

# Emerge



## A Child's Place

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Occupational Therapy  
Speech Therapy

### Chapel Hill Office

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Serving children from birth  
to 14 years old

### Using therapy to improve conditions such as:

Delayed Speech  
Dyspraxia  
Speech Impairments  
Non-communicative Speech  
Oral/Verbal Apraxia  
Language Disorders  
Feeding Difficulties  
Autism/Asperger's/PDD  
Developmental Delay  
Cerebral Palsy  
Sensory Integration  
Disorders  
Sensory Modulation  
Disorders  
Handwriting Impairments  
Fine & Gross Motor Delays

A Private, Independent  
Provider

[www.EmergeAChildsPlace.com](http://www.EmergeAChildsPlace.com)

## New Data on Higher Prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder



Bonnie Hacker, OT  
Founder / Director

This past October, *Pediatrics* published analysis of the CDC's National Survey of Children's Health.<sup>1</sup> Between April 2007 and July 2008, interviewers completed 91,642 telephone surveys. They found that the prevalence of diagnosed autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has risen to 1.1% of children age 3 to 17. This means that practitioners seeing 500 children should expect that four to six of their patients would have an ASD diagnosis. Previous reports estimated the prevalence to be 0.2% to 0.5%. Improved screening in medical practice may account for some of the increase. Nearly half of the cases were categorized as mild ASD. ASD was more prevalent among boys than girls at a rate of 4 to 1.

Evidence suggests early intervention improves outcomes and has the potential to create significant savings for state and national healthcare dollars in the long-run.<sup>2-3</sup> The diagnosis of autism is typically made by a psychologist or, in the Durham or Chapel Hill area, by TEACCH. A simultaneous referral for occupational and/or speech therapy is often indicated. Inasmuch as the developmental challenges presented by ASD usually span speech and functional realms, both occupational and speech therapy are essential components of an effective intervention program for most children with ASD. Additionally, the majority of children on the autism spectrum present with a sensory processing disorder which significantly impacts their learning, behavior and ability to adapt. When a developmental delay is suspected, children can benefit from pediatric OT and ST even prior to an official ASD diagnosis.

The therapists at **Emerge - A Child's Place** have specific experience working with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Emerge therapists have received continuing education in DIR/Floortime Intervention. Developed by Stanley Greenspan, MD, Floortime provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and treating children challenged by autism spectrum and related disorders. It focuses on helping children master the building blocks of relating, communicating, and thinking, rather than focusing on symptoms alone. The therapists at Emerge truly tailor programs to the individual needs of both the child and his or her family. Emerge involves parents in therapy sessions and gives them guidance and support for implementing therapy strategies at home.



"Does your child . . .

- not speak as well as peers?"
- have poor eye contact?"
- not respond to his/her own name?"
- seem to tune others out?"
- not have a social smile that can be elicited by others smiling?"
- have difficulty following simple commands?"
- not bring things to you simply to show them to you?"
- not point to interesting objects or events to direct your attention?"
- have repetitive, odd behaviors?"
- show an unusual attachment to inanimate objects, especially hard ones (e.g. a flashlight or chain vs. a stuffed animal or blanket)?"
- prefer to play alone?"
- demonstrate an inability to play with toys in the typical way?"
- not engage in pretend play (if older than 2 years)?"

**"Yes" answers suggest the need for a comprehensive evaluation.**



### Affordable Care at Emerge - A Child's Place

Many parents find that insurance coverage for pediatric occupational or speech therapy is often limited. In these cases, Emerge has even more to offer in addition to uncompromising quality of care and excellent facilities. Even though the quality of care at Emerge is at the highest levels, you will find the fees at Emerge to be the most affordable.

**Please tell parents about Emerge - A Child's Place  
Believing in a Child's Potential to Flourish**

## References

1. Kogan M, Blumberg S, Schieve L, et al. Prevalence of parent-reported diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder among children in the US, 2007. *Pediatrics*. 2009, Oct 5 (published online doi: 10.1542/peds.2009-1522).
2. Jacobson J, Mulick J. System and cost research issues in treatments for people with autistic disorders. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. 2000; 30 (6): 585-593.
3. Jacobson J, Mulick J, Green G. Cost-benefit estimates for early intensive behavioral intervention for young children with autism – general model and single case. *Behav Intervent*. 1998; 13: 201-226.