

Criminal Protection for Autistic Children

الحماية الجزائية لأطفال التوحد

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Abstract:

Children with autism are more likely to be offenders of minor crimes than victims and witnesses. They have difficulty communicating and socializing. Their conduct may look unusual, concealing many impairments that are difficult for others to recognize.

As a result of the aforementioned, all experts in the field of criminal justice may come into contact with persons with autism, because their demonstration of certain behaviors may expose them to criminal charges and hurt due to anti-social conduct. From the police station through the trial, autistic patients may face issues and legal impediments that may jeopardize their rights; hence, the criminal justice system must address them specifically.

Several countries have established integrated approaches between mental health and criminal justice experts to deal with these particular difficulties, such as Northern Ireland's Autism Act, which entered into force in August 2011, so we raise the following problematic: What is the criminal protection for autistic children, and how does it aid in their integration and the preservation of their rights? Is the Algerian legislature using processes comparable to those used in other countries?

Keywords : autism children, criminal protection, justice, law, handicap, mental health, ...,

الملخص:

من المحتمل أن يكون الأطفال الذين يعانون من التوحد مرتكبي جرائم بسيطة أكثر من كونهم ضحايا وشهود على جريمة، فهم يواجهون صعوبات في التواصل والتفاعل الاجتماعي، فقد تبدو سلوكياتهم غريبة تخفي إعاقات مختلفة تستعصى على الآخرين معرفتها.

ومما سبق، قد يتصل جميع المهنيين في مجال العدالة الجنائية بأشخاص مرضى التوحد، لأن إظهارهم لبعض السلوكيات قد تعرضهم لتهمة جنائية وإيذاء بسبب السلوك المعادي للمجتمع، فبدء من الشرطة إلى غاية قاعة المحكمة، قد يتعرض مرضى التوحد إلى إشكاليات وعقوبات قانونية قد تضر بحقوقهم، ولذا كان لا بد لنظام العدالة الجنائية التعامل معهم بشكل خاص.

وقد اعتمدت دول عديدة من خلال مقامي اعتبارات السياسة الجنائية نهج متكاملة بين المتخصصين في الصحة العقلية والعدالة الجنائية للتعامل مع هذه القضايا الفريدة كما هو الحال في أيرلندا الشمالية بإصدارها قانون التوحد الذي دخل حيز النفاذ في أوت 2011.

وعليه، نطرح الإشكالية التالية: فيم تتمثل الحماية الجنائية لأطفال التوحد، وكيف تساهم هذه الحماية في دمجهم وحماية حقوقهم؟ وهل تبني المشرع الجزائري آليات في هذا الشأن على غرار بعض الدول؟
الكلمات المفتاحية: أطفال التوحد، الحماية الجزائية، إعاقاة، العدالة، الصحة العقلية، قانون، ...

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Introduction:

Criminal policy, in a broader sense, refers to all actions that have an impact on criminality, and criminal policy includes, for example, decisions about what acts constitute punishable offenses, the type of penalties imposed for these offenses, and the severity of these penalties, in addition to criminal law measures, social policy measures, education, health care service arrangements, and urban planning, among other things that affect criminality.⁽¹⁾

Legal protection in the concept of law means preventing people from attacking each other's rights in accordance with the provisions of legal rules, and criminal protection derives from it, which is the most important and dangerous one,⁽²⁾ as criminalization is based primarily on protecting interests worthy of protection through texts approved by the legislator, knowing that criminal protection in the Procedure Code differs from criminal protection in the Penal Code.

Children with autism are currently classified as having one of the patterns of autism, as is the case in Egypt, which affects their ability to communicate socially and verbally with others,⁽³⁾ while some seek, as is the case in Algeria, to classify them as having special needs, and this classification plays an important role in protecting them, whether as defendants or victims, because autism is neither a learning disability nor a mental illness.⁽⁴⁾

1. Autism and Criminal Behavior

Understanding and measuring the association between autism spectrum condition and deviant conduct is a difficult and sensitive undertaking, but it is becoming increasingly relevant for a variety of reasons,⁽⁵⁾ and research suggests that while there is no link between the latter and deviant conduct in most persons with autism, it is obviously impacted by factors such as comorbidity, particular autistic symptoms, and kind of crime.⁽⁶⁾

