

The prevalence and prominence of autism: Why researchers in IDD should care

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Autism spectrum disorder, or ASD, has dominated the media in recent years, whether the topic is prevalence, cause, cure or treatment. The impact on families has received less of the spotlight, but parents – especially mothers – play a crucial supporting role. This presentation will examine the effects of IDD and/or autism, with the goal of addressing the question: Are there collateral effects? The answer is: Yes, there are -- on the family and on the individual him- or herself. Youth with IDD or ASD have demonstrated significantly higher levels of behaviour disorders, and it is these behaviours – not the disability per se – that impact families. Collateral effects will be illustrated with data from our 17-year longitudinal study of families, as well as the work of others.