

## Ga. autism project looks to early detection

September 21 2013, by Christina A. Cassidy

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Marlaina Dreher, right, sits with her 5-year-old son, Brandon, who is autistic, before a session in the pediatric feeding disorder program at the Marcus Autism Center, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2013, in Atlanta. A partnership between the Marcus Autism Center, one of the nation's premier autism research centers, and the state of Georgia is working to boost early detection and diagnosis of the disorder. Research shows that 1 in 88 children in the U.S. have autism spectrum disorder, which includes developmental disabilities that affect ability to communicate, understand language and relate to others. (AP Photo/David Goldman)

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In Georgia, state and contract employees are being trained to work with day care operators and pre-K providers to identify early warning signs and support parents.

Research shows that symptoms can be detected as early as the first two years of life, and early intervention is key.

The center hopes to expand the partnership to other states and is working with the U.S. Department of Education to bring its work to Head Start programs nationwide.

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