

British Autism Study of Infant Siblings



About BASIS

The British Autism Study of Infant Siblings (BASIS) is a collaborative research network for the study of infants at-risk for autism in the UK. The primary aim of BASIS is to provide a platform for the study of infants at-risk for autism in the UK and to facilitate collaborative links between scientists working in the area. This is achieved through establishing a national focal point for recruitment of participants for scientific research studies, data sharing, and scientific exchange. BASIS also aims to provide information for families involved in research as well as for the general public.

Research focus

Autism is a developmental disorder affecting social development and communication. Some form of autism affects 1 in 100 children in the UK. Currently, it is rare that autism is diagnosed earlier than two years of age when symptoms are sufficiently clear. Over the past decades, scientific research has advanced our understanding of the neurobiological basis of autism in older children and adults. By contrast, very little is known about how the condition develops over the first few years.

Using newly developed techniques for studying brain and behaviour in infants, BASIS scientists will investigate whether there are any differences in development between infants who have brothers or sisters with autism and those who do not. In the long term, this will help identify the early signs of the disorder, allowing for earlier and more effective intervention aimed at improving the quality of life of children with autism.

Funding and collaboration

BASIS was formally launched in May 2008, following funding from a consortium of charities led by Autism Speaks, and with support from the Medical Research Council. Currently, collaborating centres include Birkbeck, University of London, Institute of Child Health, Institute of Psychiatry, Cambridge University, Oxford University, and University of Manchester. Expansion into other sites is anticipated over the next few years.

Contact Us



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