



Ministry of
Children and Family
Development

A Parent's Handbook: Your Guide to Autism Programs



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Frequently Used Acronyms

ASD: *Autism Spectrum Disorder*

MCFD: *Ministry of Children and Family Development or the ministry*

Introduction

This handbook is for parents and caregivers of children and youth who may have, or have been diagnosed with, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It provides information on ASD, intervention, and programs available for children and youth with ASD and their families.

The Ministries of Children and Family Development (MCFD), Education and Health work closely to coordinate assessment, diagnosis, intervention and support services for children and youth with ASD and their families.

Services and Supports for Children and Youth with Special Needs and Their Families

In addition to the autism programs described on pages 10-15, MCFD provides a range of programs for children and youth with special needs and their families. These include:

- Aboriginal Infant Development Program
- Aboriginal Supported Child Development
- At Home Program (medical and respite)
- Community Brain Injury Program
- Early Intervention Therapies
- Infant Development Program
- Key Worker and Parent Support
- Nursing Support Services
- Provincial Outreach and Professional Supports
- Provincial Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- School-Aged Therapies
- Supported Child Development

For information on program eligibility, see the **WEBLINK**.



WEBLINK

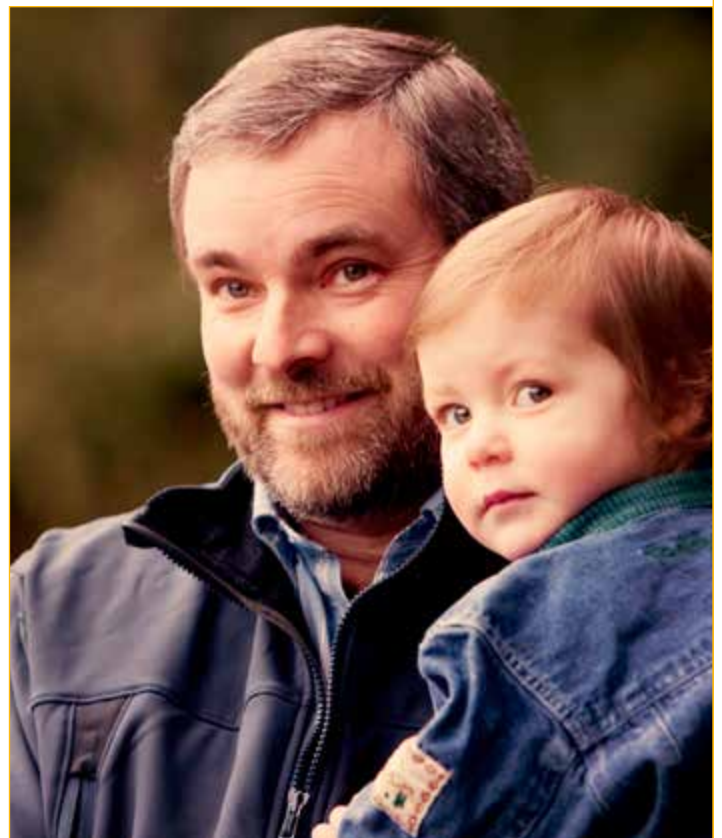
MCFD Special Needs Services Website.
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs/

What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a complex neurobiological condition that impacts brain development and affects a person's social relationships, communication, interests and behaviour. The symptoms and characteristics present in a wide variety of combinations; and individuals can exhibit any combination of the behaviours in any degree of severity. Studies indicate that ASD affects one in every 68 children. ASD usually appears early in life, often before the age of three, and is four to five times more common in boys than in girls.

Individuals with ASD tend to have difficulties communicating. Their communication challenges can range from being non-verbal to responding inappropriately in conversations, to not understanding non-verbal cues, or having difficulty building friendships appropriate to their age. In addition, individuals with ASD may be overly dependent on routines, highly sensitive to changes in their environment, or intensely focused on inappropriate items. The symptoms and characteristics of ASD can present in a wide variety of combinations from mild to severe. Therefore, there is no standard type or typical person with ASD.

Parents may hear different terms used to describe children with ASD, such as: Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS), Childhood Disintegrative Disorder (CDD), autistic-like, autistic tendencies, autism spectrum, high-functioning or low-functioning autism. These terms are not necessarily related to the child's abilities or needs. It is more important to understand that appropriate education and treatment based on the child's individual abilities and needs can help children to develop to their full potential.



WEBLINKS

Autism Society of Canada:
www.autismsocietycanada.ca

Autism Speaks Canada:
www.autismspeaks.ca/

University of Washington Autism Center:
www.depts.washington.edu/uwautism/resources/autism-resource-dvd.html

Early Indicators of Autism Spectrum Disorder

If you think your child may have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), please read through the list of possible signs of ASD. Your child does not need to demonstrate all of the indicated behaviours in order to be referred for an assessment. Please note that these characteristics may also be indicators of other conditions.

Possible early signs of ASD (adapted from First Signs* and Autism Speaks**):

- Impairment in Social interaction
 - Lack of appropriate eye gaze
 - No big smiles or other warm, joyful expressions by six months or thereafter
 - Lack of sharing interest or enjoyment
 - Lack of response to name
- Impairment in Communication
 - No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles or other facial expressions by nine months
 - Lack of showing gestures such as pointing, showing, reaching or waving by 12 months
 - Lack of coordination of non-verbal communication
 - No babbling by 12 months
 - Unusual prosody (little variation in pitch, odd intonation, irregular rhythm, unusual voice quality)
- Repetitive Behaviours & Restricted Interests
 - Repetitive movements with objects
 - Repetitive movements or posturing of body, arms, hands or fingers

* First Signs, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating parents and paediatric professionals about the early warning signs of autism and other developmental disorders.

** Autism Speaks is a non-profit autism science and advocacy organization, dedicated to funding research into the causes, prevention, treatments and a cure for autism; increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders; and advocating for the needs of individuals with autism and their families.

First Signs® and the First Words® Project have developed a video glossary to assist families and professionals learn more about the early signs of ASD. It is recommended that users of the video glossary read the introduction and how to use sections before they login.

http://www.firstsigns.org/asd_video_glossary/asdvg_about.htm

A screening tool called the M-CHAT (Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers) can also help you determine if a professional should evaluate your child. This simple online autism screen, available at www.m-chat.org/, takes only a few minutes. If the answers suggest your child is at risk for autism, please consult with your child's doctor. Likewise, if you have any other concerns about your child's development, don't wait. Speak to your doctor now about screening your child.

If your child shows two or more of these signs, please ask your paediatric healthcare provider for a referral for an evaluation.

WEBLINKS

ACT – Autism Community Training:
www.actcommunity.ca

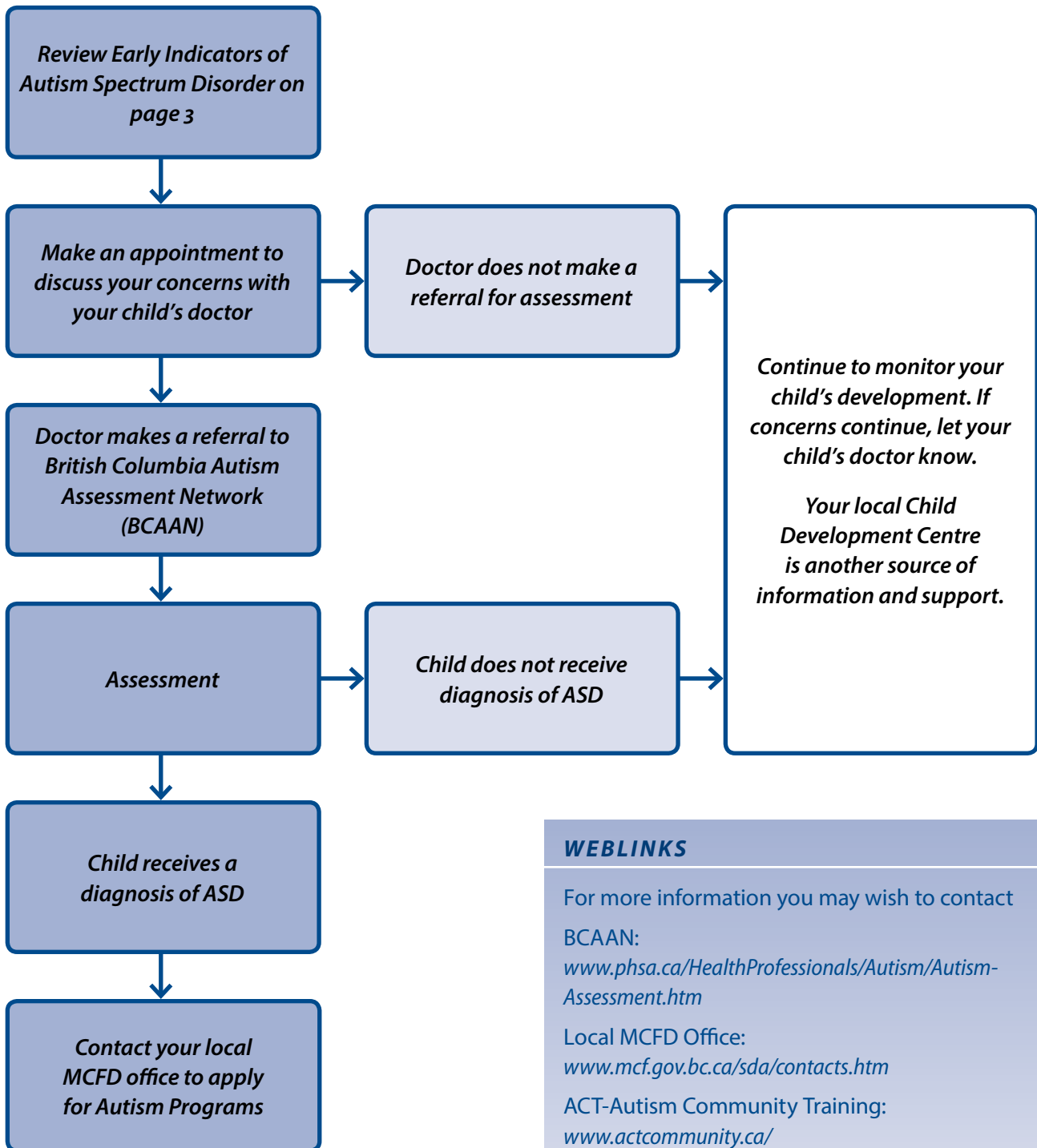
British Columbia Association for Child Development and Intervention:
www.bcacdi.org

First Signs: www.firstsigns.org

Autism Speaks Canada:
www.autismspeaks.ca

Children and Youth with Special Needs
Ministry of Children and Family Development:
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs/index.htm

What to Do if You Think Your Child May Have Autism



WEBLINKS

For more information you may wish to contact
BCAAN:

www.phsa.ca/HealthProfessionals/Autism/Autism-Assessment.htm

Local MCFD Office:

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/sda/contacts.htm

ACT-Autism Community Training:

www.actcommunity.ca/

What Causes Autism Spectrum Disorder?

