

Autism and ADHD: A Clinician's Perspective

Katie Kastner, MD

Assistant Professor

Developmental Pediatrics and Rehabilitation Medicine

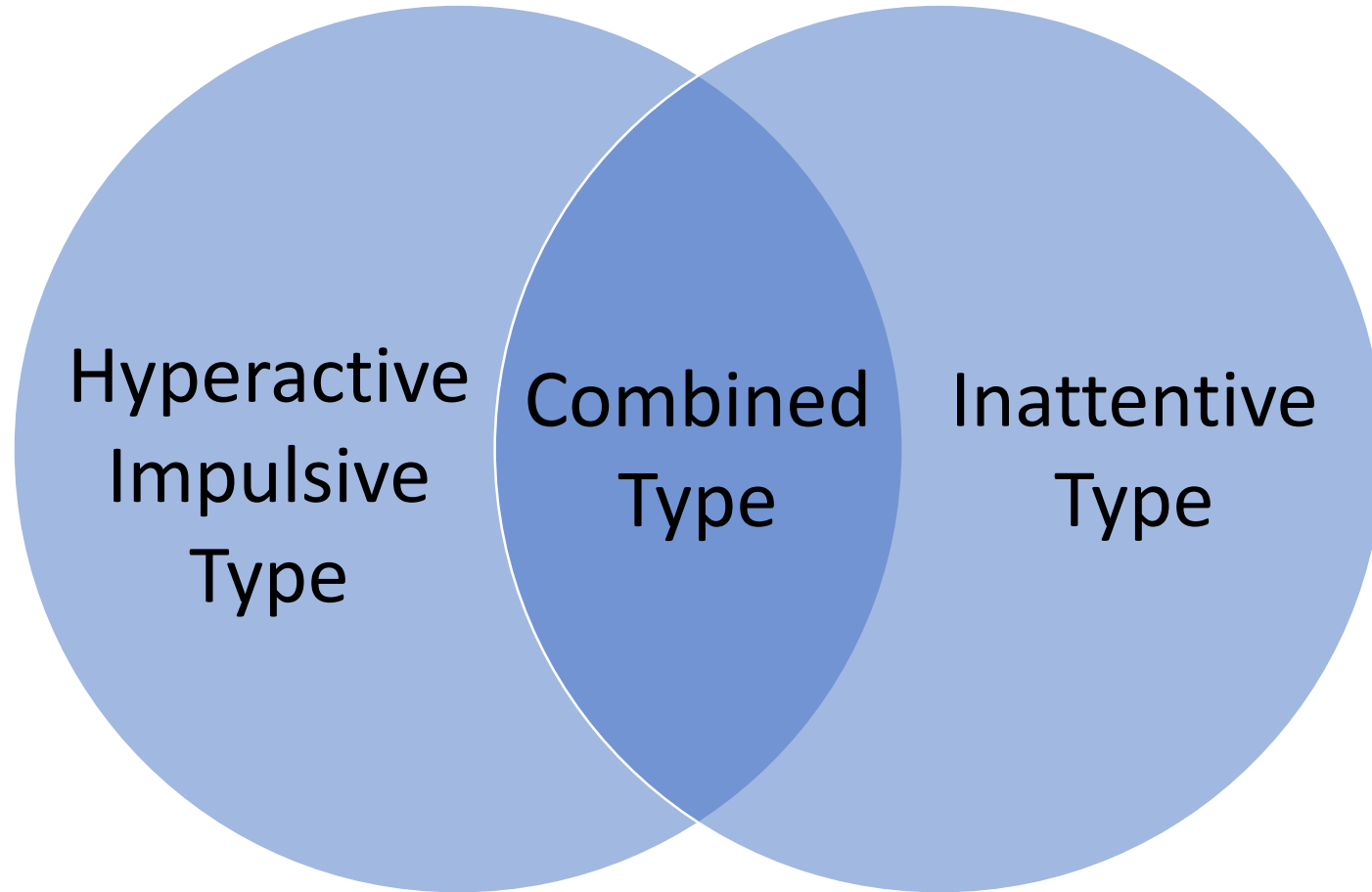
Waisman Center

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Objectives

- Define ADHD vs complex ADHD
- List current clinical criteria for ADHD diagnosis
- Describe clinical evaluation process for possible ADHD in autistic children
- Describe treatment of ADHD in children with autism

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder



***Complex ADHD**

Reference: Barbaresi et al. *Journal of Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics*. 41: S35-S57, 2020.

