

# After Your Child's Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder

A Quick Start Guide for Ages 0-5



Ministry of  
Children and Family  
Development

Autism Information Services  
British Columbia (AIS BC)  
***We're Here to Help***

*Call Toll-free* 1 844 878-4700  
*In person* 3688 Cessna Drive Richmond, B.C.  
*Website* [gov.bc.ca/autism](http://gov.bc.ca/autism)  
*Email* [AutismInformation@gov.bc.ca](mailto:AutismInformation@gov.bc.ca)



*This guide was developed, in collaboration with our partners, to help parents and other caregivers in their journey of understanding of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and the related services available. We welcome your feedback. We will put your feedback to good use in future versions of the guide, as well as using it to help keep you informed on our website. Please send your comments to [autisminformation@gov.bc.ca](mailto:autisminformation@gov.bc.ca) with the subject heading **"Guide Feedback"**. Thank you!*

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When children are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), families often have many questions.

Autism Information Services British Columbia (AIS BC) is here to help families along every step of their journey.

This guide will help you learn about autism spectrum disorder and best practice approaches, show you how to access autism funding, discuss hiring professionals and will suggest ways to connect with other parents. This guide is not intended to replace the “*A Parent’s Handbook: Your Guide to Autism Programs*” which contains additional information on funding and policy.

# Autism Information Services British Columbia (AIS BC)

## About Us

Autism Information Services British Columbia (AIS BC) is part of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

AIS BC is a provincial information centre for autism and related disorders. Our experienced staff provide information on best practice treatments, supports and training to families, service providers and community professionals across the province.

Our staff is available to assist you in English, Chinese, Punjabi and Tagalog. We also have access to interpreters to support you in over 50 languages.

AIS BC also manages the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP). *See page 5 of this guide for more information.*

## We’re Here to Help

We are here to help with questions related to:

- ▶ Providing information on assessment and diagnosis
- ▶ Best practice treatment options
- ▶ Effectively using and navigating the Autism Funding Program
- ▶ Finding and hiring professionals to work with your child
- ▶ Identifying and accessing provincial and local-level community supports and services
- ▶ Managing transitions across infancy, preschool, school-age, and entering adulthood

## Connect With Us

- ▶ 8:30am to 4:30pm (M-F) excluding statutory holidays
- ▶ In person: **3688 Cessna Drive, Richmond, B.C. V7B 1C7**  
No appointment necessary
- ▶ Toll Free Line: **1 844 878-4700**
- ▶ Email (general information): **AutismInformation@gov.bc.ca**
- ▶ Email (Registry of Autism Service Providers): **RASP@gov.bc.ca**
- ▶ Website: **gov.bc.ca/autism**

We are located on the first floor of the GoodLife Fitness Family Autism Hub at the Pacific Autism Family Network (PAFN)



# What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex condition that impacts brain development and affects a person's social relationships, communication, interests and behaviour.

ASD presents itself in a wide variety of ways and individuals can exhibit many different combinations of the behaviours in any degree of severity. Each person with ASD is unique and the needs, skills, and abilities of each person are affected differently.

Often a person with ASD has difficulty with communication and social interactions. This can include:

- ▶ Being nonverbal or responding inappropriately in conversations
- ▶ Difficulty understanding non-verbal cues
- ▶ Difficulty building age appropriate friendships
- ▶ Engaging in restricted or repetitive behaviours such as being overly dependent on routines, highly sensitive to changes in the environment and attachments to objects

## Autism Funding Programs in British Columbia

Services and supports for children with an autism diagnosis in B.C. are funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) through an individualized funding model. Individualized funding means that families have access to money to purchase eligible services and supports from *private practitioners* that best meet the unique needs of their child.

There are two Funding Programs:

### **Autism Funding: Under Age 6**

Families can access up to \$22,000/year to pay for eligible services

### **Autism Funding: Ages 6-18**

Families can access up to \$6,000/year to pay for eligible services



## What Can Families Purchase with Autism Funding?

The goal of autism funding is to help families with the cost of purchasing intervention services that will promote their child's communication, social-emotional, pre-academic and functional life skills development.