The causes of autism are still largely unknown. We do know that it is not caused by parents or the way a child is raised, and there is likely no single cause. Research is underway to explore possible causes including genetic and environmental factors.

Is There a Cure?

There is no cure for ASD. There are, however, highly effective treatment and intervention methods available that can help individuals and their families address the characteristics of this disorder. Early interventions based on best practices are intended to help children with ASD develop skills, learn to communicate effectively, share in family life and enjoy success at school. For more information on best practices, please see page 23.

WEBLINKS

For information on current research, see the National Institute of Mental Health:
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/autism-spectrum-disorders-asd/index.shtml>



Assessment and Diagnosis

British Columbia Autism Assessment Network (BCAAN)

If you have concerns about your child's development, please see your family doctor who may refer you to BCAAN for a diagnostic assessment.

BCAAN provides diagnostic assessments for children up to age 19. Children can be diagnosed at any age, some as young as two years old. BCAAN will arrange for an assessment to be done as close to where you live as possible. There is no charge for BCAAN services.

At the completion of the assessment, you will receive a BCAAN Clinical Outcomes Form. This form provides a summary of the testing results that will indicate whether your child has Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Non-BCAAN (Private) Assessment and Diagnosis

Families may obtain a non-BCAAN (private) diagnostic assessment completed by a private clinician. This assessment must meet the same standards as a BCAAN assessment (see the **WEBLINKS**).

Children under age six require a multidisciplinary diagnostic assessment. Children age six and older require a clinical diagnostic assessment (completed by an eligible professional clinician such as a paediatrician, child psychiatrist, or registered psychologist). All assessments for children of any age for the purposes of diagnosis must include the implementation of the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) and the Autism Diagnostic Interview-revised (ADI-r) by a clinician trained in the use of these assessment tools.

The eligible clinician must complete a Non-BCAAN (Private) Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder Form to document a positive ASD diagnosis and all assessment reports must be submitted to the child's local MCFD office before the family is able to apply for autism programs. Parents are responsible for any costs charged for the private assessment.

Moving to B.C. from Another Province

If your child has had a diagnostic assessment of ASD from another province in Canada and you are applying for the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) autism programs, a Confirmation of Diagnosis Form must be completed by a qualified B.C. specialist (paediatrician, psychiatrist or registered psychologist).

Moving to B.C. from Another Country

If your child has had a diagnostic assessment of ASD from another country and you are applying for MCFD autism programs, a Confirmation of Diagnosis Form must be completed by a qualified B.C. specialist (paediatrician, psychiatrist or registered psychologist). If the out of country diagnostic assessment does not meet B.C. Standards, the qualified B.C. specialist may require your child to have a new diagnostic assessment within B.C. before applying for autism programs.

You can obtain the Non-BCAAN (Private) Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder and Confirmation of Diagnosis forms from the WEBLINK on page 7 or by calling MCFD at 1 877 777-3530.



WEBLINKS

BCAAN: www.phsa.ca/AgenciesAndServices/Services/Autism/default.htm

Standards and Guidelines for the Assessment and Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder: www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2003/asd_standards_0318.pdf

Confirmation of Diagnosis Form and Non-BCAAN (Private) Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder Form: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/forms.htm

The Diagnostic Process in B.C.: www.actcommunity.ca/autism-manual-for-bc

My Child Has a Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. What Do I Do?

When a child is diagnosed with ASD, it may be a difficult and stressful time for a family.

Every family has their own questions and concerns after a child has been diagnosed. For many families, it is important to learn as much as possible, and to connect with other parents and professionals who can offer information and support.

To help families navigate the services and supports offered for children and youth with autism in B.C., MCFD has contracted with ACT-Autism Community Training to provide provincial autism information, support services, and training for families and professionals who are supporting children with ASD. ACT has an information support line manned by Information Officers who are able to assist families during work hours (1-866-939-5188). The ACT website also offers a variety of resources for families to access for free such as: The New Diagnosis Hub; an Autism Information Database (AID) to locate local services and resources; an Autism Parent Manual for B.C.; Autism Videos on a variety of topics; and the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) to locate qualified professionals (see **WEBLINKS** below).

Information on a variety of autism organizations in BC can be found on page 27

It is important for parents to know that children and youth with ASD can benefit from an evidence-based intervention program. Research has identified interventions and approaches that are supported by evidence and proven to be effective for ASD – these are known as best practices. For more information on best practices, please see page 23.

Applying for Autism Programs

If your child has been diagnosed with ASD, and you wish to enrol in the Autism Funding Program, contact your local MCFD office (**WEBLINK** below) to complete a funding agreement.

WEBLINKS

ACT – Autism Community Training:
www.actcommunity.ca

MCFD:
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm

ACT's New Diagnosis Hub:
www.actcommunity.ca/newdiagnosishub

ACT's Autism Information Database (AID):
www.actcommunity.ca/aid

ACT's Autism Manual for B.C.:
www.actcommunity.ca/autism-manual-for-bc

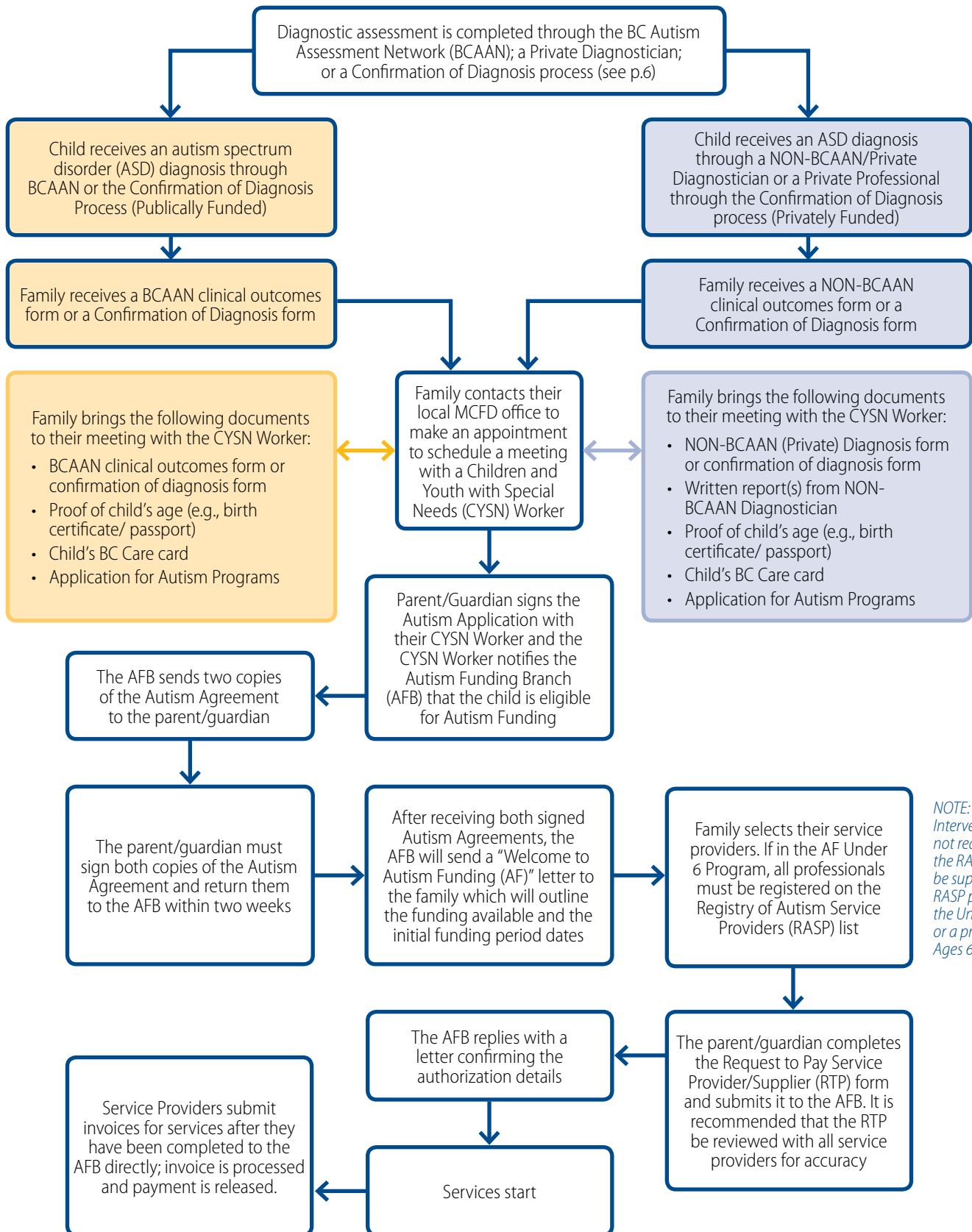
ACT Autism Videos: www.actcommunity.ca/videos

Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP):
www.actcommunity.ca/rasp



Accessing Autism Funding using Invoice Payment

(please refer to page 32 for information on the Direct Payment method)



NOTE: Behaviour Interventionists (BI) are not required to be on the RASP but should be supervised by a RASP professional in the Under 6 program or a professional in the Ages 6-18 program

Autism Programs

The Ministry of Children and Family Development provides two autism programs:

- Autism Funding: Under Age 6
- Autism Funding: Ages 6-18

Autism Funding: Under Age 6

The primary intent of Autism Funding: Under Age 6 is to assist families with the cost of purchasing eligible autism intervention services (based on best practices) to promote their child's communication, social-emotional, pre-academic and functional life skills development. Families of children age five and younger with a diagnosis of ASD may receive up to \$22,000 per year towards eligible interventions.

Your child's intervention program must be based on a plan that takes into account his or her unique strengths and needs. This **Behaviour Plan of Intervention (BPI)** is written by a behaviour consultant/analyst, with input from family members and other professional team members, such as the speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist and/or physical therapist. The BPI should be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that your child is making meaningful progress. For more information on BPIs, see page 25.

For children under the age of 6, the professionals (Behaviour Consultant/Analyst; Speech-Language Pathologist; Occupational Therapist; Physiotherapist) that you choose to develop and monitor your child's plan of intervention must be selected from the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP).

Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP)

Parents of children receiving Autism Funding: Under Age 6 are required to select professional service providers for their child from the RASP. The RASP is managed by ACT – Autism Community Training on behalf of the Ministry of Children and Family Development. In order to be included on the RASP, professionals must demonstrate that their education and experience meet the qualifications required by the ministry.



WEBLINKS

Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) and information on choosing service providers at:

www.actcommunity.ca/rasp/

MCFD:

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm

Autism Funding: Under Age 6 may only be used for the following:

- Services of behaviour consultants/analysts, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and physical therapist who are listed on the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) (see Autism Community Training **WEBLINK** below).
- Behaviour interventionists (BI) – (BIs should be supervised by a RASP professional)
- Family's administrative costs (e.g., bookkeeping/payroll, up to \$100 monthly).
- Applicable employer costs (e.g., employee income tax, Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance and Workers Compensation Board premiums, four per cent vacation pay).
- Up to 20 per cent of the funding may be used for training, travel costs to access eligible autism intervention and training within B.C. (round trip greater than 80 kms) and eligible equipment as necessary for effective intervention, outlined in a Justification for Equipment/Supplies Form completed by a professional/specialist (please see the **WEBLINK** below or Autism Funding: Under Age 6 - Ineligible Expenses on page 12 for more information).

Tip for Parents

The service provider's hourly rate of pay should reflect the cost of doing business.

Travel costs to access training within B.C. (round trip greater than 80 kms):

- Reimbursement for registration and travel costs for parents or behaviour interventionists to attend autism-specific training. Fees for post-secondary credit courses are not eligible expenses.
- Travel expenses may include actual fare for air, bus or train travel, or mileage at \$0.40 per kilometre for a private vehicle.
- Hotel expenses to a maximum of \$150 per night for one room only are eligible.
- Parking may be reimbursed to a maximum of \$15 per day.
- Ferry and toll charges are eligible expenses.
- Educational books, DVDs and videos for parents (specific to autism).

Travel costs to access autism intervention within B.C. (round trip greater than 80 kms):

- If you are unable to access service providers in your own community, you may claim expenses for the most cost-effective method of receiving services as close to home as possible.
- Options may include travel to the service provider or bringing the service provider to the community.
- Travel expenses may include actual fare for air, bus or train, or mileage at \$0.40 per kilometre for a private vehicle.
- Hotel expenses to a maximum of \$150 per night for one room only are eligible.
- Parking may be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$15 per day.
- Ferry and toll charges are eligible expenses.

Equipment and materials related to intervention:

- Equipment and materials necessary for the child's intervention must be requested in a Justification for Equipment and Supplies (JFE) Form that is completed by a professional/specialist from the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) or by Early Intervention Therapy (EIT) professionals (i.e., Speech Language Pathologists (S-LP), Occupational Therapists (OT) and/or Physical Therapist (PT)) who are not on the RASP, but are employed through MCFD contracted agencies/organizations/health authorities.
- An approved JFE is valid for one year from the date it is signed by the eligible professional, providing the child remains eligible for autism funding and the 20% of the annual funding is not exceeded. The date on the purchase receipt will determine the funding period from which the transaction is processed.
 - A JFE is not a guarantee that an item will be eligible for autism funding. It is recommended that families wait to purchase items only after the JFE has been approved. The cost of items that are not eligible will not be reimbursed.
 - The items purchased as per specifications on an approved JFE will remain the sole property of the child and family.

WEBLINKS

Justification for Equipment Form:

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/forms.htm

SET-BC: www.setbc.org

ACT – Autism Community Training:

www.actcommunity.ca/newdiagnosisub

Other avenues of funding for equipment purchases or loans must be explored. Purchases must not duplicate those that would be approved under SET-BC, the At Home Program, other agencies providing equipment or that are typical expenses for a child. Please see the **WEBLINK** on page 11 for more information on SET-BC.

Computers, Touch Screen Tablets or Smart Phones

- Requests to purchase a computer, touch screen tablet or smart phone must be made in writing through a Justification For Equipment and Supplies (JFE) Form written by the child's RASP professional/specialist or EIT professional employed through MCFD contracted agencies/organizations/health authorities.
- A child's autism funding can be used to purchase one laptop OR one desktop computer; OR one touch screen Tablet (e.g., an iPad OR an iTouch or a smart phone) once every three years.

Autism Funding: Under Age 6 Ineligible Expenses

Some interventions and equipment recommended by a professional/specialist are ineligible expenses. The following are some examples of ineligible items:

- Home repairs, renovations, swimming pools, hot tubs, trampolines, playground equipment
- Household items, including appliances
- General recreation and sports enrolment fees
- Sports/fitness equipment
- Televisions
- Vitamins, medical supplies, orthotics
- Clothing
- Food (however, small reinforcers for therapy may be eligible)
- Any items to be used only in school settings
- Monthly smart phone bills and/or data plans



The following are some examples of ineligible services:

- Child care
- Respite
- General recreation lessons, such as swimming and karate
- Medical services
- Services provided out of province, and associated travel

Not all ineligible expenses are listed here. It is recommended that families contact the Autism Funding Branch at 1 877 777-3530 for more information before purchasing items or services.

Setting Up an Autism Intervention Program for Your Child Under 6

MCFD: Ministry of Children and Family Development
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm

ACT: ACT- Autism Community Training
www.actcommunity.ca

ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorder
(see page 2)

RASP: Registry of Autism Service Providers
(see page 10)

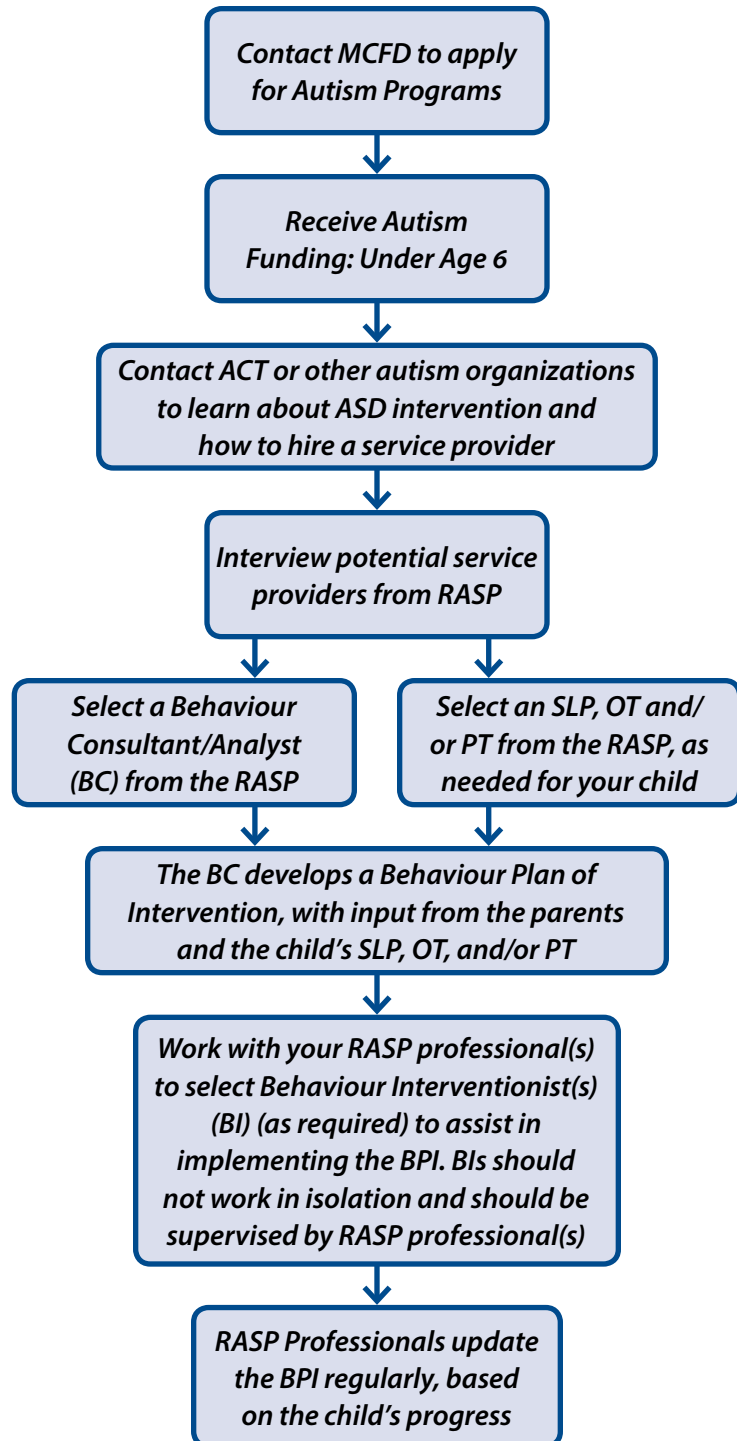
BPI: Behaviour Plan of Intervention
(see page 25)

BC: Behaviour Consultant/Analyst
(see page 21)

SLP: Speech-Language Pathologist
(see page 21)

OT: Occupational Therapist
(see page 21)

PT: Physical Therapist
(see page 21)



Autism Funding: Ages 6 - 18

The primary intent of Autism Funding: Ages 6 - 18 is to assist families with the cost of purchasing eligible out-of-school autism intervention that will promote their child's communication, social-emotional, academic and functional life skills development.

Families of children aged 6 to 18 with a diagnosis of ASD may receive up to \$6,000 per year towards eligible intervention services that are outside of the child's school or educational program (please see Best Practices on page 23). Up to 20 per cent of the annual funding may be used to purchase training, travel and equipment related to autism intervention.

