

AUTISM—A BRAIN DISORDER

Autism is a neuro-biological disorder of the brain that causes a life-long development disability

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ARUL SITS alone in a park opposite his Sarojini Nagar home, while the other children screech with delight as they rush around in circles playing *chhopole*. He seems undisturbed by the laughter and attendant commotion around him as his main focus is on the

bottle in his hands, which he continuously rotates. His mother Geeta calls out to him, but he refuses to respond and appears to be deaf. When she slides up behind and tries to hug him, Arul lets go of the bottle, puts his hands over his ears and starts crying uncontrollably.

Arul is autistic, and has been so from birth. Not many people are very clear what autism is, most think that it is some kind of emotional or psychological disorder. But autism or

P e r v a s i v e

