama); however, they tend to use these words infrequently and without meaning. Their

comprehension skills are usually stronger than their expressive skills. The majority of children with Angelman Syndrome express their needs using sign language, gestures, and picture communication boards.

Treatment and Prognosis

Children with Angelman Syndrome benefit significantly from special education services. Early speech, physical, and occupational therapies help improve their communication, gross, and fine motor skills. As these individuals reach adulthood, their hyperactivity decreases and sleep patterns improve. Many AS children grow up to be able to live in adult community homes.



Resource

Find parent support and further information on Angelman Syndrome at:
Angelman Syndrome Foundation, Inc. 1-800-432-6435 <http://www.angelman.org>

Resources

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, <http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/angelman/angelman.htm>

Better Health Channel, http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Angelman_syndrome?open