Autism Funding: Ages 6 – 18 may only be used for the following:

- Behaviour Consultants/Analyst
- Speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and physical therapist
- Behaviour Interventionists (BI) (It is highly recommended that all BIs be supervised by one or all of the professionals listed above)
- Life skills and social skills programs
- Out-of-school learning support/tutoring (not part of the regular school program)
- Specialized therapeutic activities and camps designed to address your child's ASD
- Dietary counseling from a registered dietician
- Family counseling/therapy
- Other interventions as recommended by a professional/specialist (A Letter of Recommendation (LOR) written by an eligible professional/specialist is required and written pre-approval from the Autism Funding Branch is recommended)
- MCFD Autism funding can be used towards independent school services if the invoice reflects out-of-school services only. In other words, MCFD autism funding can contribute to the fees that cover the costs of before and after school supports, tutoring, therapy services (e.g., speech-language therapy, behaviour consultation), and social activities provided outside of the typical educational program
- Family's administrative costs (e.g., bookkeeping services, up to \$50 monthly or Direct Payment accountant fees up to a maximum of \$600 per funding period)

- Applicable employer costs (e.g., employee income tax, Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance and WorkSafeBC premiums, four per cent vacation pay)
- Up to 20 per cent of the funding may be used for training, travel costs to access eligible autism intervention and training with B.C. (round trip greater than 80 kms), and eligible equipment as necessary for effective intervention, outlined in a Justification for Equipment and Supplies Form completed by a professional/specialist (see the **WEBLINK** on the next page or Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 - Ineligible Expenses on page 15 for more information)

Travel costs to access training within B.C. (round trip greater than 80 kms):

- Reimbursement for registration and travel costs for parents or behaviour interventionists to attend autism-specific training.
- Travel expenses may include actual fare for air, bus or train travel, or mileage at \$0.40 per kilometre for a private vehicle.
- Hotel expenses to a maximum of \$150 per night, for one room are eligible.
- Parking may be reimbursed to a maximum of \$15 per day.
- Ferry and toll charges are eligible expenses.
- Educational books, DVDs and videos for parents (specific to autism).

Travel costs to access autism intervention within B.C. (round trip greater than 80 kms):

- If you are unable to access service providers in your own community, you may claim expenses for the most cost-effective method of receiving services as close to home as possible.
- Options may include travel to the service provider or bringing the service provider to the community.
- Travel expenses may include actual fare for air, bus or train, or mileage at \$0.40 per kilometre for a private vehicle.
- Hotel expenses to a maximum of \$150 per night for one room are eligible.
- Parking may be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$15 per day.
- Ferry and toll charges are eligible expenses.

Equipment and materials related to intervention:

Equipment and materials necessary for the child's intervention must be requested in a Justification for Equipment and Supplies form completed by a professional/specialist from the following list:

- Behaviour Consultant/Analyst
- Physical Therapist
- Speech-language pathologist
- Occupational therapist
- Registered psychologist
- Registered psychological associate
- Psychiatrist
- Paediatrician
- Neurologist
- An approved JFE is valid for one year from the date it is signed by the eligible professional, providing the child remains eligible for autism funding and the 20% of the annual funding is not exceeded. The date on the purchase receipt will determine the funding period from which the transaction is processed
- A JFE is not a guarantee that an item will be eligible for autism funding. It is recommended that families wait to purchase items only after the JFE has been approved. The cost of items that are not eligible will not be reimbursed
- The items purchased as per specifications on an approved JFE will remain the sole property of the child and family.

Other avenues of funding for equipment purchases or loans must be explored. Purchases must not duplicate those that would be approved under SET-BC, the At Home Program, other agencies providing equipment or that are typical expense for a child. Please see the **WEBLINK** below for more information on SET-BC.

Computers and/or Touch Screen Tablets

- Requests to purchase a computer, touch screen tablet or smart phone must be made in writing through a JFE written by a child's professional/specialist.
- A child's autism funding can be used to purchase one laptop OR one desktop computer; OR one touch screen Tablet (e.g., an iPad OR an iTouch OR smart phone) once every three years (monthly phone bills or data plans are not eligible expenses and will not be paid).

Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 Ineligible Expenses

Some interventions and equipment recommended by a professional/specialist are ineligible expenses. The following are some examples of ineligible items:

- Home repairs, renovations, swimming pools, hot tubs, trampolines, playground equipment
- Household items, including appliances
- General recreation and sports enrolment fees
- Sports/fitness equipment
- Televisions
- Vitamins, medical supplies, orthotics
- Clothing
- Food (however, small reinforcers for therapy may be eligible)
- Any items to be used only in school settings
- Monthly smart phone bills and/or data plans

The following are some examples of services that are ineligible:

- Child care
- Respite
- General recreation lessons
- Medical services
- Services provided out of province, and associated travel

Not all ineligible expenses are listed. It is recommended that families contact the Autism Funding Branch at 1 877 777-3530 for more information before purchasing items.

WEBLINKS

Justification for Equipment and Supplies Form: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/forms.htm

SET-BC: www.setbc.org

Accessing Autism Programs

(Also refer to flowchart on page 9)

Step 1:

Once an assessment is completed, you will receive a BCAAN Clinical Outcomes Form or a Non-BCAAN (Private) Diagnosis of ASD Form. If the Form indicates a diagnosis of ASD and you would like to apply for autism programs, it is important to contact the local MCFD office as soon as possible to schedule a meeting with a Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN) Worker (see Contact Us on page 26).

The following documents are required:

- The BCAAN Clinical Outcomes Form or Non-BCAAN (Private) Diagnosis of ASD Form, showing a diagnosis of ASD (see Diagnosis and Assessment on page 6)
- Proof of your child's age (such as a birth certificate)
- Your child's BC Care Card
- An Application for Autism Programs.

If your child received Non-BCAAN (Private) Diagnosis, families must also provide the written report(s) from their private diagnostician(s) to ensure that the B.C. autism assessment standards and guidelines were met and that the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) and Autism Diagnostic Interview-revised (ADI-r) were implemented before funding can start. Families who are purchasing a private assessment are encouraged to enquire about the time-line for receiving reports before the assessment begins.

The Application for Autism Programs can be found at: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/, or your CYSN Worker can provide you with one.

Step 2:

Your CYSN Worker will meet with you to:

- Confirm your child's eligibility for autism programs
- Describe the autism programs, including the options available in your community
- Discuss additional planning and support service available through MCFD (please see the sidebar)

Tip for Parents

Your child will be eligible for funding from the first day of the month that MCFD receives all required documents. It is suggested that you mail or fax copies of the required documents to your local MCFD office before your meeting with a CYSN Worker (see Contact Us in weblinks on this page). The CYSN Worker will review the documents to ensure that they are complete.

Tip for Parents

In addition to autism programs, MCFD provides a range of supports for families of children and youth with special needs. The CYSN Worker will provide you with information about these supports.

WEBLINKS

To find a CYSN Worker:

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/sda/contacts.htm

Funding Options

Invoice Payment

Through an Invoice Payment Agreement, funding is set aside in an “account” held within government in the child’s name and payment is provided directly to service providers for eligible intervention services.

Parents choose the service(s) they need and the service provider(s), and notify the Autism Funding Branch using a Request to Pay Service Providers/Suppliers Form. (The non-profit agency ACT – Autism Community Training maintains the Registry of Service Providers (RASP) that parents with children under six must choose from). Behaviour Interventionists (BI) are not required to be registered on the RASP, but BIs should be supervised by a RASP professional). Service providers submit invoices to the Autism Funding Branch for services they have provided.

MCFD is committed to paying all authorized invoices within 30 days of their receipt, although most are paid sooner.

Currently, MCFD requires service providers to submit invoices no more than once per month for authorized services that have already taken place. Invoices received for future-dated services or for missed appointments are not eligible for funding through the Autism Funding Programs. Service providers who provide services under Invoice Payment have up to a maximum of six months after the date of service being provided to submit an invoice to the Autism Funding Branch for payment.

Parents can contact the Autism Funding Branch at any time to confirm the amount of funds remaining in their child’s account.

Autism Funding Agreements are automatically renewed at the end of a child’s birth month.

Parents are responsible for managing employment-related expenses, such as Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance and Workers’ Compensation Board premiums, where there is an employer/employee relationship. MCFD cannot make these payments on behalf of parents but can reimburse parents for these expenses.

Direct Payment (For Children 12 and Over)

Through a Direct Payment Agreement, funding is provided directly to the parent/legal guardian that signed the Direct Payment Agreement (‘agreement signatory’) at the beginning of their child’s funding period. The parent chooses eligible autism intervention services that best suit their child’s needs and the parent is responsible for paying service providers for those services.

At the end of each funding period, the parent must account for the use of the child’s autism funding. Required paperwork includes documentation identifying who provided service with clear proof of payment (e.g., invoices, receipts, autism branch approval letters, approved JFE Forms, Accountant Confirmation Form, etc.). The Accountant Confirmation Form must be completed and signed by a professional accountant, which means a Certified General Accountant (CGA), Chartered Accountant (CA), Certified Management Accountant (CMA) or Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA).

All documentation submitted to MCFD is subject to audit. If it is found that autism funding was spent on ineligible autism expenses, the parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement will be required to pay back the ineligible amount. Please note that an audit can be done several years after the initial payment has been made. A Direct Payment Agreement can be cancelled if the parent/legal guardian does not comply with their Agreement obligations. The parent will still be able to access autism funding through the Invoice Payment method, but will no longer be eligible to access further funding through Direct Payment.

Eligibility Requirements for Direct Payment

- A child diagnosed with ASD must be 12 years or older;
- The parent/legal guardian who signs the Direct Payment Agreement ('agreement signatory') must have successfully managed Invoice Payment for a minimum of two full years (i.e., 24 months);
- The agreement signatory must have complied with all of his or her obligations under any previous Autism Funding Agreements with MCFD;
- The parent/legal guardian must notify the Autism Funding Branch at least 60 days prior to the end of their current funding period that they wish to switch to Direct Payment; and,
- The parent/legal guardian must complete their child's existing funding period under Invoice Payment before establishing a new funding period under Direct Payment.
- Please refer to "Appendix 5: Steps to Access Funding Through Direct Payment" for more information.

Eligible Siblings Ages 6-12

- In order to simplify the payment process for families with more than one child with ASD, agreement signatories will have a choice to have younger siblings who are between the ages of 6-12 also access autism funding through Direct Payment.
- Conversion of any younger siblings onto Direct Payment must occur at the renewal of that child's funding period.
- Siblings under the age of 6 are not eligible for Direct Payment.



Autism Funding Programs and Parent Responsibilities

The autism funding programs offer flexibility and choice to parents.

It is important to know the responsibilities associated with these programs. Review the parental obligations listed in your Invoice Payment Agreement or Direct Payment Agreement and request clarification from the Autism Funding Branch if needed.

