Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHAT) Follow-Up Interview™

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The M-CHAT Follow-Up Interview can be downloaded free of charge from http://www2.gsu.edu/~psydlr

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Instructions for the M-CHAT Follow-Up Interview™

Select items based on M-CHAT scores. Administer only those items for which the parent indicated behavior that demonstrates risk for autism spectrum disorders (ASDs), and/or those which the healthcare provider has concerns may not have been answered accurately.

Score interview items in the same manner as the M-CHAT. If an item is failed, it indicates risk for ASDs. Failure of two critical items (items 2, 7, 9, 13, 14, 15) or any three total warrants referral to a specialist. Please note that failing the follow-up interview does not diagnose ASDs; it indicates increased risk for ASDs.

Please note that if the healthcare provider has concerns about ASDs, children should be referred to a specialist regardless of the score on the M-CHAT or M-CHAT follow-up interview.

Please use the following M-CHAT page to record the scores after the interview is completed.
Please score the interview items on this page. Critical items are marked in **bold** and reverse score items, meaning those for which a score of “Yes” indicates risk for autism (11, 18, 20, 22) are noted by the word **reverse**.

1. Does your child enjoy being swung, bounced on your knee, etc.?  
   Yes  No
2. **Does your child take an interest in other children?**  
   Yes  No
3. Does your child like climbing on things, such as up stairs?  
   Yes  No
4. Does your child enjoy playing peek-a-boo/hide-and-seek?  
   Yes  No
5. Does your child ever pretend, for example, to talk on the phone or take care of a doll or pretend other things?  
   Yes  No
6. Does your child ever use his/her index finger to point, to ask for something?  
   Yes  No
7. **Does your child ever use his/her index finger to point, to indicate interest in something?**  
   Yes  No
8. Can your child play properly with small toys (e.g. cars or blocks) without just mouthing, fiddling, or dropping them?  
   Yes  No
9. **Does your child ever bring objects over to you (parent) to show you something?**  
   Yes  No
10. Does your child look you in the eye for more than a second or two?  
    Yes  No
11. Does your child ever seem oversensitive to noise? (e.g., plugging ears)  
    (REVERSE) Yes  No
12. Does your child smile in response to your face or your smile?  
    Yes  No
13. **Does your child imitate you? (e.g., you make a face—will your child imitate it?)**  
    Yes  No
14. **Does your child respond to his/her name when you call?**  
    Yes  No
15. If you point at a toy across the room, does your child look at it?  
    Yes  No
16. Does your child walk?  
    Yes  No
17. Does your child look at things you are looking at?  
    Yes  No
18. Does your child make unusual finger movements near his/her face?  
    (REVERSE) Yes  No
19. Does your child try to attract your attention to his/her own activity?  
    Yes  No
20. Have you ever wondered if your child is deaf?  
    (REVERSE) Yes  No
21. Does your child understand what people say?  
    Yes  No
22. Does your child sometimes stare at nothing or wander with no purpose?  
    (REVERSE) Yes  No
23. Does your child look at your face to check your reaction when faced with something unfamiliar?  
    Yes  No

**Critical Score:** _________

**Total Score:** ____________

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1. You reported that __________ does not enjoy being swung, bounced on your knee, etc.

Is this still true?

No

Then s/he does enjoy being bounced or swung?

Yes

No

PASS

When you swing or bounce him/her, how does s/he react?

Yes □ No □

Yes □ No □

Yes □ No □

Other (Describe):...........................................................................

If NO to all

FAIL

If YES to any specific examples

PASS

If other is clearly a positive response
2. You reported that ______________ does not take an interest in other children. (Critical)

Is this still true?

No

Then your child does take an interest in other children?

Yes

No

Is he/she interested in children who are not his/her brother or sister?

Yes

No

When you are at the playground or supermarket, does your child usually respond to the presence of another child?

Yes

No

How does your child respond?

Plays with the other child
Talks to the other child
Aggressive behavior
Vocalizes
Looks at the other child
Smiles at the other child

Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes
No No No No No No

NO to all
PASS

(Ask all)

FAIL

If yes to any:

Does s/he (fill in responses given here- e.g. plays, talks, smiles, looks, or vocalizes) more than half of the time?

