

When Being High Functioning On The Autism Spectrum Was Dismissed As Discipline

Many autistic children who are high-functioning are often misdiagnosed and their symptoms are dismissed as discipline problems. This can lead to years of frustration and missed opportunities for early intervention.



He Seemed Normal: When Being High Functioning on the Autism Spectrum was Dismissed as a Discipline Problem... His Journey, my Destiny.

by Rachael Thomas M.S.Ed

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What is high-functioning autism?

High-functioning autism is a term used to describe autistic individuals who have an IQ of 70 or higher and no significant intellectual disability. These individuals may have social and communication difficulties, but they are able to learn and function in a mainstream school setting.

Why are high-functioning autistic children often misdiagnosed?

There are a number of reasons why high-functioning autistic children are often misdiagnosed. One reason is that their symptoms may be less obvious than those of children with more severe autism. For example, high-functioning autistic children may be able to make eye contact and speak in full sentences. However, they may still have difficulty understanding social cues and interacting with peers.

Another reason why high-functioning autistic children are often misdiagnosed is that their symptoms may be dismissed as discipline problems. For example, a child who is having difficulty following instructions may be seen as being oppositional or defiant. A child who is having difficulty making friends may be seen as being shy or withdrawn.

What are the consequences of misdiagnosis?

Misdiagnosis can have a number of negative consequences for high-functioning autistic children. First, it can delay access to early intervention services. Early intervention services can help autistic children learn how to cope with their symptoms and develop their social and communication skills. Without early intervention, autistic children may fall behind their peers and experience difficulty in school and social situations.

Second, misdiagnosis can lead to inappropriate treatment. For example, a child who is misdiagnosed with ADHD may be given medication that does not help their symptoms. This can lead to further frustration and difficulty for the child.

Third, misdiagnosis can lead to stigma and discrimination. Autistic children who are misdiagnosed as discipline problems may be seen as being "bad" or "difficult." This can lead to bullying and ostracism.

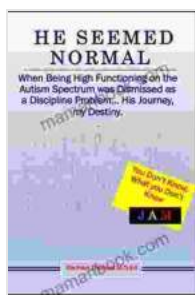
How can we prevent misdiagnosis?

There are a number of things that can be done to prevent misdiagnosis of high-functioning autistic children. First, it is important to be aware of the signs and symptoms of autism. If you think your child may be autistic, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional.

Second, it is important to advocate for your child. If you think your child is not getting the help they need, don't be afraid to speak up. Talk to your child's teachers, the school principal, and your doctor. You can also contact an autism organization for support and information.

Third, it is important to be patient. It may take time to get your child the diagnosis and help they need. But with patience and perseverance, you can help your child reach their full potential.

Misdiagnosis of high-functioning autistic children is a serious problem. It can lead to years of frustration and missed opportunities for early intervention. It can also lead to inappropriate treatment, stigma, and discrimination. By being aware of the signs and symptoms of autism, advocating for your child, and being patient, you can help prevent misdiagnosis and ensure that your child gets the help they need.



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