1.1- Fundamentals of protection for autistic individuals

There are dedicated legal norms or strict legal instruments aimed specifically at confirming and protecting the rights of people with autism, as well as imposing obligations on states to respect, protect, and promote these rights, particularly in the fields of education and employment, similar to European institutions and supranational organizations - such as the Council of Europe and the European Union - where the situation and special needs of people with autism find legal recognition, where within the broader framework of legal norms and instruments relating to the rights of people with disabilities, as well as within the scope of

(1)- Criminal policy, Ministry of Justice, Finland, on: <https://oikeusministerio.fi/en/criminal-policy>, last update March 2nd, 2020.

(2)- See also Masngud Afandi and Gunarto, *The Legal Protection Against Children Who Did Criminal Actions Through Diversion*, *Law Development Journal*, Volume 3, Issue 2, June 2021, (283 – 289).

(3)- On the International Day of “Autism” and the “Child’s Book”..., *Youn7 Newspaper*, Sunday Issue, 02 April 2017.

(4)- The National Autistic Society, *The protection of children and young people with autism from violence and abuse*, 2014, p.05.

(5)- Rhian Hayes, *What is the relationship between autism spectrum disorder and offending behavior, if any?*, 2016, p.02, on:

<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/What-is-the-relationship-between-autism-spectrum-%2C-Hayes/20c3def022a33249b8eab8203f079fe860aef84d>

(6)- A. X. Rutten et al., *Autism in adult and juvenile delinquents: a literature review*, *Child Adolesc Psychiatry Ment Health*. 2017.



application of the general principle of equality and non-discrimination,⁽¹⁾ the condition and special needs of people with autism find legal recognition and protection to some extent.

In light of this larger framework, the most significant comprehensive and inclusive legal document to use as a reference point is, of course, the 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This Convention elaborates on the rights of persons with disabilities and defines the code of implementation through policies, laws, and administrative measures to guarantee these rights and to abolish laws, regulations, customs, and practices that constitute discrimination against persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities includes a monitoring system to analyze how states are implementing the Convention's provisions in their domestic legal norms and practices.

In addition to the above hard law instruments and provisions on the rights of people with disabilities (including people with autism), there are some soft law instruments at the international and European levels that deal with a specific issue of the rights of people with autism, such as declarations of principles and decisions adopted by European or international organizations that do not have legally binding force but nonetheless have a normative value.⁽²⁾

1.2- Autism and types of offenses committed

Studies on the frequency of autistic children, particularly juveniles, have found inconsistencies. In Japan, autism incidence rates ranged from 1.3 to 6.7% across three courts for offenses such as rape or arson. A South Carolina data analysis revealed that 5% of autistic kids in the study region had been charged with at least one offense.⁽³⁾

Some studies show that when people with autism conduct criminal activities, it may be beneficial to try to understand the misbehavior in the context of the disease. Individuals with autism frequently struggle with social relationships, have unusual reactions to sensory inputs, and have limiting interests and repetitive activities. Some experts believe that these characteristics—the primary signs of autism spectrum disorder—may be overlooked or misunderstood by others, resulting in unwittingly (illegal) trades.⁽⁴⁾

The lack of research on the methodology used in relation to autism and criminal justice has resulted in a significant difference in understanding of how crime is prevalent among those with this disorder, and one study⁽⁵⁾ indicates that a variety of factors contribute to the difficulty of making generalizations and predictions. Crimes that persons with autism spectrum condition may be more inclined to commit owing to their particular features, making prevention harder.

(1)- Giuseppe Palmisano, *The Protection of People with Autism Within the Wider Framework of International and European Rules on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, ISGI-CNR, Rome, Italy Institute for International Legal Studies National Research Council (CNR) Rome, Italy, First Online: 04 February 2015.

(2)- Resolution 67/82 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 12, 2012, regarding "meeting the social and economic needs of individuals, families and communities affected by autism spectrum disorders, developmental disorders and related disabilities".

- World Health Organization, "Dhaka Declaration on Autism Spectrum Disorders and Developmental Disabilities," Adopted by civil society organizations from South Asia and Southeast Asia, 25 July 2011.

