

Effects of Asperger's syndrome noticeable in babies

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People with Asperger syndrome have problems with social interaction and attentiveness, and are also sensitive to noise and light. Several of these characteristics were evident to parents during their child's first two years, reveals Petra Dewrang's thesis in psychology at the University of Gothenburg.

In her thesis, Dewrang investigated how individuals with Asperger syndrome aged 14-24 perceive themselves relative to their diagnosis. The thesis is based on interviews, tests and self-evaluations. A questionnaire for parents also resulted in important descriptions of these individuals' behaviour and development from [infancy](#) onwards.

The results show first and foremost that the similarities are greater than the differences when the Asperger group and the comparison group describe their lives.

"But the differences that do exist are vital for understanding how people with Asperger syndrome stand the best chance of getting by," says Dewrang.

The Asperger group were as content with themselves and their lives as the comparison group.

But they found it harder to build relationships with other people, and their plans for the future were less "adventurous". Parents and siblings were more present in their lives than is normal for this age group, even

after they had left home. On the other hand, they were just as good at [social cognition](#) as the comparison group when they had to explain why the key person in a story reacted in a certain way. However, the ability to theoretically understand other peoples' thoughts and feelings are not always enough for making friends in real life.

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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