

**SPOTTED**

# Anxiety app; favorite things; overheard words and more

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## WEEK OF JULY 9<sup>TH</sup>

### Anxiety app

Autistic adults can access an app, **Molehill Mountain**, designed to help them **manage their anxiety**, King's College London announced 10 July. The app relies on cognitive behavioral therapy approaches that have been adapted for people on the spectrum.

#### SOURCES:

**King's College London** / 10 Jul 2018

Molehill Mountain – an app to help autistic people with anxiety

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/ioppn/news/records/2018/july/molehill-mountain-%E2%80%93-an-app-to-help-autistic-people-with-anxiety.aspx>

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### Favorite things

Hats, books, rolls of old-fashioned film, a beloved backpack. These items are among the examples autistic New Yorkers gave the public radio station WNYC when asked about their **favorite stim toys**, objects they use to self-soothe through repetitive movement. The story was published 7 July on *Shots*, NPR's health news resource.

#### SOURCES:

**NPR** / 07 Jul 2018

Autistic New Yorkers share their stim-toy stories with 'Aftereffect'

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2018/07/07/625756385/autistic-new-yorkers-share-their-stim-toy-stories-with-aftereffect>

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## Overheard words

A small study suggests that children on the spectrum are like other children in their **ability to pick up new words** simply by overhearing them. Researchers reported 3 July on the linguistic advantage of eavesdropping in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*.

### SOURCES:

**Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders** / 03 Jul 2018

Brief report: Learning language through overhearing in children with ASD

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10803-018-3672-0>

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## Bilingual advantage

Speaking of words, concerns that children with autism might experience **negative effects from bilingual homes** appear to be unfounded. A review of the evidence suggests a positive influence on both verbal and nonverbal communication. Autistic children from bilingual households show a particular advantage in their use of nonverbal cues such as gestures, *The Conversation* reported 5 July.

### SOURCES:

**The Conversation** / 05 Jul 2018

Can you raise an autistic child to be bilingual – and should you try?

<https://theconversation.com/can-you-raise-an-autistic-child-to-be-bilingual-and-should-you-try-98653>

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## Tech coach

Google Glass can serve as a social coach for autistic people, delivering information about facial expression and eye movement to the user. Investigators from the **Autism Glass Project** say that the device can teach users to read eight emotions, including happiness, anger, fear and disgust. Researchers talked about their unpublished findings, based on more than 100 people, 5 July in the *South China Morning Post*.

### SOURCES:

### **South China Morning Post** / 05 Jul 2018

How Google Glass can improve autistic children's social skills by reading facial expressions

<https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/health-wellness/article/2153875/how-google-glass-can-improve-autistic-childrens-social>

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## Income influence

Ethnicity and socioeconomic status interact to affect parental awareness of the signs of developmental conditions, such as autism. In particular, low-income Latino parents in the United States who are not fluent in English tend to have less experience with and **awareness of these conditions**, researchers reported 4 July in *Academic Pediatrics*.

### **SOURCES:**

#### **Academic Pediatrics** / 04 Jul 2018

Disparities in familiarity with developmental disabilities among low-income parents

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1876285918304224>

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## Screening shortfall

Despite considerable discussion about the importance of early intervention for developmental conditions, **screening and surveillance rates** in the U.S. remain dismally low. Only about one-third of young children are screened for these conditions, with huge differences among states, researchers reported 9 July in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

### **SOURCES:**

#### **JAMA Pediatrics** / 09 Jul 2018

Prevalence and variation of developmental screening and surveillance in early childhood

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2686728>

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## Cycle considerations

Autistic women who menstruate have many of the same questions and concerns as those not on the spectrum. This perhaps predictable finding, published 7 July in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, emerged from what researchers call the first study to ask autistic women

about their **experiences with menstruation**.

Women on the spectrum did report some autism-specific challenges related to menstruation, including sensory responses and emotional and behavioral regulation.

**SOURCES:**

**Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders** / 07 Jul 2018

“Life is much more difficult to manage during periods”: Autistic experiences of menstruation

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10803-018-3664-0>

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## Romantic revelations

Romance **novelist Helen Hoang**, who is autistic, wrote her first book as a way to process her autism diagnosis, she told NBC News 5 July. She also said that she wanted to create a heroine on the spectrum because **books and other media** only rarely portray autistic characters accurately.

**SOURCES:**

**NBC News** / 05 Jul 2018

In 'The Kiss Quotient', Helen Hoang uses writing to process her autism diagnosis

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/kiss-quotient-helen-hoang-uses-writing-process-her-autism-diagnosis-n887281>

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## Best care

Primary-care physicians see their practices as the **best place for children on the spectrum** to receive care for physical and behavioral conditions related to their autism. Investigators described these findings and discussed the accommodations such practices make for this population 7 July in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*.

**SOURCES:**

**Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders** / 07 Jul 2018

Expanding the capacity of primary care to treat co-morbidities in children with autism spectrum disorder

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10803-018-3630-x>

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## News tips

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