(3)- Alexandra M. Slaughter et al., *Criminal Behavior and School Discipline in Juvenile Justice-Involved Youth with Autism*, *J Autism Dev Disord.* 2019 Jun; 49(6).

(4)- Alexandra M. Slaughter et al., *Ibid.*

(5)- Such as the study by King C and Murphy GH titled *A Systematic Review of People with Autism Spectrum Disorder and the Criminal Justice System*, *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 2014.



According to Article 110 of the Child Protection Law, the Algerian parliament provided the possibility of mediation in breaches and misdemeanors, excluding crimes. The Algerian lawmaker likewise required it to be used before filing a public case, and the French legislator did the same.⁽¹⁾

1.3- Autistic youngsters face criminal charges

Current diagnosis criteria for autism include difficulty with social communication and engagement, as well as confined and repetitive patterns of behaviors, hobbies, or interests that begin in childhood. These criteria, along with others, provide significant issues in identifying the proper amount of criminal culpability for persons with autism, given there is no proof that autism is a causal element in poor behavior.⁽²⁾

Recent study suggests that a subset of people with autism engage in criminal behavior. As a result, researchers must determine if an offender's autism diagnosis has an impact on their criminal culpability. According to the findings of this study, people with autism spectrum disorder have deficiencies in cognitive empathy and higher moral reasoning. Based on these deficiencies, the autism spectrum diagnosis must be taken into account for evaluating criminal culpability under Canadian criminal law and in other criminal liability cases across the world.⁽³⁾

It is not enough to simply establish responsibility for a crime from a legal standpoint; the perpetrator of the crime must be distinguished, aware, and full of will, and despite progress within the criminal justice system, there are no specific provisions about autism or neurodevelopmental disorders in criminal legislation, which has created some tension in reconciling autism with criminal understanding about guilt and punishment.⁽⁴⁾

Today, courts handle instances involving autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and criminal intent, but the method varies since there is no single explicit view or regulation on how ASD relates to criminal intent.⁽⁵⁾ (In addition, a criminal defendant must distinguish between autism and intellectual handicap. For example, if a person has autism or an intellectual impairment, this may be effectively utilized in a defense or to achieve a lesser sentence based on that mental handicap.⁽⁶⁾

In Algeria, the legislator enacted a separate law for the protection of the child, which includes a set of procedures that apply to the delinquent child and determine how to deal with him, taking into account that his criminal responsibility is not fully established due to his lack of perception and discrimination, as is the case for children with autism.⁽⁷⁾

The Algerian legislator divided delinquent children into three age groups: less than 10 years old: no criminal responsibility⁽⁸⁾ and thus the child is not subject to criminal

(1)- Katrin Deckert, *Mediation in France: Legal Framework and Practical Experiences*, Klaus J. Hopt (ed.), 2012.

(2)- Daniele Alge, *Autism, culpability and the criminal law*, New Vistas, volume 5, issue 1, university of West London, 2017, p.19.

(3)- Grant, Tessa, et al., *Criminal responsibility in autism spectrum disorder: A critical review examining empathy and moral reasoning*, *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne*, Vol 59(1), Feb 2018, 65-75.

(4)- Daniele Alge, *Autism*, op.cit., p.20.

(5)- Monique Chiacchia, *Autism Spectrum Disorder and the Criminal Justice System*, on: <https://www.purdueglobal.edu/blog/criminal-justice/autism-and-the-criminal-justice-system/>

(6)- Christine N. Cea, *Autism and the Criminal Defendant*, *St. John's Law Review*, number 2, volume 88, Summer 2014, p.500.

(7)- See Law No. 12-15 of Ramadan 28, 1436 corresponding to July 15, 2015, relating to child protection, JR 39.

(8)- Article 56 of Law 15-12 aforementioned.



prosecutions and penalties, 13 years old: no criminal responsibility despite the possibility of criminal prosecution,⁽¹⁾ and 18 years old: the child is not completely exempted from criminal responsibility.