Autism & ADHD

Diagnosis

- Overlapping characteristics
- Developmental context
- Lack of validated tools

Treatment

- Lower response rates to medications
- More likely to experience side effects

ADHD Inattentive Criteria

Difficulty focusing
on details

Difficulty paying
attention

Difficulty listening
when spoken to
directly

Difficulty following
through on
instructions/tasks

Difficulty
organizing tasks
and activities

Difficulty with
losing/misplacing
things

Easily distracted by
other stimuli
(including
thoughts)

Forgetful in daily
activities

ADHD Hyperactive-Impulsive Criteria

Often fidgets or
squirms

Difficulty staying
seated

Often runs or
climbs
inappropriately/
feeling restless

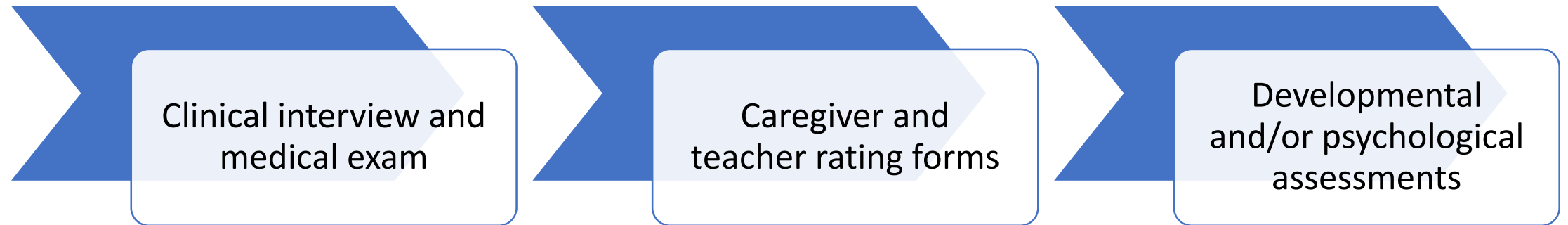
Difficulty
participating in
quiet activities

Often “on the
go”