For children under age 6, families can use their funding to purchase services from professionals listed on the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP). *See page 5 of this guide for more information.* Families can also purchase services from Behaviour Interventionists (BIs). BIs should be supervised by a RASP professional. Families may use up to 20% of their annual funding to purchase eligible equipment, travel or training.

*For more detailed information about autism funding, view *A Parent's Handbook: Your Guide to Autism Programs* at: [gov.bc.ca/autism-forms-resources](http://gov.bc.ca/autism-forms-resources) — available in nine languages. You can also receive more information directly through the Autism Funding Branch at 1-887-777-3530.*

## How Autism Funding Works

Once your child is approved as eligible for autism funding, the Autism Funding Branch (AFB) sets up a funding account in your child's name.

Parents then choose eligible service providers who meet their child's needs.

Parents complete and submit forms to the AFB to identify their chosen service providers and confirm information about the service being provided.

Service providers send their invoices to the AFB after the service has been provided.

The AFB pays the service provider(s) directly.



# How To Apply For & Access Autism Funding

1



Contact the local Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) office to make an appointment and schedule a meeting with a **Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN) Worker**.

If you need assistance locating your local CYSN MCFD office, contact Autism Information Services British Columbia (AIS BC) at [1 844 878-4700](tel:18448784700).

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**Bring the following documents to your meeting with your CYSN worker:**

- ▶ **Proof of child's age** (e.g., birth certificate/passport)
- ▶ **Child's BC Services Card**
- ▶ **Autism Program Application Form**

**and ONE of the following forms** filled out by your child's diagnostician:

## A. Clinical Outcomes Form

If your child was diagnosed through the BC Autism Assessment Network (BCAAN)

OR

## B. Non-BCAAN (Private Diagnosis Form)

If your child was diagnosed in a private clinic in B.C. (please note: a private diagnosis also requires you to provide all written reports to your CYSN Worker)

OR

## C. Confirmation of Diagnosis Form

If your child was diagnosed out of province and you had a qualified B.C. specialist confirm the diagnosis in B.C. (please note your original assessment and diagnostic reports must be included).

3



Your CYSN social worker will provide you with information about the Autism Funding Program and make sure you have all of the required documents completed. After this is completed, your **Autism Funding Agreement** will be mailed to you within 2-4 weeks from the **Autism Funding Branch (AFB)**.

When you receive the **Autism Funding Agreement**, sign and return both copies, by mail, to the AFB within 2 weeks. It is recommended that you make a photocopy to keep for yourself.

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After receiving your two signed agreements, the AFB will send you a **"Welcome to Autism Funding"** letter outlining your available funding.

You are now ready to select your service providers. *See page 5 of this guide for more information.*

Register for My Family Services (MyFS) to manage your child's Autism Funding online and submit documents electronically at [gov.bc.ca/autismfunding](http://gov.bc.ca/autismfunding)

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After selecting your service providers, complete the **Request To Pay Service Provider/ Supplier (RTP) form** and submit it to the AFB (Remember to review the RTP(s) with your service provider(s) for accuracy).

You will receive a letter from the AFB confirming authorization details.

After providing service to your child, service providers submit their invoices to the AFB.

The AFB processes the invoice and pays your service provider directly.

If you have any questions, we're here to help: **1 844 878-4700** or [gov.bc.ca/autism](http://gov.bc.ca/autism)

# Finding My Team

## Hiring Service Providers

Autism Funding Programs encourage families to be in the driver's seat of their child's intervention program.

- ▶ Parents are responsible for finding and hiring service providers for their child.
- ▶ For children under the age of six, families must select professionals from the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP).
- ▶ The Autism Funding Branch is responsible for paying authorized invoices from those service providers.

## What is the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP)?

The RASP is a list of professionals whose education, training and experience qualify them to design and supervise the implementation of intensive, comprehensive, and effective treatment programs for young children with ASD.