2. Forms of protection:

There are studies that focus primarily on victims, rather than criminal acts, and are beneficial in obtaining information on situations that may not be reported to authorities, such as victimization, abuse, exploitation, or other crimes that disproportionately impact children with autism,⁽²⁾ these studies occasionally also gather data on how criminal acts affected the victims who were involved, data that might be helpful to organizations that provide services to victims. Importantly, victim research can offer knowledge about trends, risk factors, and protective variables that can be included into the development of crime prevention policies.⁽³⁾

Children with intellectual and developmental impairments are more prone than their non-disabled classmates to become victims of conventional crimes and child abuse. Child abuse may be classified into four types: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. You agree that intellectual impairment can be a significant barrier to obtaining justice and restitution following abuse since the mentally impaired victim may not realize he has been mistreated even in cases, they may not have the opportunity to inform the authorities.⁽⁴⁾

2.1- During the preliminary investigation phase

Individuals with autism may not be deemed vulnerable during police investigations because they look academically capable and utilize language well, masking any underlying social difficulties. True, they may have substantial issues understanding and dealing with police requests. However, the context of the social environment, as well as the specifics and techniques of inquiry, must be examined because many police officers and attorneys have had no training to assist them in recognizing and understanding the behavioral characteristics of autism.⁽⁵⁾

It was recommend that mental health professionals provide evidence to autism spectrum experts, as those who suffer from it may be more compliant despite not understanding questions and providing clear answers, and individuals with autism spectrum disorder may also suffer from an intense fear of authority figures and the style and manner of questioning and pressure, which supports the view that individuals with autism spectrum disorder may be more likable.⁽⁶⁾

When interrogating an autistic individual, the officer may exhibit traits such as frailty or difficulty to talk. Inappropriate conduct (for example, laughing during a scenario) Outbursts of rage (commonly referred to as 'meltings') or spiraling behavior for no apparent cause. One

(1)- Article 57 of the Child Protection Law, which prohibits the imposition of any kind of punishment and replaces it with measures of protection and discipline according to the status of the juvenile.

(2)- Marina Sarris, *What Do We Really Know About Autism and Crime?*, Interactive Autism Network , Kennedy Krieger Institute, 2014.

(3)- Rebecca D. Pfeffer., *Autistic and at-risk: The Public and Personal Safety of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders*, Northeastern University Boston, Massachusetts, November 2012, p.13.

(4)- There is a significant underreporting of these events to the criminal justice system. Often, abuse that occurs in the home or in a residential facility is seen as a private matter rather than a criminal case by the private parties, see: Rebecca D. Pfeffer., *op.cit.*, p.24.

(5)- Clare S Allely, *Autism Spectrum Disorders in the Criminal Justice System: Police Interviewing, the Courtroom and the Prison Environment*, In book: *Recent Advances in Autism* Edition: <http://www.smgebooks.com/autism/chapters/AUT-15-02.pdf>, January 2016, pp.01-02.

(6)- Clare S Allely, *op.cit.*, p.04.



of the features of autism poses a special issue for law enforcement, therefore advice is offered not only on how to detect behaviors typically found in persons with autism spectrum condition, but also on how the police would respond and question prospective suspects (or witnesses). Advice includes the following:⁽¹⁾

- Maintain a safe distance
- Determine the person's behavior
- Use a calm, non-threatening voice
- Use basic language Talking with others who know the autistic person, such as caretakers

Because autism can impair a person's capacity to speak, it is conceivable that the authorities will not be able to obtain all of the information they want in a single interview. It is required to have numerous sessions in order to become acquainted with the individual and, if feasible, to consult with parents, caregivers, or relevant specialists to choose the best method to interview them. Request support services from an organization.⁽²⁾

Despite the establishment of child protection teams at the level of the National Security Directorates and youth protection cells at the level of the national gendarmerie in Algerian legislation, the legislator did not establish judicial control of juvenile delinquents,⁽³⁾ and judicial police officers with general jurisdiction in accordance with Article 15 C.C.P can control children's crimes and arrest for garde à vue.⁽⁴⁾

In general, when the police are called to interview a person with a disability, they should be directed to a researcher who has been particularly trained to examine people with intellectual impairments. A "private investigator" might be a psychologist, social worker, clinical criminologist, or someone with particular education. In urgent and rare instances, especially when required to prevent interruption of the investigation, ward off or allow the arrest of additional suspects, the inquiry may be handled by a normal police detective.()

2.2- During the preparatory instruction phase

If the lawyer discovers that his client has autism or another mental health disorder, he may request that the proceedings be postponed until a psychiatrist's report is acquired. In the International Classification of Diseases, autism is classified as "Mental and Behavioral Disorders," with the subgroup "Psychological Developmental Disorders," giving the court the option of proceeding under mental health rather than criminal law.