Parents' responsibilities include:

- Using the funds for eligible autism intervention expenses and for no other purpose, in accordance with the terms of the funding agreement and current program policies
- Hiring and monitoring service providers
- Ensuring all service providers are at least 19 years old and have a clear and current criminal record check
- Determining whether an employer/employee relationship exists between the parent and service providers
- Meeting employer/employee obligations, including complying with relevant employment standards and paying Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance and Workers' Compensation Board – WorksafeBC premiums and other employer costs as required
- If the child is under age six, selecting professional service providers from the Registry of Autism Service Providers
- Notifying the Autism Funding Branch within 30 days of any changes in address, child's care or custody, or any change in circumstances that may eliminate or reduce the need for funding
- Submitting a Request to Pay (RTP) Service Providers/Suppliers form to the Autism Funding Branch for each service provider, every funding period. The RTP must be submitted every funding period and must indicate the maximum amount that a service provider can invoice during that period. (Please note that services are not eligible for reimbursement; only authorized travel, training and equipment purchase may be reimbursed)
- Invoices must be submitted to the Autism Funding Branch within 6 months of the purchase of the service or equipment. (Please note that the date in which the service occurred or the equipment was purchased determines the funding period from which the payment is processed)
- Additional responsibilities as noted in the Invoice Payment Agreement or the Direct Payment Agreement

WEBLINKS

Resources of assistance in determining obligations as an employer and tax information:

Canada Revenue Agency

(information specific to employment obligations) 1
800 959-5525
www.cra-arc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html

Workers' Compensation Board - WorkSafeBC

1 888 922-2768
www.worksafebc.com/employers_and_small_business/overview/default.asp

Employment Standards Branch

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
1 800 663-3316
(or in Prince George, call: 250 612-4100)
www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb/welcome.htm

Please note: The Autism Funding Branch is not able to provide advice or answer questions with regards to employer responsibilities or taxation.

Foster Parents and Children In Care

Children in care are eligible for autism programs. If you think that a child or youth you are caring for may have autism, discuss your concerns with their guardianship worker.

To access services for Children in Care with ASD, the guardianship worker contacts the local MCFD office to complete the Autism Funding Application. The CYSN Worker then confirms eligibility and initiates access confirm eligibility and initiate access to autism funding.

For information on health supports available for children in care, please see the Health Supports Guide accessible through the **WEBLINK** below.

WEBLINKS

Application Form for Autism Funding:
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/forms.htm

Ministry of Children and Family Development:
Health Supports for Children in Care and Youth Agreements:
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/pdf/health_supports_cic.pdf

Appeals or Complaints

If you have a concern about the service provided by the Autism Funding Branch, or about an autism funding decision, contact the Autism Funding Branch at 1 877 777-3530. If your complaint is not resolved, request to speak with an Autism Funding Branch supervisor at 1 877 777-3530.

If you have a complaint about a service provider on the RASP, please contact ACT- Autism Community Training toll free at 1 866 939-5188 to find out more on how to initiate a complaint.

Confidentiality and Your Privacy

Some personal information about you and your child is required to complete a diagnosis, determine eligibility and provide ongoing services. All necessary personal information must be collected, used and disclosed in accordance the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA).

The Autism Funding Branch may only release information regarding a child's agreement to the Agreement Signatory (i.e., the parent/legal guardian who signed the autism agreement). If you wish for another person to access this information, please contact the Autism Funding Branch and ask for a Release of Information Form.

WEBLINKS

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:
www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/96165_00



Tips For Parents

Who Will Be Working with My Child?

Depending on the needs of your child, his or her therapy team may include:

- **Behavior Analyst (BA) and Behaviour Consultant (BC):**

BAs and BCs are professionals who conduct assessments, develop an individualized Behavior Plan of Intervention (BPI), train parents and interventionists, and monitor and oversee treatment programs on an on-going basis. Treatment programs can cover a wide range of domains such as verbal behaviour, social skills, daily living skills, problem behaviours, etc. BAs and BCs who are listed on the British Columbia Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) have demonstrated the necessary education and experience in the field of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and autism. The difference between a BC and a BA is that a BA (Behaviour Analyst) has received the certification of "Board Certified Behaviour Analyst" (BCBA) through the Behaviour Analyst Certification Board (BACB). BAs and BCs may also conduct Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and design support plans for problem behaviour(s) as needed.

- **Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP):** An S-LP is a registered professional who works with people who have problems with communication. Communication includes both understanding and using speech, language, written language, non-verbal communication, and augmentative and alternative communication technology. An S-LP can provide assessment, diagnosis, consultation, and intervention/treatment. An S-LP can also provide expertise in the area oral motor skills including eating, drinking and swallowing.

- **Occupational Therapist (OT):** An OT is a registered professional who provides services to promote health and well being. The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in activities of everyday life by enhancing an individual's ability to participate or by modifying the environment to better support participation. An OT can provide assessment, diagnosis, consultation, and intervention/treatment in the areas of functional living such as play, dressing, feeding, school readiness, printing, keyboarding, social skills, ability to cope and work. An OT examines underlying correlations of these deficits and addresses motor, perceptual, social and/or sensory challenges.

- **Physical Therapist (PT):** A PT is a registered professional who provides services to address how and why movement and function take place. The primary goal of the physical therapist is to improve quality of life by promoting optimal mobility, physical activity and overall health and wellness; managing acute and chronic conditions, activity limitations, and participation restrictions; and improving and maintaining optimal functional independence and physical performance. Physical Therapists provide diagnostic and assessment procedures and tools in order to develop and implement preventive and therapeutic interventions.

- **Behaviour Interventionist (BI):** A BI is a paraprofessional who practices under the close, ongoing supervision of a Behavior Analyst/Consultant, Speech Language Pathologist or Occupational Therapist. The BI is primarily responsible to implement the intervention plan (e.g., the BPI) developed by the supervising professional(s). The BI may also collect data and conduct simple assessments. The BI does not have the qualifications to work in isolation or design and adjust intervention plans. The tasks that BIs perform will be based on his or her training, experience, and competence. The BI's supervisor is ultimately responsible for the work performed by the BI.

When hiring professionals, select someone who can demonstrate the appropriate qualifications, training and experience and who is able to provide the treatment approach that best fits with the needs and strengths of your child and family.

Understand what each person on your child's team will be doing, how much time they will spend with you and your child, and what they charge for their services. You should have a written contract or agreement with the professionals you hire. Information on creating on contract and selecting professionals to work with your child is available from ACT – Autism Community Training.

WEBLINKS

For more information on the professionals that your child's team may include, go to:

Behaviour Analyst:

<http://www.bacb.com/index.php?page=4>; and <https://bc-aba.org/>

Speech-Language Pathologist:

<http://www.cshhpb.org/>; and
<http://www.bcaslpa.ca/>

Occupational Therapist:

<http://www.cotbc.org/>; and
<http://www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=4125>

Physical Therapist:

<http://cptbc.org/>; and
<http://bcphysio.org/>

How Much Can I Expect to Pay for Services?

The yellow box has guidelines to assist you and service providers in negotiating fees. These guidelines were developed in consultation with professionals and upon review of existing guidelines developed by professional associations. Although many factors may affect the fees charged by professionals, you can expect a correlation between the rate and their credentials, education and experience.

Fee Guidelines

BC: \$70 – \$110 per hour
(Registered psychologists:
Up to \$160 per hour)

OT: \$90 – \$120 per hour

SLP: \$105 – \$130 per hour

PT: \$75 – 85 per visit

BI(s): \$10 – \$40 per hour
\$15 to 20 per hour is common.

Service providers' rates may vary from these guidelines.



How Do I Know My Child is Receiving Quality Intervention?

MCFD requires that interventions and programs for children under age six be based on best practices. “Best practices” refers to interventions and approaches that are supported by research evidence and proven to be effective. It is highly recommended that these best practices be used for children over age six.

Best Practices for Autism Intervention

- Development of an individualized behaviour plan of intervention with a multidisciplinary focus that is based on a curriculum that emphasizes: academics, communication, social/play skills, emotional/self regulation, motor/sensory functioning, independence/life skills
- Intensive one-to-one (at least initially) intervention at home, in preschool/school and in a variety of community settings on a year-round basis
- Programs must be developed by professionals who are well trained and have demonstrated qualifications and experience in the field of autism.
- Program plans should be regularly monitored and evaluated by professionals to ensure that progress is continually being made by the child. If progress is not being made, program plans need to be adjusted accordingly.
- Motivating materials and activities should be used to increase child engagement (e.g., understand what motivates each child and use these motivators to help teach new, positive behaviours).
- Environmental rearrangement and visual supports can be used to promote the learning of new desired behaviours – (e.g., decreasing the clutter in an environment or using visual schedules; choice boards; or Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices, etc.).
- Parents, family members, and caregivers should be highly involved in program planning to ensure that goals will improve quality of life.
- Parents, family members and caregivers should receive training in intervention strategies so that they can be involved in providing intervention as much as possible.
- There should be high levels of predictability and routine
- Intervention should focus on highly supportive, structured teaching methods, based on the principles of applied behaviour analysis (ABA – See Definition on page 24), that incorporate a variety of strategies to help your child acquire, generalize and maintain new skills
- Intervention should take place in both structured settings and more natural environments.
- Problem behaviours should be addressed with Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) strategies (Please refer to definition on page 24)
- Professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds (e.g., Behaviour Analysts/ Consultant, Speech - Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, medical personnel, etc.) should be brought together to work in collaboration with the family in a positive manner.
- Intervention should include regular, planned opportunities to interact with typically developing peers who are the same age.
- There should be deliberate planning for times of transition such as preschool to kindergarten; middle school to high school; high school to adulthood; etc..
- For youth, there should be planned opportunities to develop skills to improve quality of life (e.g., employment; recreation; hobbies; social networks; etc.).
- Behaviour Interventionists must receive ongoing supervision and training by qualified professionals.
- There must be regular, ongoing monitoring of the child's progress by a professional or team of professionals

For more information on best practices go to:

The US National Standards Project:

<http://www.nationalautismcenter.org/nsp/>

The US National Professional Development Center on ASD:

<http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu>

The US Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality:

<http://www.ahrq.gov>

The UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence:

<http://publications.nice.org.uk/autism-cg170/introduction>

National Research Council (2001). Educating Children with Autism. Committee on Educational Interventions for Children with Autism, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

When choosing an intervention for your child, ask yourself, “what are the priorities and areas of concern for my child?” Then ask your potential service provider(s):

- Is there research that shows this intervention is effective, if so what kind of research is it?
- How will this intervention help my child function better?
- How will my child’s progress be evaluated?
- What will be the measures and how often?
- How will the program be adjusted according to my child’s progress?

Adapted from Jack, M., Ady, J. *A Guide to Choosing Interventions for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders*. Alberta Centre For Child, Family & Community Research, 2006.

WEBLINKS

ACT – Autism Community Training:
www.actcommunity.ca/newdiagnosishub

Autism Support Network:
<http://autismsupportbc.ca/>

Definitions

In general, treatment for ASD can be categorized into three over arching models: Applied Behaviour Analytic Approaches including Applied Behaviour Analysis and Positive Behaviour Support; Developmental Social Pragmatic Approaches; and Comprehensive, Naturalistic Developmental Behavioural Interventions (NDBIs), or combined approaches.

Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA): *Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) is the science of human behaviour. It is the process of applying interventions in a systematic way in order to improve socially significant behaviors and to demonstrate that the interventions used led to improvements in those targeted behaviours. ABA uses the principles of learning theory. For example, techniques such as reinforcement are used to increase behaviours, generalize learned behaviours or reduce undesirable behaviours. A core feature of ABA is that programs and interventions focus on meaningful outcomes for the learner. Many different teaching strategies are used in interventions based in ABA theory such as “shaping; chaining; discrete trial training; etc.” – for more information on ABA-based interventions, please refer to <http://www.centerforautism.com/aba-therapy.aspx>*

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS): *Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a set of research-based strategies used to increase quality of life and decrease problem behavior by teaching new skills and making changes in a person’s environment. PBS can be used by a wide range of trained service providers. It combines information from social, behavioural, and biomedical science and applies this information to reduce behavioural challenges and improve quality of life. In general, PBS uses proactive, educative, and reinforcement-based interventions and supports across settings to improve behavior so that it is meaningful, durable, and sustainable in natural settings. For more information, please refer to <http://www.apbs.org/>.*

Developmental Social Pragmatic (DSP) Approaches *are based on the principles of typical development and how typical children learn to interact. They focus on initiation and spontaneity in communication and following the child’s focus of attention and motivations. The goal is to improve the child’s ability to form positive, meaningful relationships with other people.*

- *DSP approaches emphasize teaching functional skills in a sequence that is developmentally appropriate. They are child directed whereby the adult responds to the child’s interests; taught in the context of natural social routines; and “intensity” is defined by the amount of “active involvement” on the child’s part, not by the number of hours of treatment per week.*
- *Examples of “name-brand” DSP approaches include Floortime/ Developmental Individual-difference Relationship-based (DIR); Relationship Development Intervention (RDI); Social, Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support (SCERTS); Hanen: More Than Words; etc.*

Comprehensive Approaches also known as ‘Naturalistic Developmental Behavioural Interventions’ (NDBIs)

combine the best of ABA and DSP intervention models. These types of treatments utilize behaviour-based teaching rooted in Applied Behaviour Analysis for skill acquisition and utilize DSP techniques to facilitate generalization and spontaneity of those skills. NDBIs emphasize developmentally appropriate skills and involve shared control between the adult and child.

- *Examples of “name-brand” NDBIs Include: the Early Start Denver model (ESDM); Pivotal Response Training (PRT); Natural Language Teaching; TEACCH; etc.*

What is a Behaviour Plan of Intervention (BPI)?

A behaviour plan of intervention (BPI) is an individualized program that identifies goals designed for a specific child that focuses on identifying areas where the child needs intervention. It is most often developed and written by a behaviour analyst/consultant in collaboration with the family, and should include input from other professionals who are members of the child's team (e.g., speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist).

It is recommended that all professionals involved with your child provide a Plan of Intervention that outlines specific goals; strategies for attaining those goals; and a process to review and update the goals on a regular basis.

A BPI identifies effective and suitable interventions for a specific child. The BPI also establishes a baseline that states "where the child is now" and looks towards "where we want to go." It is also a roadmap that outlines how intervention will proceed and provides a platform to regularly review your child's plan and to measure his or her progress. It is important that parents are part of the planning and review processes and that intervention is always guided by a plan that is regularly reviewed.

A Behaviour Plan of Intervention (BPI) should:

- Be completed within the framework of best practices
- Be based on a developmental curriculum that includes: identifying global goals for all areas of development (academic, communication, social skills/play skills, motor/sensory functioning and independence/life skills)
- Identify specific goals within the global goals
- Include input from specific professionals who are on the team, as appropriate
- Identify the specific teaching strategies or methods to be used to achieve each goal
- Use ongoing data collection procedures to monitor the child's progress and make adjustments to the child's program based on this information
- Use a functional approach to challenging behaviour
- Identify team members (including their contact information) and their responsibilities to ensure collaboration, communication and accountability
- List dates for regular review and updating of the plan, based on the child's individual needs (e.g., some children may require reviews as often as monthly)
- Include strategies for generalization and maintenance of acquired skills across different environments and ensure that these are regularly addressed, monitored and updated

See page 28 for a Behaviour Plan of Intervention (BPI) Template.



Contact Us

We are here to assist you and ensure you receive accurate and helpful information.

Autism Funding Branch

This branch is responsible for funding agreement processing, payments to families and service providers, and financial reconciliation.

For general inquiries and inquiries regarding parental responsibilities associated with funding agreements:

In Victoria:	250 387-3530
Toll-Free:	1 877 777-3530 (translation services available)
Fax:	250 356-8578
Web:	www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm
E-mail:	MCF.AutismFundingUnit@gov.bc.ca
Mail:	Autism Funding Branch P.O. Box 9776 Victoria, B.C. V8W 9S5

Service BC

Service BC provides information and referral services for all provincial government programs and services and can provide you with contact information for local ministry offices.

In Victoria:	250 387-6121
In Vancouver:	604 660-2421
Elsewhere in BC:	1 800 663-7867



Appendix 1 : B.C. Service and Autism Organizations

ACT – Autism Community Training Society

A not-for-profit society funded by MCFD to provide information, resources and training on a wide range of autism services in B.C. ACT also maintains the Registry of Autism Service Providers for the ministry.

Tel: 604 205-5467, Toll-Free: 1 866 939-5188

E-mail: info@actcommunity.ca

Web: www.actcommunity.ca

The Autism Society of BC

A parent-based and directed society providing support to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families in B.C. and the Yukon.

Tel: 604 434-0880, Toll-Free: 1 888 437-0880

E-mail: administrator@autismbc.ca

Web: www.autismbc.ca

BC Autism Assessment Network (BCAAN) – Provincial Health Services Authority

Information on assessment/diagnosis of children who may have Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Tel: 604 453-8343

E-mail: autism@phsa.ca

Web: www.phsa.ca/AgenciesAndServices/Services/Autism/default.htm

Canada Revenue Agency

Canada Revenue Agency has information for individual income tax enquiries as well as specific information on topics and services that may be of interest to individuals with disabilities.

Toll-free: 1 800 959-8281

Web: www.cra-arc.gc.ca/disability

Ministry of Children and Family Development

MCFD provides services and planning support for children, youth and adults with developmental disabilities and for children and youth who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis, or are eligible for the At Home Program (children with severe disabilities).

Web: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm

Families for Early Autism Treatment of British Columbia (FEAT of BC)

Information for parents and concerned professionals working for universal access to effective autism treatment.

E-mail: info@featbc.org

Web: www.featbc.org

Autism Support Network

A parent organization whose vision is to create a secure, inclusive community of support so to help those Autism Spectrum Disorder reach their full potential.

Web: www.autismsupport.ca

Family Support Institute

A family-directed organization providing information, training and province-wide networking to assist families and their communities.

Tel: 604 540-8374

E-mail: fsi@bcacl.org

Web: www.familysupportbc.com

Ministry of Children and Family Development Children and Youth with Special Needs

Information on autism funding and programs:

Web: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm

Information on other programs for children and youth with special needs:

Web: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs/index.htm

Ministry of Education

Special Education: Autism

Information on special education programs and autism initiatives.

Web: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/sped_res_docs.htm

Ministry of Health Services

Access to an evidence-based report: *Standards and Guidelines for Assessment and Diagnosis of Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in B.C.*

Tel: 250 952-1742, Toll-Free: 1 800 465-4911

Web: www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2003/asd_standards_0318.pdf

Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders (POPARD)

An educational organization to help teachers, parents and para-professionals access information about autism and the B.C. school system's available resources.

Web: www.autismoutreach.ca

Special Education Technology - BC (SET-BC)

Provides resources and training for assistive technology used in the school setting.

Tel: 604 261-9450

Web: www.setbc.org

Appendix 2: Behaviour Plan of Intervention

Name of child:		Child's date of birth:
Name of parent(s)/guardian(s):	Today's date:	Date to review/update plan:

Professionals involved in the child's program

some examples	Name	Role & Responsibilities	Contact information
<i>Behaviour analyst/consultant</i>			
<i>Occupational therapist</i>			
<i>Physiotherapist</i>			
<i>Speech language pathologist</i>			
<i>Supported Child Development consultant</i>			
<i>Supported Child Development worker</i>			
<i>Preschool/daycare supervisor</i>			
<i>Behaviour interventionist(s)</i>			
<i>Other</i>			

Family Goals:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

The following is a list of domain areas that need to be addressed in the behaviour plan of intervention. With collaboration from family and professionals who are members of the child's intervention team, identify: specific goals/objectives, teaching procedures, measurable outcomes/mastery criterion for each domain and which family goal this objective is addressing.

Examples of Domains	Specific Goals/Objectives	Teaching Procedures	Measurable Outcomes/ Mastery Criterion	Family Goal
<i>Social skills</i>				
<i>Play skills</i>				
<i>Communication</i>				
<i>Emotional functioning/ Self regulation</i>				
<i>Academics/ cognition</i>				
<i>Fine & gross motor/ sensory functioning</i>				
<i>Life skills</i>				

Professional's Name
(please print)

Signature of Professional
(In signing I confirm that I have assessed the child's skill level and will monitor and supervise the implementation of his/her program)

Parent
(please print)

Signature of parent
(In signing I agree the behaviour plan of intervention addresses my family's and child's needs)

Appendix 3: Autism Funding – Summary of Eligible Expenses

Autism Funding: Under Age 6 may only be used for:

- Services of behaviour consultants/analysts, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists who are listed on the Registry of Autism Service Providers.
- Behaviour interventionists (BI) – (It is highly recommended that all BIs be supervised by a RASP professional)
- Family's administrative costs (e.g., bookkeeping/payroll, up to \$100 monthly).
- Applicable employer costs (e.g., employee income tax, Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance and Workers Compensation Board premiums, four per cent vacation pay).

