

SPOTTED

Spotted around the web: Suicide rates, TCF4, rapid screening, face masks in an MRI

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WEEK OF JANUARY 18TH

Research roundup

- Autistic people have died by suicide at three times the rate of non-autistic people in Denmark. [*JAMA Network Open*](#)
- Children with autism may become less active in their teenage years than non-autistic children. [*Autism*](#)
- Autistic children aged 3 to 5 often have feeding and swallowing difficulties arising from multiple issues, such as sensory problems and repetitive behaviors. [*African Health Sciences*](#)
- Infants with tuberous sclerosis complex who experience seizures should be monitored for autism. [*Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology*](#)
- Rats exposed to an activated immune system in utero appear to have altered activity patterns and circadian rhythm as adults. [*Brain, Behavior, and Immunity*](#)
- A comprehensive review of the TCF4 gene may reveal clues to how genetic variants lead to autism and psychiatric conditions. [*Translational Psychiatry*](#)
- A new rapid screening test for autism in toddlers, tested in a real-world clinic, appears to be reliable and easy to implement. [*Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*](#)
- Success in school depends on a person's cognitive abilities, but it may also be influenced by genetic variants related to personality traits and psychiatric conditions. [*Nature Genetics*](#)
- Developmental conditions with known genetic links appear to occur with different frequencies in Chinese versus Western populations. [*Genetics in Medicine*](#)
- Wearing a face mask during magnetic resonance imaging may increase the degree of contrast for baseline readings but does not affect measurements of task-induced brain activity. [*NeuroImage*](#)

- Adults with autism have an elevated risk of post-traumatic stress disorder. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*

Science and society

- Unregulated clinics continue to hawk unproven stem cell therapies for autism and other conditions, an issue that *Spectrum* investigated in 2019. *Business Insider*
 - The number of rats and mice used in scientific research in the United States is under dispute, with estimates ranging from 10 million to more than 100 million. *Science*
 - Autism researcher Simon Baron-Cohen has been knighted in the United Kingdom. *Cambridge Independent*
 - People with intellectual disabilities should be prioritized for COVID-19 vaccination in the U.K., three healthcare experts argue. *The BMJ*
 - Autistic politician Jessica Benham, whom *Spectrum* interviewed in November, says her life experiences will inform her service as a Pennsylvania legislator. *Today*
 - Explaining the science and answering questions about vaccines are key steps to countering anti-vax misinformation. *Business Insider*
 - The National Fragile X Foundation is slated to hold a virtual meeting on 3 March to hear patient perspectives on needs and concerns for drug development. *Fragile X News Today*
 - Alycia Halladay, chief science officer at the Autism Science Foundation, has been elected board president of the Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation. *Autism Science Foundation*
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