Difficulty with
interrupting or
waiting for a
turn

Responds before
questions are
completed

Diagnostic Process



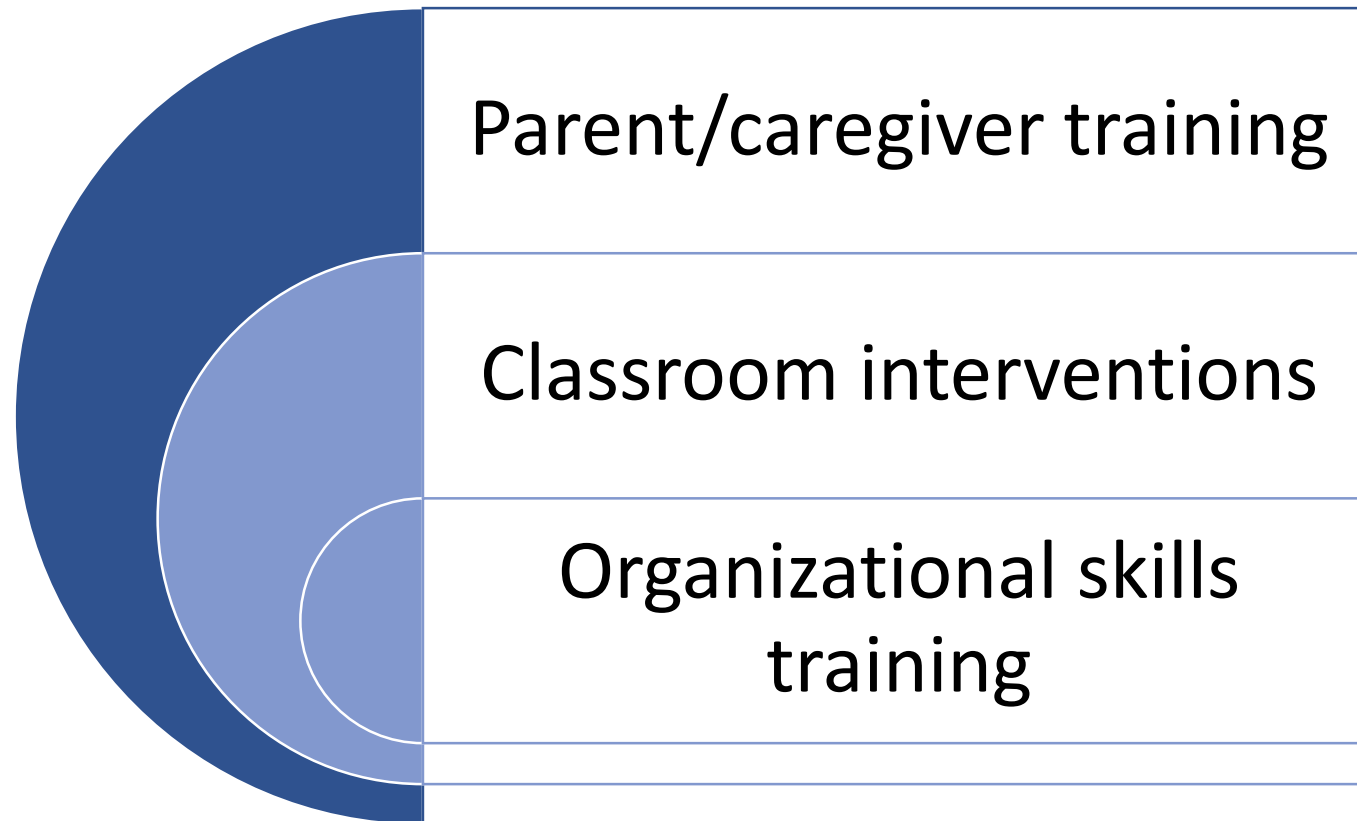
Intervention/Supports

