

SPOTTED

Spotted around the web: shock therapy; telehealth; restraint policies

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Research roundup

- Autistic adults and those with autism traits tend to focus on details when observing a social interaction, whereas non-autistic adults interpret such scenes holistically. *Autism*
- Inactivating the mTORC2 pathway curtails the excess neuronal branching seen in mice that lack the autism-linked gene PTEN, but it does not ameliorate seizure activity. *Journal of Neuroscience*
- Clinical results with electroconvulsive therapy, though limited in number, have been mostly positive, according to a review of studies. *Spectrum* reported on **ECT in autistic children** in 2016. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*
- Differences in brainstem white-matter structure are linked to sensory issues — hyper- and hyporesponsiveness — in autistic children. *Molecular Autism*
- Young people with autism show increased connectivity between the thalamus and temporal cortex in a functional MRI protocol designed to limit head movement. *Spectrum* reported on the **thalamus' role** in autism in 2021. *Autism Research*
- Variants of the transcription regulator ZMYM3 may result in developmental delay, intellectual disability and autism or autism traits, according to a small study. *American Journal of Human Genetics*
- Autistic adults tend to be more generous toward strangers than non-autistic people are, according to a preprint. *PsyArXiv*
- Telehealth assessments can be effective in diagnosing autism in children under 3 years old, as well as in older children with delayed language. *Spectrum* covered the emerging evidence for **telehealth assessments** in July. *Autism*
- The placenta and uterine lining of mice show immune changes in response to maternal infection or antidepressant drugs, which may affect neurodevelopment. *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity*

Brain imaging: Autistic people tend to have more connectivity between the thalamus and the lateral temporal cortex than non-autistic people.

- Event-related potentials triggered by viewing faces are not robust enough to serve as a valid biomarker for autism, but they may aid in subtyping participants in clinical trials. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*
- Autistic people who are arrested by police experience more stress than non-autistic people in the same situation and are more likely to melt down or shut down, according to a case-control study. *Spectrum* has covered **such interactions** previously. *Autism*

Science and society

- Arizona Autism Charter Schools has won the \$1 million Yass Prize, a prestigious award for U.S.-based schools that offer innovative programming for underserved student populations. *KTAR News*
- Restraint and seclusion policies for misbehaving students in U.S. schools are overwhelmingly applied to children with disabilities and should be banned, writes the former lieutenant governor of Michigan, who has an autistic child. *The Washington Post*
- Black people are overwhelmingly underrepresented in U.K. universities, making up only 0.6 percent of science professors. *Nature*

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