Because some autistic persons are banned from pleading in court, the defendant on the autism spectrum must be evaluated for his or her capacity to grasp the processes. This is just for adults.

The judge or jury can decide whether the person is fit to plead and can rely on as many psychiatric evaluations as they like. A report from an expert in autism is required.

For witnesses, witnesses with autism may require special procedures and/or a registered mediator who can assist the judge and attorneys in framing their questions in a way that the person will understand, and at the judge's discretion these things can also be put in

(1)- Clare S Allely, *op.cit.*, p.05.

(2)- Among the suggestions for helping people with autism through a professional guide for criminal justice professionals to communicate with were prepared by the National Autism Society and the Department of Justice in Northern Ireland in 2014, see: National Disability Authority, *Assisting People with Autism, Guidance for Justice Professionals in communicating with people with autism*, N. Ireland, 2014, p.18.

(3)- See the United Nations rules for organizing juvenile justice in Rule 12-1, which stipulates that police personnel who deal with juveniles must receive special training and training, with the need to allocate juvenile judicial control.

(4)- See Articles 48 and 49 of the Child Protection Law.



place for the weak defendant, ⁽¹⁾ because children with autism as witnesses in a courtroom are the consequence of abuse they have endured or observed alleged abuse of others, courts need institutions to allow children with autism to testify in a way that is likely not (or at least less) disruptive to their emotional well-being. ⁽²⁾

Some advocate for certain strategies to be utilized when children with autism testify. Assistive technology, assisted communications, preparing programs for child witnesses, victim witness advocates, counseling, and closed television are examples of these. There are still many challenges to be handled when it comes to youngsters in the courts as victims or witnesses to help legal entities. ⁽³⁾

In terms of investigation, the Child Protection Law requires the presence of a juvenile judge at the level of each court, ⁽⁴⁾ who is in charge of investigating all types of crimes committed by the child, such as violations, misdemeanors, and felonies, and has broad powers to identify the juvenile's personality and reveal the truth ⁽⁵⁾ in the presence of a lawyer with the juvenile and the presence of his legal representative in his capacity as a civil official, where the juvenile judge must advise him of the follow-up and the actions he will take.

2.3- During the trial phase

Children with autism are frequently subjected to physical and sexual abuse, and while no rigorous studies have been conducted to determine the extent of heightened risk, a disproportionate number of children with autism are assaulted each year. If he has autism, the prosecutor must figure out how to communicate with the jury via the defense.

Partners with autism specialists can aid advocates and attorneys in delivering information to the individual in order to respond to and manage fear. Individuals with autism spectrum condition may struggle to grasp events and activities if they do not receive proper help. To help with prosecution efforts, ⁽⁶⁾ information must be delivered in a way that satisfies their demands. Because each autistic individual is distinct but shares certain characteristics.

Regardless matter what additional disorders a person has, an autism diagnosis is critical. Even if a person with autism spectrum disorder is involved in legal or police matters, others should quickly provide information on how to communicate and interact to all relevant authorities in the legal system related to autism spectrum disorders, both in writing and in person. Participation in legal proceedings has a significant influence on an individual's capacity to act fairly.

Regarding juvenile trials, and according to the rules of the Child Protection Law, juvenile courts include sections and chambers at the level of courts of first instance to adjudicate in violations and misdemeanors, in which trial procedures are characterized by the possibility of exempting the child from attending the pleadings in case of necessity and interest. The trial is marked by confidentiality. ⁽⁷⁾ The juvenile division is then placed at the

(1)- National Autistic Society, *Criminal justice*, on:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/professionals/others/criminal-justice.aspx>

(2)- Jonni L. Johnson et al., *The Wiley Handbook of Memory, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and the Law*, first edition, John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 15 May 2018.

(3)- Jonni L. Johnson et al. *Ibid*.

(4)- Article 61 of the Child Protection Act.

(5)- Article 68 of the Child Protection Act.