No

Yes

FAIL
PASS
3. You reported that ________ does not like climbing on things, such as up stairs.

Is this still true?

No

Then s/he does like climbing on things?

Yes

No

Yes

No

Does he/she enjoy climbing on....

... stairs?
Yes ☐ No ☐

... chairs?
Yes ☐ No ☐

... furniture?
Yes ☐ No ☐

... playground equipment?
Yes ☐ No ☐

Yes to any

PASS

No to all

FAIL
4. You reported that __________ does not enjoy playing peek-a-boo / hide – and –seek.

Is this still true?

No

Then your child does enjoy playing peek-a-boo or hide-and-seek?

YES

PASS

NO

Yes

Does your child like any games that involve a back – and –forth exchange with another person?

No

What does s/he do if you try to play a game like peek-a-boo or pat-a-cake (or example given) with him/her?

Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smiles/laughs</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocalizes pleasure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests more verbally</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests more nonverbally</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Refuses to play      | Yes | No |

Cries                | Yes | No |

Not interested in those games | Yes | No |

Leaves situation if parent initiates | Yes | No |

If yes to example(s) from above

PASS

If yes only to example(s) from above

FAIL

Pass response

What is more typical?

Fail response
5. You reported that __________ does not ever pretend, for example, to talk on the phone or take care of dolls, or pretend other things.

Is this still true?

No

Then your child does pretend play?

Yes

No

Can you give me an example?

Yes

Can you give me an example?

Yes

No

Does he/she ever play make believe?

If parent gives any examples listed, it is a pass.

If no, ask examples individually

Push a car on a pretend road ________

Does he/ she put a toy pot on stove or stir imaginary food?____

Pretend to vacuum or mow lawn _________

Feed self with a toy spoon or empty cup__

Feed a doll with real or imaginary food?____

Pretend to be a robot, an airplane, a ballerina, or any other favorite character____

Put an action figure or doll into a toy car or truck____

Pretend to talk on the telephone ______

If parent gave any example listed:

If parent did not give any example listed

PASS

FAIL
6. You reported that __________ does not use his/her pointer finger to point, to ask for something.

Is this still true?

No

Then your child does use his/her pointer finger in order to ask for something?

Yes  No

Yes

No

PASS

If there is something your child wants that is out of reach, such as a cookie up on a counter, how does he/she get it?

Points   ________

Reaches for the object with the whole hand ______
Leads the parent to the object ______
Tries to get the object for him/herself ______
Asks for it ______

If responds with any of the above:

If you said “Show me,” would he/she point at it?

Yes  No

PASS  FAIL
7. You reported that __________ does not use his/her pointer finger to point, to indicate interest in something. (Critical)

Is this still true?

- No
  - Then your child does use his/her pointer finger in order to point to indicate interest in something?
    - Yes
    - No
    - PASS

- Yes
  - Does your child ever want you to see something interesting such as:
    - ...an airplane in the sky
      - Yes □ No □
    - ...a truck on the road
      - Yes □ No □
    - ...a bug on the ground
      - Yes □ No □
    - ...an animal in the yard
      - Yes □ No □
  - If Yes:
    - How does your child draw your attention to it? Would he/she point with his/her pointer finger?
      - Yes
      - No
      - FAIL
      - PASS
    - No
      - Is this to indicate interest, not to get help?
        - Yes
        - No
        - FAIL
        - PASS
8. You reported that ________ does not play properly with small toys (e.g. cars or blocks) without just mouthing, fiddling, or dropping them.

Is this still true?

No

Then your child does know how to play properly with small toys?

Yes

No

Can you give me an example?

Yes

How does he/she play with toys?

PASS

Stacks blocks____
Does simple puzzles____
Plays with cars/trucks____
Plays with a shape sorter____
Stacks rings on a stick____
Nests cups inside each other____

FAIL

Puts toys in mouth____
Throws toys____
Doesn’t play with toys____
Swallows pieces____
Lines toys up____
Carries one toy around the house____
Stares at toys____

If yes only to example(s) from above

If yes to examples from both

What is more typical?

PASS

Pass response

FAIL

Fail response
9. You reported that ________ does not bring objects over to you (parent) to show you something. (Critical)

Is this still true?