There are four general types of professionals listed on the RASP:

- ▶ Behaviour Analysts/Consultants (BA/BC) (non-supervised and supervised)
- ▶ Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LP) (non-supervised and supervised)
- ▶ Occupational Therapists (OT) (non-supervised and supervised)
- ▶ Physical Therapists (PT)

To learn more about these professionals, please visit [gov.bc.ca/autism-rasp](http://gov.bc.ca/autism-rasp)

It is recommended that families of children age six and over also access the RASP to choose service providers as there is no equivalent listing for professionals working with children over age 6.

Behaviour Interventionists (BIs) are not listed on the RASP, but should be supervised by a RASP professional.



# Building and Maintaining a Strong Team For Your Child

An effective program for children with ASD requires a multidisciplinary team of qualified professionals who can work together with parents and family members.

For example, a team may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

- ▶ Behaviour Analyst and/or Behaviour Consultant
- ▶ Speech-Language Pathologist
- ▶ Occupational Therapist
- ▶ Physical Therapist
- ▶ Behaviour Interventionist
- ▶ Preschool or school personnel
- ▶ Extended family
- ▶ Physician
- ▶ Psychologist

## Building and Maintaining Strong Relationships With Your Team

It is important to understand the role of each person on your child's team to maintain a good working relationship.

- ▶ Know how much time they will spend with you and your child and what they charge for services
- ▶ Meet regularly with team members
- ▶ Review information recorded by team members
- ▶ Communicate your child's needs to the team
- ▶ Check to see whether your child is progressing and meeting their goals
- ▶ Treat team members with respect and encourage ongoing, positive communication between team members
- ▶ Regularly evaluate whether team members are a proper fit for your child

To learn more about what treatments with young children with ASD looks like visit [autismnavigator.com](http://autismnavigator.com)

You will find the **ASD Video Glossary** under the tab "Family Resources". You will need to create a free account and sign in to view videos. Call us for assistance: 1-844-878-4700.





# Developing a Behaviour Plan of Intervention (BPI)

A behaviour plan of intervention (BPI) is an individualized program that identifies goals designed for a specific child and focuses on determining 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, the school team, etc.).

Your BPI identifies the type of interventions that will be most effective for your child. The BPI also establishes a baseline that states "where your child is now" and looks towards "where you want to go." It acts as 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.

*Overall, it is recommended that all service providers involved with your child provide you with a plan for their intervention that outlines specific goals, strategies for attaining those goals, and a process to review and update the goals on a regular basis.*

## Finding the Right Professional

Choosing the right professional takes time. Here are some practical considerations to help you decide:

- ▶ Do not rush into hiring
- ▶ Take the time to meet face to face with a few professionals to find out what services and programs they offer and if they are a good fit for your child and family
- ▶ Find out the total costs that a service provider will charge before signing a contract or agreement
- ▶ Decide on a treatment approach that will work for your family and be cautious if a provider insists their approach works for all children
- ▶ Consider whether the service provider understands your family's priorities
- ▶ Ask about how many hours of direct intervention the program provides
- ▶ Consider how the professional will involve you and your family in your child's program
- ▶ Ask about how much direct support you and your family will receive so that you can learn to use new strategies to support your child in daily life



# Deciding Where Services Will Take Place

**In a home-based program**, consider how much time you can contribute to managing the people coming into your home to provide therapy.

**In a centre-based program**, consider your travel to the program, the setting and if therapy outside of your home is a better fit for your family.

**In an agency-based program** (i.e. the agency provides a packaged program either in your home or in a centre), consider the following:

- ▶ Ask who in the agency will work directly with your child
- ▶ Not all of an agency's staff may be listed on the RASP. If you wish to hire a professional through an agency, it's important to ask:
  - ▶ Who in the agency is qualified to be on the RASP and how will she/he provide services to your child?
  - ▶ What services are you purchasing from the agency?
  - ▶ Are the agency's services eligible for autism funding?
  - ▶ How does the agency ensure that all individuals working with your child are qualified and appropriately supervised?
  - ▶ How does the agency administer and bill for services?
- ▶ Agencies are not listed on the RASP, but many RASP professionals are affiliated with agencies.

