

People with autism show significant increases in IQ as they mature, but development issues remain

People with [autism](#) show significant improvements in cognitive ability from age 12 to 23 years, but their autism traits remain stable over this time, according to a new [study](#).

...

Tests of intelligence [adjust for age](#), so intelligence quotients are generally expected to [remain stable](#) throughout a person's lifetime. But the participants' IQs increased with age even as their autism traits remained stable, the researchers found.

The 35 participants whose parents reported a [regression in language skills](#) early in childhood showed the largest increase in IQ, gaining about 13 IQ points on average, compared with about 7 in the whole group. The work appeared in December in the Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry.

"The most plausible explanation to me is that children who regress are those whose otherwise underlying trajectory was one of normal-high development in terms of cognition," she says. "Then something happened to perturb this trajectory — and also to cause autism." Then throughout adolescence, she says, these participants gradually returned to their earlier developmental trajectory.

In this way, she says, early regression may mark a unique autism trajectory, distinct from those of children with slower but steadier cognitive development.

[Read the original post](#)