

Girls tend to experience softer symptoms of autism than boys

Think autism and an image of an awkward boy typically emerges. The developmental disorder is at least four times more common in boys, but...[m]any girls with autism have social skills that can mask the condition. And some girls are born without autism despite the same genetic mutations seen in boys with the condition.

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Better understanding of gender's role is key to helping the most people, said Kevin Pelphrey, an autism researcher at George Washington University. "Autism may not be the same thing in boys and girls."

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Brain imaging suggests there may be an additional explanation for why many girls with autism have more subtle symptoms, Pelphrey said.

"The surprising thing we are finding is that even in girls who clearly have autism," brain regions involved in social behavior that are normally affected are less severely impaired, he said.

Recent studies on autism-linked genes have found another gender difference.

"[Girls] even need to have twice as many mutations on average to actually manifest with autism," said Joseph Buxbaum, director of an autism center at Mount Sinai medical school....

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Girls and autism: It can be subtle, or absent for some at risk](#)