

## What is This Study About?

- Autism research tends to focus on early childhood, neglecting adolescent and adult outcomes<sup>1</sup>
- Most transition age youth with ASD are faced with significant obstacles as they attempt to navigate their way into college, work, community participation, and independent living<sup>2</sup>
- Although daily living and community participation are often included as the ultimate goals of interventions<sup>3</sup>, there is a lack of knowledge about normative functioning in this area
- Lack of knowledge about normative functioning is in part due to a lack of consistent, comprehensive, and updated measures to capture the wide range of activities<sup>4</sup> that should be considered a part of community integration

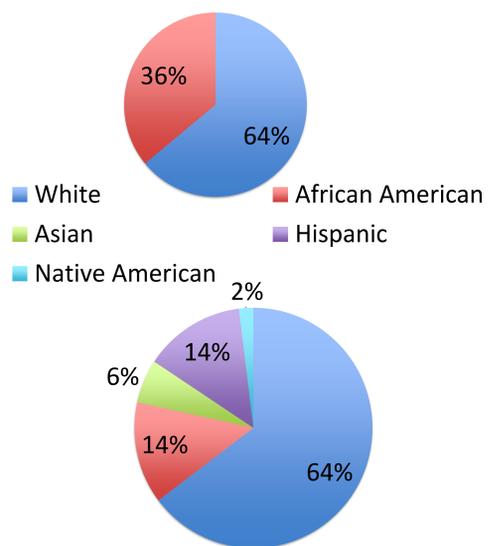
## Research Question

What is the difference between individuals *with ASD* and individuals *without ASD* in terms of various community participation variables?

## Participants

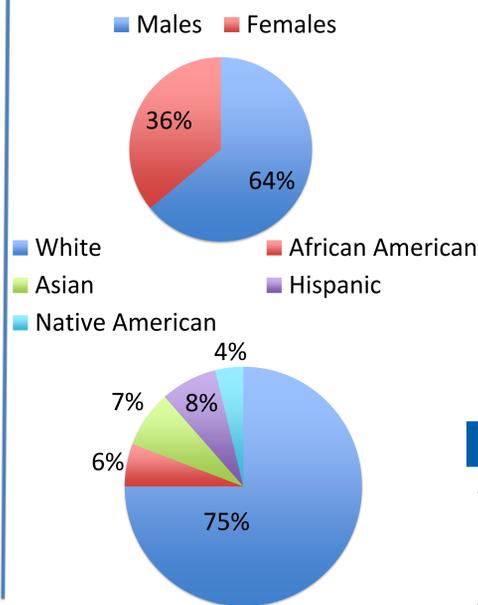
### Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) n = 50

Mean Age (Years) = 20.2 (1.2)  
Mean Age of Diagnosis = 8.7 (3.9)



### Individuals without Autism n = 50

Mean Age (Years) = 21.1 (0.9)



- Participants were 18-22 years old recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk.

## References

<sup>1</sup>Hendricks, D. R., & Wehman, P. (2009). Transition from school to adulthood for youth with autism spectrum disorders: Review and recommendations. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 24*(2), 77-88.  
<sup>2</sup>Gerhardt, P. F., & Lainer, I. (2011). Addressing the needs of adolescents and adults with autism: A crisis on the horizon. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy, 41*(1), 37-45.  
<sup>3</sup>Dumas, H. M., Bedell, G. M., & Hamill, M. S. (2003). Strategies to promote activity and participation in children and youths with acquired brain injuries. *International Journal of Rehabilitation Research, 26*(4), 303-308.  
<sup>4</sup>Galvin, J., Froude, E. H., & McAleer, J. (2010). Children's participation in home, school and community life after acquired brain injury. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal, 57*(2), 118-126.

## Method

### Procedure

- Participants completed an anonymous online self-report survey.
- A demographics questionnaire was followed by the community participation survey developed for this study.

### Community Participation Survey

#### Description

- 27-item survey
- Participants rated how often they engage in activities on a 6 point Likert-type response scale
- Higher scores indicated more self-reported engagement

Rarely/ Never (1)	A few times a year (2)	About Monthly (3)	About Weekly (4)	About Daily (5)	Several times each day (6)
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### Item Break Down by Domain

- **Educational Activities:** 2 Items
- **Exercise, Volunteer, Job, Vacation/Traveling**
  - 1 Item each
- **Online/Computer Activities:** 7 Items
- **Leisure Activities:** 7 Items
- **Daily Life:** 7 Items
- **Group Membership:** 1 item
  - Participants select from a list of groups which (if any) they participate in (e.g., YMCA)
- **Documents:** 1 Item
  - Participants select from a list of documents which (if any) they own (e.g., Drivers' License, Library Card)
- In the **educational activities, online/computer activities, leisure activities, and daily life activities** participants were given the option to fill in additional activities not captured by the measure.