Psychoeducation

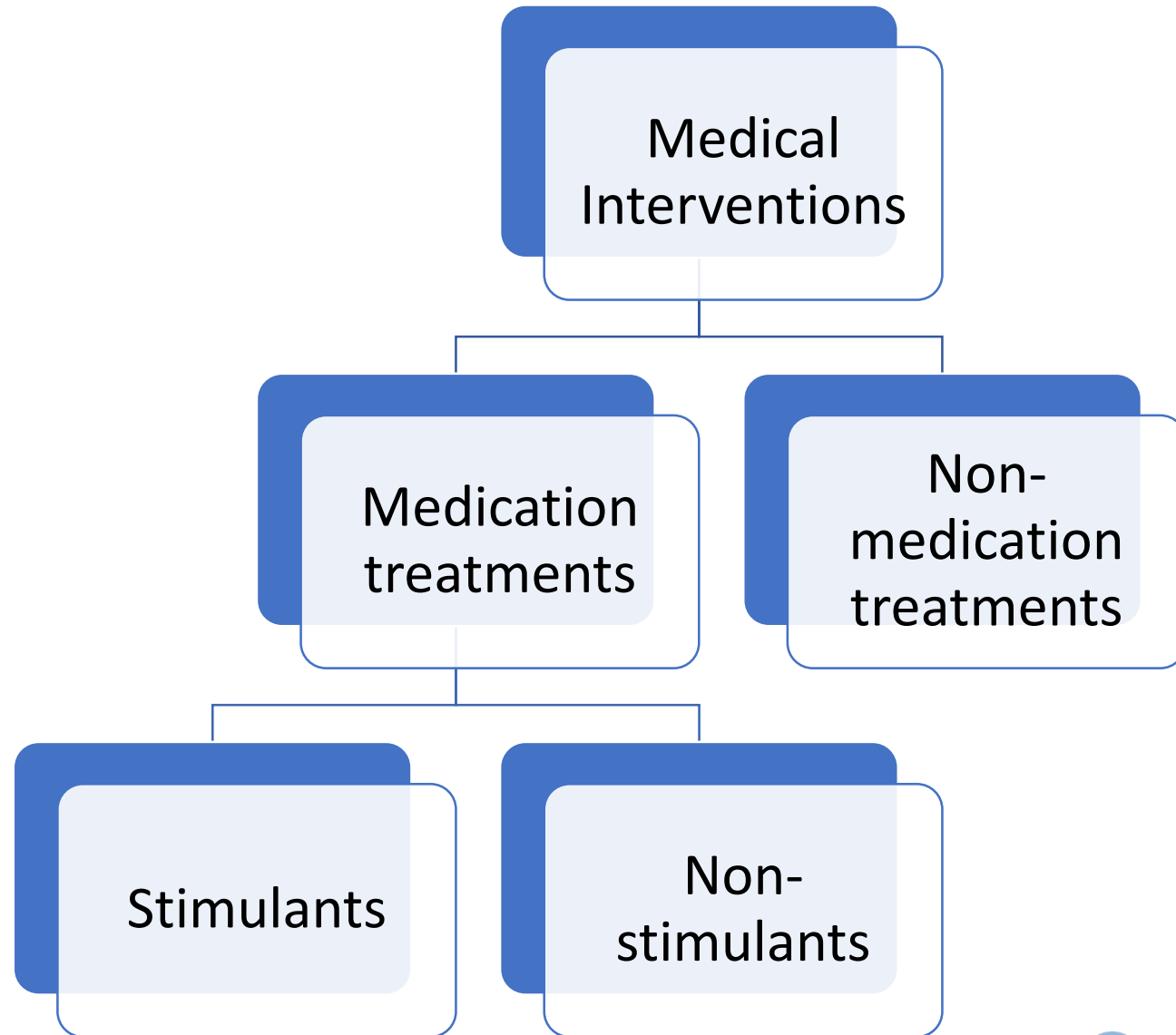
Psychosocial interventions

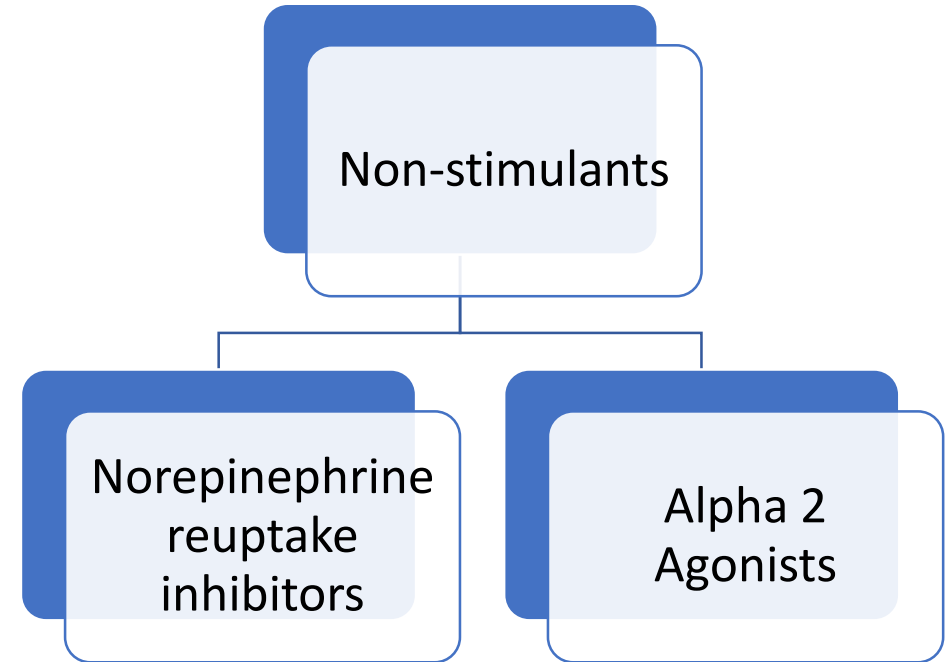
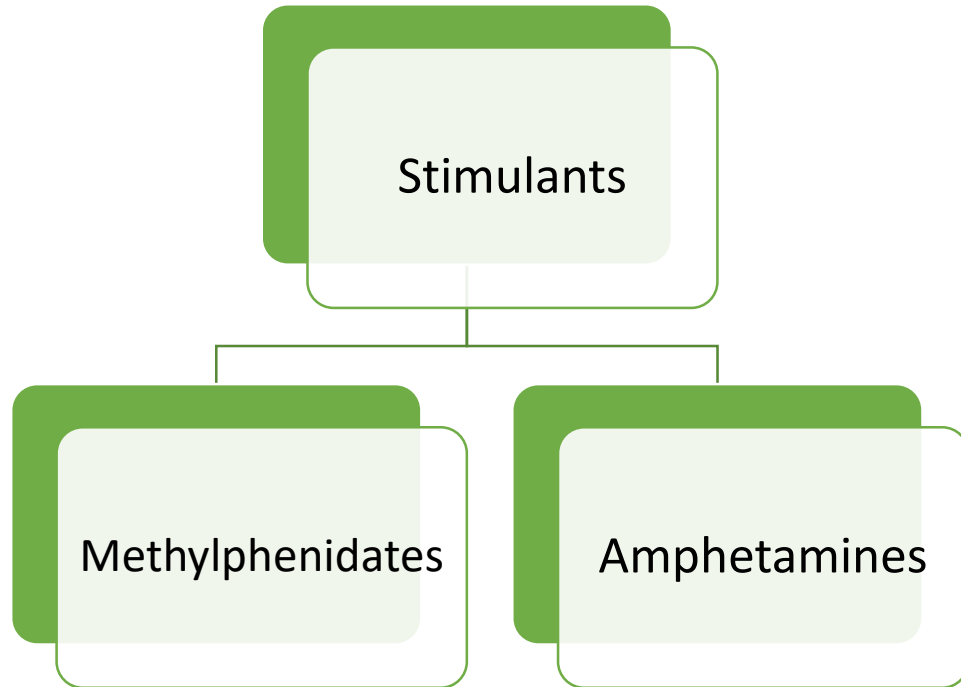
Medical interventions