**No**

Then your child does bring objects over to show you?

**Yes**

**PASS**

**No**

Does your child sometimes bring you:

- A picture or toy just to show you? ____
- A drawing he/she has done? ____
- A flower he/she has picked? ____
- A bug he/she has found in the grass? ____

**No**

If yes to any:

**Yes**

Is this just to show you, not to get help?

**Yes**

**PASS**

**No**

**FAIL**
10. You reported that __________ does not look you in the eye for more than a second or two?

Is this still true?

No

Then your child does look you in the eyes for more than a second or two?

Yes

No

Yes

No

**PASS**

Does s/he look you in the eyes when s/he needs something? ____
When playing with you? ____
During feeding? ____
During diaper changes? ____
When you are reading him/her a story? ____

Yes only to one

Yes to two or more

No to all

**FAIL**

Does your child look you in the eyes every day?

On a day when you are together all day, does he/she look you in the eyes at least 5 times?

Yes

No

**PASS**

FAIL
11. You reported that __________ sometimes seems oversensitive to noise.

Is this still true?

No

Then your child does not seem oversensitive to noise?

No, he/she does not

PASS

Yes, he/she does

If yes to two or more, continue:

Does your child have a negative reaction to the sound of:
(ask as needed)....

A washing machine? ____
Babies crying? ____
Babies squealing or screeching? ____
Vacuum cleaner? ____
Sirens? ____
Traffic? ____
Doors slamming? ____
Loud music? ____
Telephone/doorbell ringing? ____
Noisy places such as the supermarket or restaurant? ____
Other (describe) : ____________________________
______________________________
____________

If yes only to example(s) from above

Calmly covers ears ____
Expresses displeasure verbally ____

PASS

Screams ____
Cries ____
Covers ears while upset ____

FAIL

If yes only to one:

What is more typical?

Pass response

FAIL

Pass response

FAIL
12. You reported that __________ does not smile in response to your face or your smile.

Is this still true?

- No
  - Then your child does smile in response to your face or your smile?
    - Yes
      - What makes __________ smile?
    - No
      - PASS

- Yes
  - Ask specifically about below examples if parent does not give any
    - PASS
    - FAIL
      - Always smiling ___
      - Smiles at favorite toy or activity ___
      - Smiles randomly or at nothing in particular ___

If yes only to example(s) from above

PASS

If yes only to example(s) from above

FAIL
13. You reported that ________ does not usually imitate you. (Critical)

Is this still true?

No

Then your child does imitate you?

Yes

No

Yes

No

Does your child copy you if you:

If yes to two or more

PASS

If yes to one or none

FAIL

Does your child copy you if you:

Stick out your tongue?
Make a funny sound?
Wave good bye?
Clap your hands?
Put your fingers to your lips to signal “Shhh”?
Blow a kiss?

Yes □ No □
Yes □ No □
Yes □ No □
Yes □ No □
Yes □ No □
Yes □ No □
14. You reported that ________ does not respond to his/her name when you call. (Critical)

Is this still true?

No

Then your child does respond to his/her name?

Yes

If he/she is not doing anything particularly fun or absorbing, would he/she usually respond to his/her name being called?

No

If parent does not spontaneously respond, ask below examples

Yes

What does he/she do when you call his/her name?

No

If yes to examples from both

Pass

What is more typical?

Pass response

FAIL

If yes only to example(s) from above

FAIL

If yes only to example(s) from above

Pass

No response

Seems to hear but ignores parent

Parent needs to be in child’s face

Responds only if touched

Looks up _______

Talks or babbles _______

Stops what he/she is doing _______

If yes only to example(s) from above

Pass
15. You reported that if you point at a toy across the room, ________ does not look at it. (Critical)

If parent does not spontaneously respond, ask below examples

**PASS**

If yes only to example(s) from above

**PASS**

If yes to examples from both

If yes only to example(s) from above

**FAIL**

**FAIL**

What is more typical?

Pass response

Fail response
16. You reported that your child does not walk.

Is this still true?

No

Then your child walks without holding on?

Yes  No

Yes  No

PASS  FAIL

FAIL
17. You reported that ____________ does not look at things you are looking at.

