



National Autism Awareness Month

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Autism Treatment Unique for Every Patient

An increasing number of children are experiencing developmental challenges, and autism spectrum disorder is often being identified as the culprit. Dr. Evelyn Frazier, who specializes in autism spectrum disorder at Bon Secours Developmental and Special Needs Pediatrics at St. Mary's Hospital, notes that the onset of autism can be indicated by a delay in language development, a lack of eye contact or very little interest in caregivers or other children.

"The hallmark of autism is atypical social and communication development," says Dr. Frazier. "If a child exhibits these symptoms, or a loss of previously obtained developmental skills, it is important that the child receive an evaluation." The majority of autism assessments are performed between 16 and 36 months. However, the earlier a child receives a diagnosis, the better, and there is no cutoff age for an evaluation.

"Diagnosis is important so we can

tailor interventions to meet the individual needs of the child," asserts Dr. Frazier. "I speak to my patients directly; it is important that their voice be heard. We cannot forget that every child with autism is an individual and has unique thoughts and goals."



Dr. Evelyn Frazier

Therapy requires a large commitment on the part of the entire family. Knowing that the challenges of having a child with special needs continue even into adulthood, Dr. Frazier partners with families to help empower them throughout the entire treatment process.

"The current gold standard therapy for autism is applied behavior analysis," Dr. Frazier explains. "I discuss alternative and complementary therapies with my patients and encourage them to discuss with me any nontraditional treatments they are considering so we can determine the safety and efficacy of that therapy."

On the joy of seeing success in treatment, Dr. Frazier says, "When a patient who on the first visit refused to be seen in our exam room is able to give me a high-five on the third visit, I feel enough joy to make me smile for weeks - but even more exciting is the reaction of the parents. When they share that their child gave them a hug or said, "Mom," it is just amazing."

Dr. Evelyn Frazier received her medical degree at Case Western Reserve University and completed her pediatric residency and a fellowship in developmental and behavioral pediatrics at the University of Virginia Health System.

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April is Autism Month - but at the Developmental and Special Needs Pediatrics practice at Bon Secours, we focus on conditions like this every day. Using a family-centered approach, our team helps children from birth through early adulthood with comprehensive evaluations and ongoing medical support. Our team includes specialists like Dr. Evelyn Frazier, a fellow in developmental and behavioral pediatrics who is trained to treat children facing autism. By working with families, school systems and the community, Dr. Frazier and our entire staff are here to bring good help - and a better life - to children with autism.

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Dr. Evelyn Frazier



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