Autism Funding: Ages 6 – 18 may only be used for:

- Behaviour Consultants/Analyst
- Speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists
- Behaviour Interventionists (BI) (It is highly recommended that all BIs be supervised by one or all of the professionals listed above)
- Life skills and social skills programs
- Out-of-school learning support/tutoring (not part of the regular school program)
- Specialized therapeutic activities and camps designed to address your child's ASD
- Dietary counseling from a registered dietician
- Family counseling/therapy
- Other interventions as recommended by a professional/specialist (A Letter of Recommendation (LOR) written by an eligible professional/specialist is required and written pre-approval from the Autism Funding Branch is recommended)
- MCFD Autism funding can be used towards independent school services if the invoice reflects out-of-school services only. In other words, MCFD autism funding can contribute to the fees that cover the costs of before and after school supports, tutoring, therapy services (e.g., speech-language therapy, behaviour consultation), and social activities provided outside of the typical educational program

- Family's administrative costs (e.g., bookkeeping services, up to \$50 monthly or Direct Payment accountant fees up to a maximum of \$600 per funding period)
- Applicable employer costs (e.g., employee income tax, Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance and WorkSafeBC premiums, four per cent vacation pay)

Up to 20 per cent of BOTH Autism Funding: Under Age 6 and Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 may be used for:

- Training within B.C.
- Travel costs to access autism intervention or training within B.C. (round trip greater than 80 kms)
- Eligible equipment, as necessary for effective intervention, outlined in a Justification for Equipment (JFE) Form, completed by a professional/specialist.

Computers and/or Touch Screen Tablets

- Requests to purchase a computer or touch screen tablet must be made in writing through a JFE written by a child's professional/specialist.
- A child's autism funding can be used to purchase one laptop OR one desktop computer; OR one touch screen Tablet (e.g., an iPad OR an iTouch) once every three years.

Please note: In the Under 6 program a professional/specialist eligible to complete a Justification For Equipment and supplies (JFE) form is defined as a RASP professional or an EIT professional employed through MCFD contracted agencies/organizations/health authorities. A professional/specialist in the Ages 6-18 program is defined as a behaviour consultant, physical therapist, speech-language pathologist, paediatrician, psychiatrist, registered psychologist, registered psychological associate, neurologist or occupational therapist.

Call 1 877 777-3530 for further information.

Appendix 4: Autism Funding – Summary of Ineligible Expenses

Please note: Some interventions and equipment recommended by a professional/specialist are ineligible expenses. The following are ineligible expenses:

- Home repairs, renovations, swimming pools, hot tubs, trampolines, playground equipment
- Household items, including appliances
- General recreation and sports enrolment fees
- Sports/fitness equipment
- Televisions
- Vitamins, medical supplies, orthotics
- Clothing
- Food (however, small reinforcers for therapy may be eligible)
- Any items to be used only in school settings
- Monthly smart phone bills and/or data plans

The following are some examples of services that are ineligible:

- Child care
- Respite
- General recreation lessons
- Medical services
- Services provided out of province, and associated travel

Not all ineligible expenses are listed. It is recommended that families contact the Autism Funding Branch at 1 877 777-3530 for more information before purchasing items.



Appendix 5: Steps to Access Funding Through Direct Payment

1. Sixty days prior to the end of the child's current funding period, the parent or legal guardian (or the 'agreement signatory') must contact the Autism Funding Branch (AFB) by phone, toll-free at 1-877-777-3530, to inform them that they wish to switch from Invoice Payment to Direct Payment.
2. The AFB reviews the request and notifies the agreement signatory whether they are eligible to access funding through the Direct Payment method.
3. The AFB mails an introduction letter, Direct Deposit Application Form and a Direct Payment Agreement to the eligible agreement signatory.
4. Upon receipt, the eligible agreement signatory must sign the Direct Payment Agreement and return it to the AFB at least 30 days prior to the commencement of their child's new funding period.
5. It is required that payments are made to agreement signatories by direct deposit. Direct deposit account information should be provided to the AFB when the Direct Payment Agreement is returned. Direct Deposit Application Forms are available at: www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/documents_library/forms/0312FILL.pdf.
6. Once the AFB has received the signed Direct Payment Agreement, it is processed for approval. Once approved, \$6,000 is paid to the agreement signatory at the start of the first funding period. The money must be held in a separate bank account for the child into which only the Direct Payment autism funds can be deposited and out of which only eligible autism expenses can be withdrawn.
7. The agreement signatory will be responsible for acquiring eligible autism intervention services, travel, training, equipment and supplies and will be responsible for paying the professionals, service providers and/or vendors directly.
8. To continue to receive Direct Payment funding in subsequent years, the agreement signatory must submit required paperwork consisting of a completed and signed Accountant Confirmation Form and supporting documentation (i.e., detailed original invoices, receipts, a bank statement showing the balance in the autism funding account, Autism Funding Branch approval letters, etc.) within 60 days of the end of a Direct Payment funding period. This documentation confirms which services and supports were rendered and that payment was made for those services and supports.
9. Unspent funds must be clearly identified in the space provided on the Accountant Confirmation Form.
10. At the end of a funding period a prepayment of \$1,500 will be made for the next funding period for autism intervention expenses.
11. Funding that is unspent at the end of a funding period will count as part of the new funding period's \$6,000 total.
12. The remainder of the funds for the new funding period will be released once the AFB receives, processes and approves the required paperwork, provided a valid Direct Payment Agreement is in place. Funding for each funding period will not exceed a total of \$6,000.
13. If an agreement signatory does not submit the completed Accountant Confirmation Form with supporting documentation to account for the \$6,000 autism funding received for a funding period they will no longer be eligible to access funding using the Direct Payment method. The agreement signatory will only be able to access future autism funding through the Invoice Payment method.
14. All documentation submitted to MCFD is subject to audit. If it is found that autism funding was spent on ineligible equipment, supports and/or services, the parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement will be required to pay the ineligible amount back to MCFD.

15. If the parent/legal guardian fails to comply with any of his or her obligations under the Direct Payment Agreement, the Province may immediately terminate the Direct Payment Agreement by providing written notice and may pursue any other remedies the Province considers necessary or appropriate.
16. If a Direct Payment Agreement has been cancelled due to non-compliance with the Agreement obligations, the family will still be able to access autism funding through the Invoice Payment method, but will be no longer be eligible to access future funding through the Direct Payment method.
17. If a Direct Payment Agreement ends or is cancelled, a cheque for the unspent funds and/or amounts for ineligible items must be provided to the AFB.





Information for Service Providers

General Information

The Ministry of Children and Family Development provides two autism programs:

1. Autism Funding: Under Age 6 (for more information, please see pages 10-13).
 2. Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 (for more information, please see pages 14-15).
- The funding programs are intended to assist families with the cost of purchasing eligible autism intervention services (based on best practices) to promote their child's communication, social-emotional, pre-academic, academic, and functional life skills development.
 - Families are able to select eligible services and/or service providers that best fit with their child and family. For more details on eligible services and service providers, please see pages 10-15.
 - All families accessing autism funding are able to access their funding using the 'invoice payment' option where funding for the child is set aside within government and payment is provided directly to eligible service providers upon submission of authorized invoices.
 - Some families with children ages 12 to 18 may choose to access their funding through the 'direct payment' option. Any inquiries regarding service provider payments for services provided to families accessing 'direct payment' should be directed to the family and not the Autism Funding Branch.
 - For more information about the 'Invoice Payment' and 'Direct Payment' options, please see pages 17-18.

The Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP)

- The Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) is a list of professionals that provide services to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The RASP includes Behaviour Consultants/Analysts, Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LP), Occupational Therapists (OT), and Physical Therapists (PT).
- The purpose of the RASP is to ensure that parents of young children with ASD have access to professionals whose education, training, and experience qualifies them to design, supervise, and oversee the implementation of intensive, comprehensive, and effective treatment programs.
- The RASP is managed by ACT-Autism Community Training on behalf of MCFD. MCFD, not ACT, sets the inclusion criteria policies for professionals to be included on the RASP.
- To be included on the RASP, professionals must demonstrate that their education and experience meet the qualifications set by MCFD.
- Applications for the RASP can be found at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/cf_0901.pdf.
- All inquiries regarding the RASP application process, including appeals, should be made to ACT-Autism Community Training. Visit www.actcommunity.ca/rasp/sp-info for contact information.
- Families receiving funding through the Autism Funding: Under Age 6 Program must select their professionals from the RASP.
- Families receiving funding from the Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 Program are not required to select their professionals from the RASP; however, it is strongly recommended.
- Behaviour Interventionists (BI) are not required to be on the RASP, as they do not have the qualifications to work in isolation or to design and adjust intervention plans; they should be supervised by a RASP professional. The RASP professional is ultimately responsible for the work performed by the BI.
- For more details please see: www.actcommunity.ca/rasp/sp-info/rasp-application-process



Autism Funding: Under Age 6

- Parents with children in the Autism Funding: Under Age 6 program, must select their Behaviour Consultant/Analyst, S-LP, OT, and PT from the RASP.
- Behaviour Consultant/Analysts, S-LPs, OTs, and PTs who are not listed on the RASP are not eligible to invoice the Autism Funding: Under Age 6 Program.
- The Behaviour Plan of Intervention (BPI):
 - It is MCFD policy that each child's intervention program must be based on a plan that takes into account his or her unique strengths and needs. The BPI is typically written by a Behaviour Consultant/Analyst, with input from family members and other professional team members, such as the S-LP, OT, PT or other Educators. The BPI should be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that your child is making meaningful progress.

Autism Funding: Ages 6-18

- Behaviour Consultants/Analysts, S-LPs, OTs, and OTs working with children in the Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 Program are not required to be on the RASP however, it is strongly recommended.
- For more detail on the types of services and service providers eligible to invoice the Autism Funding Programs please see pages 11-15.

Behaviour Interventionists (BIs)

- A Behaviour Interventionist (BI) is a paraprofessional who practices under the close, ongoing supervision of a Behavior Analyst/Consultant, S-LP, OT, or PT. For more details about what role a BI plays on a team, please see page 21.
- Behaviour Interventionists (BIs) are eligible to invoice the Autism Funding Branch if they are over the age of 19 and if they have a clear criminal record.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian employing the BI to ensure that the BI has an up to date clear criminal record check.
- BIs are not required to be on the RASP.
- BIs should be supervised by a RASP professional in the Autism Funding: Under Age 6 program and a qualified professional in the Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 program as they do not have the qualifications to work in isolation or independently design and adjust intervention plans.
- It is the BI's supervisor (typically a RASP professional) that is ultimately responsible for the work performed by the BI.

Employment Related Expenses

- Parents and service providers are responsible for managing employment-related expenses, such as: Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, or Workers' Compensation Board premiums. MCFD cannot make these payments on behalf of parents but can reimburse parents for these expenses.
- Further information regarding tax deductions and employment related expenses can be obtained from the Canada Revenue Agency. Visit www.cra-arc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html.
- Equipment and/or supplies owned and retained by service providers (e.g., computer programs, laminators, etc.) are not eligible expenses for invoicing in the Autism Funding Programs.