Psychosocial interventions

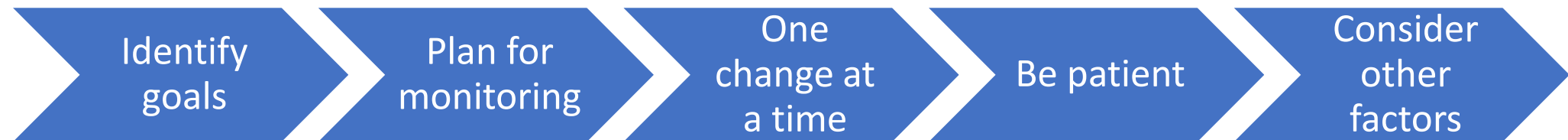
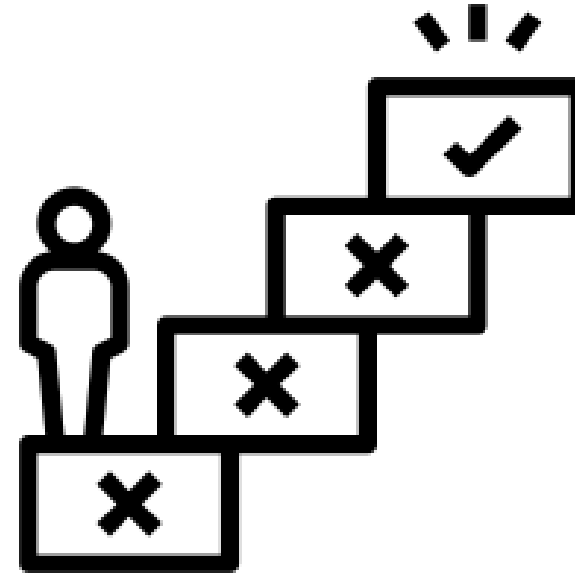


- **Medication form:** liquid, chewable, tablets, dissolving tablets, capsules, patches
- **Length of effect:** short acting (immediate release) vs. long acting (extended or sustained release)





Medication Management



Resources

ADHD information

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/index.html>

Behavioral interventions

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/behavior-therapy.html>

AACAP parent medication resource guide

https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Family_Resources/Parents_Medication_Guides.aspx

CHADD: Children and Adults with ADHD

<https://chadd.org/>

Questions?