## Discussion

- When asked to self-report their participation, of the 27 items, individuals with ASD reported significantly different levels of engagement in **six** items, and at a trend level for another **four** items
- There are several areas of community integration where there are no differences in self-reported engagement including using social media, attending lectures, and exercising
- Results are likely to be different for individuals representing the full spectrum of ASD (since current sample could read and access internet)
- However, results support the observation that full community integration for individuals with ASD remains a challenge<sup>1</sup>

## Results

### Mean Differences of Community Participation Variables for Both Individuals with ASD and without ASD (N = 100)

Community Participation Variables	Individuals with ASD (n = 50)	Individuals without ASD (n = 50)	t(df)	Cohen's d
<b>How often do you engage in:</b>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>		
<b>Driving/commuting</b>	3.52 (1.88)	4.80 (1.19)	-4.07(83)**	0.81
<b>Working a job</b>	3.00 (1.77)	4.24 (1.41)	-3.87(93)**	0.78
<b>Cleaning (like cleaning your home, washing dishes, washing clothes)</b>	3.92 (1.28)	4.50 (0.89)	-2.64(98)*	0.53
<b>Dining out (like going out to eat at a restaurant)</b>	3.08 (1.04)	3.54 (0.82)	-2.45(98)*	0.49
<b>Gaming (like online games, Xbox, PlayStation, computer games, apps)</b>	4.40 (1.51)	3.70 (1.52)	2.43(98)*	0.46
<b>Communicating (like texting, talking on the phone)</b>	4.52 (1.49)	5.08 (1.23)	-2.05(98)*	0.41
<b>Watching videos/movies (like Hulu Plus, YouTube, Netflix)</b>	4.74 (1.08)	4.34 (0.96)	1.95(98)^	0.39
<b>Shopping (like for groceries, clothing)</b>	3.46 (1.20)	3.82 (0.72)	-1.82(80)^	0.36
<b>Traveling/vacation</b>	1.88 (0.77)	2.18 (0.90)	-1.79(98)^	0.36
<b>Reading the news</b>	3.58 (1.69)	4.08 (1.31)	-1.65(92)	0.33
<b>Playing an instrument</b>	1.56 (1.56)	2.02 (1.55)	-1.76(85)^	0.30
<b>Participating in a team sport</b>	1.74 (1.17)	2.10 (1.31)	-1.45(98)	0.29
<b>Volunteering</b>	1.72 (0.95)	2.02 (1.19)	-1.40(98)	0.28
<b>Running errands or attending appointments (like going to the bank, post office, hair dresser)</b>	3.56 (1.15)	3.84 (0.82)	-1.41(89)	0.28
<b>Lectures or classroom learning</b>	3.22 (1.78)	3.66 (1.75)	-1.25(98)	0.25
<b>Attending religious services or spiritual practice</b>	2.34 (1.44)	2.00 (1.40)	1.20(98)	0.24
<b>Watching TV</b>	4.78 (1.11)	4.48 (1.40)	1.19(98)	0.24
<b>Social media (like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)</b>	4.28 (1.76)	4.68 (1.66)	-1.17(98)	0.23
<b>Community events/entertainment (like sporting events, concerts, movies)</b>	2.28 (1.05)	2.52 (1.20)	-1.06(98)	0.21
<b>Email (like checking emails, sending emails)</b>	4.68 (1.66)	4.94 (1.17)	-1.11(98)	0.18
<b>Homework/quizzes or exam preparation</b>	3.14 (1.65)	3.44 (1.72)	-0.89(98)	0.18
<b>Online educational activities</b>	3.00 (1.70)	3.26 (1.58)	-0.79(98)	0.16
<b>Blogging (like reading or writing a blog)</b>	2.02 (1.50)	2.24 (1.44)	-0.75(98)	0.15
<b>Exercise</b>	3.70 (1.37)	3.90 (1.27)	-0.82(98)	0.15
<b>Literacy activities</b>	3.82 (1.71)	4.02 (1.33)	-0.65(92)	0.13
<b>Listening to music</b>	5.04 (0.88)	4.92 (1.08)	0.61(98)	0.12
<b>Arts and crafts</b>	2.32 (1.35)	2.20 (1.33)	-0.42(98)	0.09

Note. ^p<.10. \*p<.05. \*\*p<.001.