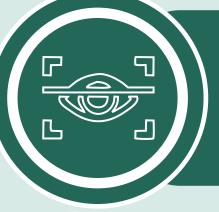
Early signs of autism include a decrease in how much a child looks at people's faces and smiles at others.

The timing of when these first signs appear can vary a lot from child to child.

We evaluated children up to 7 times as they grew from birth to age 3.



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> We examined where their gaze went in both structured settings (during developmental testing) and during play time with toys.

Children who went on to be diagnosed with autism at age 3 spent less time looking at adult faces when they were 6-12 months old.

Early eye-gaze assessment may help identify children in need of services and supports even before they receive a diagnosis of autism.

We are now developing easier ways to evaluate eye contact in doctors' offices or with video-based screening tools.