Invoicing and Payment

General Information

- MCFD is committed to paying all authorized invoices within 30 business days of their receipt, although most are paid sooner.
- Service providers may submit invoices once per month.
- Invoices received for future-dated services or for missed appointments are not eligible for payment.
- Service providers have up to six months after the date of service to submit an invoice. Invoices submitted after this 6 month time period will not be considered for payment.
- It is recommended that service providers sign up for Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), which would expedite payments to be deposited to a bank account, often within three to five business days of the invoice being processed. Details of the deposit by EFT are emailed to the service provider at the time of each payment. For more information, please visit www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/pdfs/0312FILL.pdf

Before a Service Provider Can Invoice: Request To Pay and Request To Amend Forms

- Once a parent/guardian has selected a service provider to work with their child, they notify the MCFD Autism Funding Branch (AFB) by submitting a Request to Pay Service Providers/Suppliers (RTP) form: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/cf_0925.pdf. For children in the care of MCFD, the legal guardian is the MCFD Social Worker. She/he is responsible for completing all Autism Funding related forms.
- The RTP specifies the maximum hourly or daily rate that the AFB may pay for a service and the maximum amount of funds that the AFB may pay to a service provider for one funding period.
- The RTP form must be processed and approved by the AFB before a Service Provider is able to invoice for services rendered and obtain payment.
- MCFD is committed to processing RTP forms within 30 business days of their receipt.
- Once the RTP form has been processed and approved and the service provider is found to meet program eligibility, the service provider will be issued a billing number.
- The billing number must be included on each invoice that is submitted to the AFB.

- It is recommended that services not be provided until the service provider has received their billing number from the AFB. Services provided before a billing number is provided may not be eligible for payment by the AFB and the parent may be responsible for the amount owing.
- It is strongly recommended that families and service providers maintain ongoing communication with regards to services billed and funds remaining for the billing number.
- During a funding period, a parent/guardian may modify the approved rates/amounts applicable to a billing number by submitting a Request To Amend Invoice Payment Authorization (RTA) form: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/cf_0925a.pdf.
- A new RTP form must be submitted at the start of a new funding period. Funding periods typically last one year. A new billing number is provided for each new funding period, if services are approved.
- Service providers should provide parents/guardians with exact duplicates of all invoices submitted to the Autism Funding Branch at the time they are submitted for payment.
- For more details please see pages 17-19.

Writing a Justification for Equipment and Supplies (JFE) form

- Equipment and materials necessary for a child's intervention must be requested by an eligible professional/specialist using the Justification for Equipment and Supplies (JFE) form available at: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/cf_0908.pdf.
- See page 11 for a description of professionals who are eligible to complete a JFE for the Autism Funding: Under Age 6 program
- See page 15 for a description of professionals who are eligible to complete a JFE for the Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 program.
- By completing and signing a JFE form, professionals are accepting responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of the child's intervention through the use of the recommended equipment and supplies.
- A JFE is not a guarantee that an item will be eligible for Autism Funding. It is recommended that families wait to purchase items only after the JFE has been approved. The cost of items that are not eligible will not be reimbursed.

- The items purchased as per specifications on an approved JFE will remain the sole property of the child and family.
- For more details about JFE forms and eligible equipment and materials related to intervention, please see pages 11-15.

Invoice Information Required

To avoid payment delays, include the following information on your invoice, written or typed in a clear and legible format:

1. Service Provider:

- Name (first and Last)
- Complete mailing address
- Phone number

2. Payee, (if different than the service provider:

- Name (first and Last)
- Complete mailing address
- Phone number

3. Billing Number

4. Invoice Number

- Invoices should contain an Invoice Number, of at least 4 digits in length. An example of an Invoice Number is 'ASo1' which may represent 'Adam Smith' invoice #01.
- Service Providers are encouraged to develop a numbering system that works best for them in keeping accurate records of payments for each client they are working with.

5. Client Name (first and last)

6. Clear and Detailed Itemization of:

- Date of service (day, month, and year)
- Type of service
- Amount of service provided (hours or days)
- Rate (per hour or per day)
- Total Cost of service

For an example of an invoice, please see: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/invoice_sample.pdf.

Submitting Invoices

- MCFD is committed to paying all invoices for authorized services and equipment within 30 business days of their receipt; most are paid sooner.
- Using the Service Provider Portal (see below) will result in the fastest payment; followed by submission of invoices by email; then regular mail.

- Service Providers should provide parents/legal guardians with exact duplicates of all invoices submitted to the Autism Funding Branch at the time they are submitted.
- If an invoice is received by the Autism Funding Branch and cannot be paid, both the parent/guardian and the service provider may receive written notification that the invoice cannot be processed (for possible reasons an invoice was not paid, see table below).

Invoices may be submitted to the Autism Funding Branch by:

1. Service Provider Portal

- The Service Provider Portal allows for invoices to be submitted online and allows for service providers to check the status of their payment and other inquires at any time.
- Invoices submitted through the Service Provider Portal are typically paid within three to five business days.
- For more details please see: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/afb_portal_info_sheet.pdf

2. Regular mail

- Invoices may be mailed to:
Autism Funding Branch
PO Box 9776 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9S5
- Please note: Mail can be lost in transit. Always keep a copy of documents you send by mail.
- Invoices submitted by mail typically take longer to process than those submitted via the Service Provider Portal or email. As a result, payments may be delayed.

3. Fax

- Invoices may be faxed to the AFB: (250) 356-8578.
- Please note: faxes are not 100% reliable and often much of the required information is not transmitted accurately. If an illegible fax is received, the AFB is not able to initiate contact with the service provider to obtain the required information.
- Please consider submitting invoices via the Service Provider Portal or email as complications with faxes may result in delayed payments.

4. Email

- Invoices may be emailed to: mcf.autismfundingunit@gov.bc.ca
- Submitting invoices by email is the least secure option. It is the service provider's responsibility to protect the confidentiality of the personal information contained in the invoice by ensuring that all servers and email accounts used by the service provider are secure.

Possible Reasons for Invoices Not Being Paid

Reason	Why Did This Happen? Potential Solutions
<i>Invoice was not received</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If an illegible fax is received, the AFB is not able to initiate contact with the service provider to obtain the required information.• On occasion, invoices submitted by mail have not been received by the AFB. <p>Solution: Resubmit the invoice. Ensure all required information is legible.</p> <p>Solution: Submit invoice through the Service Provider Portal (see: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/afb_portal_info_sheet.pdf). The Portal provides validations to ensure submissions are complete. Payment is often produced within three to five business days. You can view the status of invoices at any time.</p>
<i>AFB staff were unable to match the invoice to a valid billing number, or read other necessary information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invoice is illegible or is missing key information• If an illegible fax is received, the AFB is not able to initiate contact with the service provider to obtain the required information.• Invoices submitted by fax are commonly not legible and cannot be processed. <p>Solution: Resubmit invoice. Ensure all required information is legible.</p> <p>Solution: Submit invoice through the Service Provider Portal (see: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/afb_portal_info_sheet.pdf). The Portal provides validations to ensure submissions are complete. Payment is often produced within three to five business days. You can view the status of invoices at any time.</p>
<i>Request to Pay (RTP) form has not been submitted, processed, or approved</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An RTP must be processed before a billing number may be issued. All invoices submitted to the AFB require a valid billing number. Invoices received without a valid billing number will not be paid.• If an invoice is received by the AFB and cannot be paid, both the parent/guardian and the service provider may receive written notification that the invoice cannot be processed. <p>Solution: Service providers and parents/guardians should ensure that an RTP form is submitted, processed and approved with a billing number, by the AFB, before invoices are submitted for payment. Include the billing number on the invoice.</p> <p>Solution: The Service Provider Portal (see: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/afb_portal_info_sheet.pdf) provides access to view approved billing numbers as soon as the AFB processes RTPs and RTAs without needing to wait for a letter with the approved billing number. Service providers may also view amounts remaining on approved billing numbers.</p>

Reason	Why Did This Happen? Potential Solutions
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Invoice crosses over two funding periods

- Funding periods for each child are typically one year in length and finish at the end of the child’s birthday month.

Solution: Submit two separate invoices; one per applicable funding period with the applicable billing number.

For example: A service provider submits an invoice for the months of October and November 2014, for a child whose birthday falls in the month of October. Since the next Funding Period for the child starts November 1, 2014, two separate invoices should be submitted, one for October dates of service, and one for November.

Solution: The Service Provider Portal (see: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/afb_portal_info_sheet.pdf) provides access to view details of funding periods for each child that a service provider works with. The Portal employs validations that will facilitate the submission of two invoices with correct dates of service on each.

Invoice was submitted more than 6 months after the service was provided

- Service providers must submit an invoice to the Autism Funding Branch for payment within six months of a date of service.
- Invoices submitted more than six months after the earliest date of service on the invoice will not be paid.

Solution: It is the responsibility of service providers and parents to ensure that all invoices are received by the AFB in a timely fashion. It is strongly suggested that invoices be submitted in regular intervals (e.g., monthly) as soon as possible after work is completed.

Invoice exceeds the funding amount allocated on the RTP

- Once a parent/guardian has selected a service provider to work with their child, they notify the MCFD Autism Funding Branch (AFB) by submitting a Request to Pay Service Providers/Suppliers (RTP) form: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/cf_0925.pdf.
- The RTP specifies the maximum hourly or daily rate that the AFB may pay for a service and the maximum amount of funds that the AFB may pay to a service provider for the funding period.
- Service Providers should provide parents/legal guardians with exact duplicates of all invoices submitted to the Autism Funding Branch at the time they are submitted to assist families with expenditure tracking.

Solution: It is the responsibility of Service providers and parents to ensure that they both understand the maximum allowable funds per funding period and that they track expenditures during the funding period. It is strongly recommended that parents/guardians and service providers maintain ongoing communication with regards to hours and billing.

Solution: The Service Provider Portal (see: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/afb_portal_info_sheet.pdf) provides access to view authorized rates and details of allocated funds remaining for each child that a service provider works with.

Reason

**Why Did This Happen?
Potential Solutions**

Invoice was not paid because service provided was not eligible

- Not all services are eligible for Autism Funding. Please refer to pages 11-12 and pages 14-15 for information about eligible services.

Solution: It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that the services they choose and list on the RTP are eligible for Autism Funding. If the service provider is unsure if the service they offer is eligible, they are encouraged to discuss eligibility with the parent directly. The parent may contact the Autism Funding Branch to inquire about eligibility for a specific service for their individual child.