Is this still true?

No

Then your child does look at things you are looking at?

Yes

No

Yes

PASS

If parent does not spontaneously respond, ask below examples

PASS

What does s/he do when you are looking at something?

FAIL

Ignores _______
Looks at parent’s face _______

If yes only to example(s) from above

PASS

If yes to examples from both

What is more typical?

Pass response

FAIL

Fail response

If yes only to example(s) from above
18. You reported that ________________ makes unusual finger movements near his/her face.

Is this still true?

No

Then he/she does not make any unusual finger movements?

No

Yes

Please describe these movements.

If parent does not spontaneously respond, ask below examples

Wiggles his/her fingers near his/her eyes
Holds hands up close to eyes
Holds hands off to the side of his/her eyes
Flaps hands near face
Other (describe)

If yes to any fail response

Does this happen more than twice a week?

No

PASS

FAIL

Yes

PASS
19. You reported that ____________ does not try to attract your attention to his/her own activity.

Is this still true?

No

Then he/she does try to attract your attention to his/her own activity?

Yes

No

Ask each item.

Does he/she….

Say “Look!” or “Watch me!” ______
Bring a toy or activity to show you (parent) ______
Look expectantly to get praise or comment ______
Keep looking to see if you’re (parent) is looking ______

If yes to any or sometimes to two or more

PASS

If yes to none or sometimes to one or fewer

FAIL
20. Have you wondered if your child is deaf?

Ask all parents:

Has your child’s hearing been tested? If YES, what were the results?

Note results ______ Hearing impaired ______ Hearing in normal range

If hearing is impaired > PASS

Note: If parents report that they wondered about their child’s hearing only as part of a routine checkup > PASS

Note: Regardless of hearing test results, if child ignores sounds or people > FAIL
21. You reported that _____________ does not understand what people say?

Is this still true?

- No
  - Then he/she does understand what people say?
    - Yes
      - When the situation gives him/her a clue, can he/she follow a command? For example, when you are dressed to go out and you tell him/her to get his/her shoes…
        - If yes
          - PASS
        - If no or sometimes
          - FAIL
    - No
      - If it is dinnertime and food is on the table, and you tell the child to sit down, will he/she come sit at the table?
        - No
          - FAIL
        - Yes
          - When the situation does not give any clues, can he/she follow a command (e.g., “show me your shoe” without any gestures)? Use other examples as needed: “Bring me the book”; “Bring me my keys”.
            - No
              - FAIL
            - Yes
              - PASS

- Yes
  - If yes
22. You reported that ______________ sometimes stares at nothing or wanders with no purpose.

Is this still true?

- **No**
  - Then your child does not stare at nothing or wander with no purpose?
    - **No**
      - **PASS**
    - **Yes**
      - Can you give me some examples of this behavior?
        - __________________________
        - __________________________
        - __________________________
        - __________________________
      - **Yes to either example**
        - **PASS**
      - **No to both examples**

- **Yes**
  - **FAIL**

**NOTE** (Only if parent asks): these behaviors need to last for at least a couple of minutes.

(If not stated above) Does your child often stare off into space?

- **No**
- **Yes**

(If not stated above) Does he/she like to walk around the edges of the room instead of settling down with an activity?

- **Yes to either example**
- **No to both examples**

Does he/she do this behavior (fill in behavior parent indicated) often - at least several times per week? ______________

Does he/she walk in circles (not in play to make self dizzy) often - at least several times per week? ______________

- **Yes to either**
- **No to both**

Does he/she do this only when tired?

- **Yes**
- **FAIL**

- **No**
  - **PASS**
23. You reported that __________________ does not usually look at your face to check your reaction when faced with something unfamiliar and a little scary.

Is this still true?

- No
- Yes

Then he/she does look at your face to check your reaction when faced with something scary?

- Yes
- No

If your child hears an unfamiliar or scary noise, will he/she look at you before deciding how to respond?

- Yes
- No

Does your child look at you when someone new approaches?

- Yes
- No

What does your child do when faced with something unfamiliar and a little scary?

- Sometimes or probably looks at parent’s reaction ________
- Probably does not look at parent’s reaction ________________

PASS

PASS