(6)- Carolyn Gammicchia and Catriona Johnson, M.S, *Autism information for advocates, attorneys, and judges*, Autism Society, 2003, p.03.

(7)- Article 38 of the Child Protection Act.



level of the council's headquarters court and follows the same structure, techniques, and prior processes.

In terms of defense, the role of defense in autism cases goes beyond working to secure, protect, and advance one's rights in accordance with systems, legislation, and regulations to support the needs of children, youth, and adults with autism spectrum disorder. They also strive to make all programs and services compliant with current legislation and regulations. Parents with attorneys, on the other hand, may have to fight tooth and nail to ensure that their rights or the rights of their children are upheld, including:

- Knowledge of regulations and rules
- Legal knowledge and procedural advocacy
- Contribute to innovative problem-solving in humanitarian service systems⁽¹⁾

The Algerian legislature acknowledges this privilege in the kid Protection Act, which states that "the presence of a lawyer during police arrest to assist a child suspected of committing or attempting to commit a crime is obligatory." In order to safeguard the kid, the legislator requires the attendance of a lawyer.⁽²⁾

Conclusion:

Autism is a developmental disability, according to studies, manifested in a nervous system disorder that affects brain functions, which in turn affects normal brain growth in the field of social life, communication skills, social interaction in recreational activities, and difficulty relating to the outside world. As a result, mental impairment and mental retardation differ from autism in terms of IQ diagnosis, and the diagnosis is the most critical issue confronting the child's family and experts in the fields of health, education, and justice.

Given that a child with autism has special needs, the Algerian constitution stipulates the matter of protecting and preserving their dignity and rights, in accordance with international conventions such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol for the year 2006, in addition to Law No. 12-15, which outlines the laws and processes for child protection.

Unlike some other pieces of legislation, such as the Autism Act 2011 in Northern Ireland, which amended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, through which the Autism Strategy was developed, it is the first to require all government departments to plan, collaborate, and implement an agreed strategy and services for people with disabilities. It creates a system of oversight and accountability overseen by the National Assembly. The Algerian lawmaker did not include criminal protection for children with autism in the Law on People with Special Needs, instead referring to the Child Protection Law, which went in the same direction.

The Algerian legislator enshrined criminal protection for the child in the Child Protection Act, which can be applied to a child with autism, with reference to the Penal Code, which limits some forms of criminalization of assaults that may affect an autistic child as a disabled person, such as the prohibition of abandoning the disabled and exposing them to danger, and the crime of discrimination.

Many actions have been taken in response to the rising rates of autism around the world, such as the United States enacting the Children's Health Act of 2000 and the federal Autism

(1)- Autism Ontario, Positive Advocacy Resources, on:
<https://www.autismontario.com/programs-services/positive-advocacy-resources>

(2)- Article 12, first paragraph of the Child Protection Law.



Control Act enacted in 2006 Funding for Autism Spectrum Disorder and Developmental Disabilities, Research, Screening, Treatment, and Education and then the Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support Act.

In terms of the criminal justice system, persons with autism spectrum disorder are more likely to be victims of crime than perpetrators, therefore their involvement is mainly as victims or witnesses. According to research, there is no link between the autistic spectrum and criminal offenses. Despite this, there are measures in place for personnel in the judicial system to cope with autistic children if they come into touch with them, such as those linked to the investigation before the police or the investigating judge until the trial.

Results:

- Studies have shown no relationship between the autistic spectrum and criminal behavior.
- No judgment has been made on whether the autistic youngster should be classified as handicapped, cognitively restricted, or psychologically wounded.
- The majority of autistic children are victims rather than abusers.
- Most legislations did not decide on the criminal responsibility of the autistic kid, as is the case in the case of justice, where we follow juvenile laws.

Recommendations:

- Determine which group children with autism fall under.
- Issuing unique legislation for this group with clearly defined rights.
- Adapting criminal processes to this group, particularly during investigations (specialist judiciary).
- Providing legal counsel to complainants, witnesses, suspects, defendants, or any other justice system user.
- Educating personnel in the legal system on how to cope with autistic youngsters.
- Involving all partners, professionals, stakeholders, and individuals interested in criminal and social justice in developing the required solutions and policies to protect the rights of autistic children.

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- <https://www.autismontario.com/programs-services/positive-advocacy-resources>