

Recently there have been more efforts to support people with disabilities to get mental health treatment. There are some things that can make this treatment more difficult. This resource highlights three of the main challenges in offering treatment to individuals with disabilities. As a family member or caregiver, it is important to recognize what issues might be evident when trying to get the right support for your child.

NOT ENOUGH KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ADULTS:

- A lot of the interest and support in the past has been on kids and teens rather than adults.
- Many therapists are not trained to work with people with disabilities as part of their classes in school.
- Most therapy treatments were designed for people without disabilities. There can be a lot of confusion about how to use those treatments with people with disabilities.



THE CHALLENGES OF AUTISM AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS:

- One of the most important parts of therapy is the relationship between therapist and client. However, people with autism can have difficulty building and maintaining relationships.
- Another common part of therapy is recognizing thoughts, emotions and feelings. The therapist helps the client to analyze and understand those experiences. People with autism often have trouble with their communication. They also might struggle with recognizing, naming and understanding their emotions.

STRESS:

People who support or care for autistic individuals tend to feel more stress. Caregivers often share concerns about a lack of training and skills. They might question their ability to provide quality care. Raising or caring for more than one child with disabilities can be overwhelming. This can lead to self-doubt, frustration, and burned out.