

# International comparisons of autism spectrum disorder behaviors in preschoolers rated by parents and caregivers/teachers

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The 99-item Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL/ 1½ -5) (a questionnaire completed by parents) and the Caregiver-Teacher Report Form (C-TRF) (a questionnaire completed by caregivers/teachers) identify problem behaviors in young children. This study tested international similarities and differences in scores on a 12-item CBCL/1½ -5 and C-TRF scale identified by international mental health experts as being very consistent with the diagnostic criteria for autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Participants were 19,850 preschoolers in 24 societies (who were rated by parents), 10,521 preschoolers from 15 societies (who were rated by caregivers/teachers), and 7,380 children from 13 societies (who were rated by both parents and caregivers/teachers). Four items on the questionnaires (Items 80. *Strange behavior*, 63. *Repeatedly rocks head or body*, 67. *Seems unresponsive to affection*, and 98. *Withdrawn, doesn't get involved with others*) were thought to be particularly useful for identifying ASD in young children. This is because positive responses on these items were rarely reported by parents or caregivers for children in our study, in contrast to several other items on the scale which were reported for many children. Agreement between parents and caregivers/teachers was stronger for the seven items on the questionnaires about social communication and interaction problems than for the five items about restricted interests and repetitive behaviors. The findings support the international use of the questionnaire for screening for ASD in young children. Because the CBCL/1½ -5 and C-TRF can be completed and scored quickly (including online), professionals can easily examine scores for a child based on ratings by both parents and teachers to determine the likelihood not only for ASD but also for other conditions, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, or anxiety disorders.