To search the **Registry of Autism Service Providers** visit [gov.bc.ca/autism-rasp](http://gov.bc.ca/autism-rasp)



# Contracting With Service Providers

Since you are purchasing services for your child, you will want to be sure of exactly what you will be getting. This can be made clear by writing down the details and having your service providers sign that they agree. This would be considered your contract. Here are some details you could include:

- ▶ A description of the services and the cost of each
- ▶ Timelines and hours required and where the service will take place
- ▶ A statement about confidentiality and release of your information to protect your privacy. This should include how information about your child will be stored and returned to you at the end of service
- ▶ What to expect on your bill including hourly rates
- ▶ A statement that rates and hours can't be changed without your written consent
- ▶ What will be done about session cancellations
- ▶ Service start and end dates that match up with your child's autism funding period
- ▶ Terms of ending service

This is just a sample list. You can include whatever else you think is important for you and your service provider to agree upon.

## Keeping Track of Invoices

You can ask your service providers to share all their invoices with you before they submit them to the AFB for processing. You also have the option of contacting the AFB to request that all submitted invoices be signed by you before they are paid. You can contact the AFB at 1-877-777-3530.



# Therapy Approaches

The primary goal of treatment is to help every child reach his or her full potential.

Each child diagnosed with ASD is unique. For this reason, strategies need to be tailored to your child's individual strengths and needs. Overall, with early intervention and support, children with ASD can experience a high quality of life and well-being.

Treatment will also change over time and at any one point may involve:

- ▶ 1 to 1 therapy
- ▶ Home-based programs
- ▶ School-based programs
- ▶ Vocational/employment supports
- ▶ Skills-based programs
- ▶ Social programs
- ▶ Group-based programs
- ▶ Community/Recreation programs
- ▶ Complementary therapies that address your child's specific needs
- ▶ Or any combination of the above or other approaches

## What Approaches Work Best?

Research shows that there is no ONE approach that is 100% effective for all individuals with ASD.

But, approximately two-thirds of treatments proven to be effective in the literature are developed from behavioural theories and include the theoretical learning model of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA).

**Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)** is a science that involves systematically applying the principles of learning to bring about meaningful and positive change in social behaviours. For example, the principle of positive reinforcement tells us that behaviour that is followed by a reward will occur more often, so we use positive reinforcement to help individuals with autism learn new, important skills.

The **Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP)** list ensures that all professionals listed have education and experience in ABA with young children with ASD. It is important that all individuals working with your child have adequate training, experience in behavioural learning models and that Behaviour Interventionists are adequately supervised by professionals who have this training and experience.



# What Should My Child's Intervention Look Like?

## Key Components to Successful Programs:

- ▶ Individual programming to meet your child's unique strengths and needs
- ▶ Programming that is based on research/best practice and implemented by qualified and experienced professionals
- ▶ Regular, planned opportunities to interact with typically developing same-age peers
- ▶ Regular evaluation of the treatment plan to ensure that your child is meeting his or her goals and if not, treatment should be adjusted accordingly
- ▶ Family involvement that takes into account your family goals
- ▶ Multidisciplinary programming that targets the entire range of developmental domains including cognition, social, language, play and motor systems
- ▶ Programming that emphasizes learning in many different contexts, including typical daily interactions, experiences and routines
- ▶ Parent training and coaching opportunities with qualified professionals
- ▶ Supervision of front-line workers (e.g., Behaviour Interventionists –BIs) by qualified professionals and consultants
- ▶ Optimistic but realistic goals that are meaningful and age appropriate



# Program Planning for Toddlers and Preschoolers

## Your Team

Building a team to meet your child's individual needs can take time. Spending the time to speak with different providers to find the team to best work on goals for your child will pay off. The following suggestions are intended to help you build the best team for your unique child.

