

60% of children with autism missed by this widely used screening tool

The most widely used screening tool for autism misses a large proportion of toddlers who are later diagnosed with the condition, according to a study published today in [Pediatrics](#).

The test, called the [Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers](#) (M-CHAT), identifies less than 40 percent of autistic children. And 85 percent of the children the screen does flag turn out not to have autism.

The results echo those of similar studies in [Norway](#) and [Malaysia](#) and underscore the need for new screens for autism. They also inform the ongoing [debate](#) over whether to [screen all toddlers for autism](#): Missing a child with autism prevents the child from being treated early, but flagging a child who does not have autism can cause parents needless worry.

The researchers say it's still too early to settle the debate.

"We do not want anybody to interpret this as a recommendation not to screen," says lead investigator [Whitney Guthrie](#), a clinical psychologist and scientist at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. "Our takeaway is that, essentially, there's more work to be done. We need to identify other methods of detecting these kids that are being missed."

Read full, original post: [Standard screen misses majority of toddlers with autism](#)