

Final Project: Hello, autism.

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Part 1 Rationale and Mission

Autism was first introduced to China in 1987 by Dr. Tao; later, Chinese people became more aware of autism in the 1990s (Su, et al., 2021). In 2001, Chinese Society of Psychiatry published the third edition of the Chinese Classification and Diagnostic Criteria of Mental Disorders (CCMD-3), in which autism gains more recognition by scientists and professionals. Currently, there isn't an official number of the population of autistic people in China due to the lack of authority agency for autism; based on various information I gathered, there are roughly 10 million Chinese identified with autism in mainland China.

Even though there are 10 million people identified with autism in China, most Chinese people are not familiar or do not know what autism is. Researches (Zhou, et al., 2021) showed that 80% of the general public has zero or little understanding on what autism is. Autism is called “自闭症” in Chinese language, which means “the syndrome of loneliness.” By looking at the word 自闭症, a typical Chinese can associate this word with introvert, loneliness, and refusal to socialize. Therefore, autism is misunderstood as an emotional or psychological issue in China. Fortunately, with the development of medical science and social awareness, more Chinese start to know, to understand, and to embrace the autism community.

This project *Hello, autism* aims to raise social attention and to build basic understanding about

autism. Furthermore, this project's target readers are Chinese people, or people who understand Chinese. The project is done in Chinese, with a copy of English translated version. I am targeting mostly for Chinese people only because I come from China; throughout my life in China, I understand how little people know about autism. Even though I am currently working in the field of autism treatment and majoring in early childhood special education, I seldomly meet Chinese coworkers or peers. What's more, I personally wish there is more attention, openness, and awareness towards autism in the Chinese community because I understand that having a child on the autism spectrum (or with other special needs) could lead to losing face (which means social images or worth) to a Chinese family. Chinese people tend to hide their children with special needs to avoid social judgement (Su, et al., 2021). I hope through this project, my readers can build a general understanding about what autism is.

Let's get to know, to understand, and to embrace autism.

Part 2 Hello, autism

My project is called *Hello, autism*, which is a brochure aimed to provide basic information about what autism is to the general public in the Chinese community. I picked the medium of a tri-fold brochure for the following reasons: first, a tri-fold brochure is a common and popular medium to present contents; most people are familiar with brochures. Due to the size of a tri-fold brochure, I think it is perfect to convey basic ideas, which matches my design for the project. Second, a tri-fold brochure is small and can fit in most bags. Based on my personal experience, I always forget that there is a brochure in my bag until I have to wait in line. I hope my brochure can be good reading material and light up minds for somebody who has some spare time to kill. Lastly, Chinese people (at least all the Chinese people I know in my life) usually

won't refuse a brochure; no matter if they will read it later or not, no matter what the content will be, I am sure that they will take the brochure.

I named my project "Hello, autism" because I want to introduce autism to the Chinese community as a new-comer and a friend. "Hello" is usually the first word we say to others. I wish we can treat and view autism as something normal that we don't need to hide. Here is the sample of the brochure.



People with autism
only have one
shared common
feature:

uniqueness

Hello,
autism

Information

Xuemel Ye @ San Francisco State University



Knowing autism

Autism, or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is a neurodevelopmental disorder that has impacts on communication and behavior.

People with autism may communicate, interact, behave, and learn in different ways than most other people. They might also present repetitive behaviors and have obsessive interests.

Are people with autism introverted?

ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder; it is not an emotional issue or psychological problem.

Can autism be cured?

Autism cannot be cured; however, effective treatment and support can help people with autism to live an independent and productive life.

Understanding

What cause autism?

There isn't a confirmed cause for autism; however, researches suggest that genes and environmental influences are related to the development of autism.

Is autism common?

According to CDC (2020), approximately 1 in 54 children in the US is diagnosed with ASD. Boys are more likely to be diagnosed with ASD than girls.

Embracing

The best thing we can do daily is to treat a person with autism as a normal regular person. Don't judge, don't stare.

