



Child Health Improvement Program International

AUTISM IN AFRICA

Newsletter

December 2025



Happy Holidays from the CHIP International family to yours!

As the year draws to a close, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who continues to champion children with autism and developmental needs across Africa. Your support empowers families, strengthens communities, and fuels hope.

We look back with gratitude at what we have achieved this year towards furthering our mission, despite ever-present challenges. We also look ahead with anticipation at the opportunities to make a difference in the lives of these incredible children.

May this season bring you peace, joy, and renewed purpose.

Together, we look forward to creating even greater impact in the year ahead.



the Importance of PLAY

'Tis the season. Families gather together, life slows down (just a little), homes are filled with warmth, music, stories, and playful moments. For children with autism, however, these holiday experiences can be highly stressful - or rich opportunities for social and emotional development.

The P.L.A.Y. Project, an evidence-based, parent/caregiver/teacher-led intervention, helps families use structured, guided play to improve social and educational outcomes at home or in school for children with autism and developmental disabilities. Play is a child's first language, and for children with autism, it can be a doorway to connection, communication, development, and emotional growth.

CHIP International collaborates with the P.L.A.Y. Project and is in the process of training a fully-certified P.L.A.Y. Project Consultant in Ghana who will also train other consultants, impacting families and schools with children on the autism spectrum. This is especially valuable where access to specialized therapists is limited and costly, as it is in most African communities. The model creates a sustainable way for children to receive consistent support by building on reciprocal trust and developing the innate bond between parent/teacher and child.

With professional guidance, everyday moments this special season and always can turn into meaningful steps toward communication, confidence, and joy. As communities across Africa celebrate the season, embracing play is a beautiful way to nurture children, empower parents, and strengthen family bonds—reminding us that the greatest gifts are often the simplest ones.



THE AGE OF AI

Families and educators working with children on the autism spectrum in Africa face tremendous challenges, including access to timely assessment and consistent, affordable specialist support. Technology—especially artificial intelligence—is beginning to offer practical solutions that complement human care and expand what’s possible.

From Ghana to Kenya to South Africa, tech hubs are collaborating with educators and disability organizations to build tools that are relevant, respectful, and reflect African cultural norms and community practices.



CHIP International is exploring ways to enhance our training programs with AI applications. In areas where trained specialists are very limited, guided early assessment, personalized learning activities, and clear tracking can make an enormous difference.

Africa’s strength has always been its resourcefulness and its community spirit. With thoughtful integration, AI can reinforce both, offering new pathways for children with autism to flourish and fulfill their potential.



Cultural Autism Studies at Yale

'Autism in Africa' Series

CHIP International’s ‘Autism in Africa’ series with the Cultural Autism Studies at Yale (CASY <https://culturalautismstudiesatyale.space>) continued in the Fall of 2025 with a presentation by Claris Angafor, the Founder and CEO of CAN-Abilities Foundation titled “Bridging Worlds: How Parenting an Autistic Child Led me to Speech and Language Therapy”

The series continues next year, with an exciting line-up of parents and/or practitioners in the field of autism from various countries in Africa. CASY has been a remarkable success and is expanding globally, at the forefront of championing a shift in perspectives concerning autism. CHIP International continues to showcase the realities, successes, and possibilities for progress in autism in Africa.

Watch previous episodes:



Center Profile



Klicks Africa Foundation



Klicks Africa Foundation (Klicks) is a non – profit, non – governmental organization that has been in existence since 2016, in support of persons with disabilities (PWDs). It was founded by Mary Kuffuor Amoah, the mother of a daughter with autism and one of CHIP-I's collaborators in Ghana.

The foundation's purpose is to strengthen families and influence communities by creating an inclusive ambiance for children from 0-5 years of age. Klicks also runs an intensive Vocational Training and Resource Centre for youths with special needs, to impact them with Self – help skills, guidance in building their social skills, and emotional support for them and their families.

Klicks also produces teaching and learning materials from locally available resources to support inclusive education.

News articles

Autistic Nigerian vlogger: 'I'm destined for something great'

Ahmed Salami is an 18-year-old Nigerian vlogger who always dreamt of stardom. He was born with autism, cerebral palsy and ADHD, and uses his platform to share his personal journey and inspire others. “When I was born, I was literally written off, he says.” He learnt to speak at the age of six and struggled with a stammer. Now, with the help of his mother, he posts weekly YouTube videos showcasing his intelligence and ability to overcome challenges, and he uses a computer for his content creation due to his difficulty with writing.





Get in Touch

Children with autism and developmental disabilities in Africa, like everywhere else, deserve the opportunity to live up to their potential. Your contribution helps to make this possible. Come join us in our mission!

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