If you are interested in working with people with autism, it is always helpful to do some research online to gather more information!

If you are a parent, let your children to play with whomever they prefer, with or without autism.



* Please notice that the English version is simply a translated version. No design effort has been input.

有自闭症的人的
唯一共同之处
就是每一个人都是独一无二的。

你好，
自闭症

认识，理解，接纳 Information

什么是 自闭症？

自闭症，全称为又称“泛自闭症障碍症候群”(Autism Spectrum Disorders | ASD)，是一种神经发育障碍。

一般来说，自闭症患者在社交沟通以至认知、情绪、行为方面都有不同程度的困难和发展差异。此障碍除了影响患者与人互动的表现外，其行为亦会较重复及固执不变，同时有狭隘兴趣和异常感官反应等问题。而其他相关障碍也包括智力、语

言及其他发展问题。

自闭症就是性格孤僻吗？

自闭症是一种由脑功能失调引起的神经系统发育障碍，而并非单纯的情绪问题或心理障碍。

自闭症是否可治愈？

自闭症无法治愈。有效支持将有助于克服自闭症所面临的困难，并帮助自闭症人们过上快乐和充实的生活。

理解自闭症

什么会导致自闭症？

原因尚不明确。但其成因和遗传因素、环境因素有关。医学界仍在研究自闭症的确切成因。

自闭症有多常见？

根据CDC的2020年报告，在美国，每54名儿童中就有一名被确诊出患有自闭症。其中，自闭症的男性比例远高于女性。

接纳自闭症

如果你是一个普通的路人

如果没有关注他们的意愿的话，请平等看待即可。所谓平等看待就是把他们和普通儿童一样看待。他们和我们一样都是普通的地球人。

如果你是一名普通家长

请接受「自闭症儿童群体」这个概念。如果他们的存在没有影响你和你家人的日常生活，请坦然接受。

It is very easy to understand. I know you work with children with autism, but I really have no ideas what autism is. I now at least know autism has to do with neurodevelopment and what I can do to help.” (Friend, social worker)

Part 3 Comment and Feedback

Due to financial reasons, this brochure is currently in electronic form only. I have sent out this brochure to my families and friends for review. Here are some comments and feedback I received from them (comments and feedback is translated in English):“I like the design! I really like the suggestions at the end.” (Friend, front desk worker in a health clinic)

“I hope you can print it out one day. I am happy that you are doing what you love! This brochure is really easy to read and to understand.” (Friend, accountant)

“I can understand what you try to say and express, even for a woman like me in her 60s.” (Family member, retired)

“I think it would be nice if you can have some information, like websites, for people who are interested in autism and would like to explore more by themselves.” (Family member, driver)

“Can you add some contact information for yourself? What if people are interested and would like to contact you?” (Friend, server)

There are more comments from my family members and friends; I found all of them very helpful. I would like to modify and add some information for websites that are related to autism for people who are interested in autism.

Part 4 Summary

In China, only 53.7% of doctors have basic understanding and know the symptoms of autism (Zhou, et al., 2021); a large number of the general public still believe that autism is caused by poor parenting (Su, 2021). It will take a long time for both professionals and the general public in China to gain sufficient knowledge on autism. I am not asking everyone to be as professional as a SPED teacher; I am hoping that, through this project, people will think again before they judge a young child running and screaming in the public. Instead of thinking “ah, kid, where are his/her parents?”, maybe we can be more empathetic and we can not make a quick judge. This project introduces its reader with basic knowledge about autism; with this small step, I wish my readers can build and develop a healthy view on autism and its community.

Reference

Su, S., Paynter, J., & Gilmore, L. (2021). Chinese Parents' Understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorder. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 68(3), 414–426. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2019.1687857>

Zhou, R., Ma, B., & Wang, J. (2021). Difficulties in the Diagnosis and Treatment of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in China. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. <https://doi-org.jp11net.sfsu.edu/10.1007/s10803-021-04997-8>