When selecting team members for your child it will be helpful to find out about all of their **training and qualifications**. Some things to consider include:

- ▶ What training and experience do they have in implementing Applied Behaviour Analysis intervention techniques
- ▶ Do they have any additional certification training that focuses on a child's early years?
- ▶ Some examples of early intervention certification programs for toddlers and preschoolers include:
  - ▶ The Early Start Denver Model (ESDM)
  - ▶ Pivotal Response Training (PRT)
  - ▶ Joint Attention, Symbolic Play, Engagement, and Regulation (JASPER)
  - ▶ Developmental, Individual Difference, Relationship-Based (DIR/Floortime), etc.
- ▶ How much training have all team members received in the intervention(s) they plan to use with your child?

The professionals you speak to should be able to answer your questions and provide you with information, in a way that makes sense to you, about how they plan to work with your child.

**You should not feel pressured to hire one professional over another;** take the time to speak to different people and understand how they plan to address the goals you have for your child.

## Goals to Consider: Core Areas of Intervention

When thinking about your child's early intervention, focus on the core skills your child needs to learn. Intervention should provide direct emphasis on the common areas of difficulty for young children with ASD. Think about your child's ability in each of these areas and set your goals accordingly. The common core areas of difficulty include:

- ▶ **Paying attention and coordinating attention with others** (e.g., looking towards a person when they are communicating; looking at an object when the adult is also looking at and talking about the same object)
- ▶ **Engaging in social play** (e.g., songs, turn taking games, etc.)
- ▶ **Reciprocal enjoyment** (e.g., social smiles) during social games and routine activities
- ▶ **Communicating** by using eye contact, gestures, sounds, and/or words
- ▶ **Imitating others** (e.g., imitating physical actions; imitating actions with objects)
- ▶ **Playing with toys** in the way they were intended (e.g., driving a car on a car mat instead of spinning the wheels of a car)

## Types of Intervention

Your child's early intervention program should be rooted in **Evidence-Based Practices** (sometimes referred to as EBPs) and individualized to your child's unique needs. Professionals should be able to speak to the research evidence supporting the intervention they plan on using.

You may want to consider:

- ▶ Professionals who individualize your child's treatment program based on best practices to suit your child's needs, instead of those who provide only one type of treatment for all children.
- ▶ There are many "name-brand" autism interventions. It is highly recommended that you take some time to **watch the 14 minute online video in the link below** describing the various types of interventions and the things you need to consider when selecting what is best for your child and family: [interactingwithautism.com/section/treating/overview](https://interactingwithautism.com/section/treating/overview)

## Active Family Involvement

**Parents and caregivers should be involved in intervention planning and implementation whenever possible.**

Well-designed goals and intervention strategies should also be carried out during daily routines (e.g., mealtimes, bath time, play time, while reading books, etc.).

For young children with ASD it is important to find a trained professional to **coach** you in using the intervention techniques during your natural routines so that you can better support your child's learning in daily life routines.

## Challenging Behaviours

Children with autism sometimes engage in challenging behaviours. Challenging behaviours should be addressed by qualified professionals with knowledge and experience in **Positive Behaviour Support**.

**Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)** combines the principles of **ABA** with those of other disciplines to decrease challenging behaviour, primarily by teaching new skills and making changes in a person's environment. PBS often focuses on understanding *why* challenging behaviour occur and then teaching new skills to replace those behaviours.



# Options for Hiring Service Providers For Your Team

Parents of children eligible for autism funding make the final decision on who to hire.

Parents can choose three options for hiring service providers:

## 1. Hiring Direct Employees

The parent becomes the direct employer. As an employer you will need to learn about how to comply with labour legislation which includes deducting employment related costs (e.g., income tax, CPP, EI).

## 2. Hiring Self-Employed Contractors

The parent enters into a contract with a self-employed contractor who is then responsible for their own employment-related costs. **Most parents choose this option.**

## 3. Hiring Agencies

The parent contracts with an agency. Agencies are independent businesses with their own staffing models of professional and non-professional staff. A parent will enter into a contract with an agency and the agency is responsible for their own employment related costs.

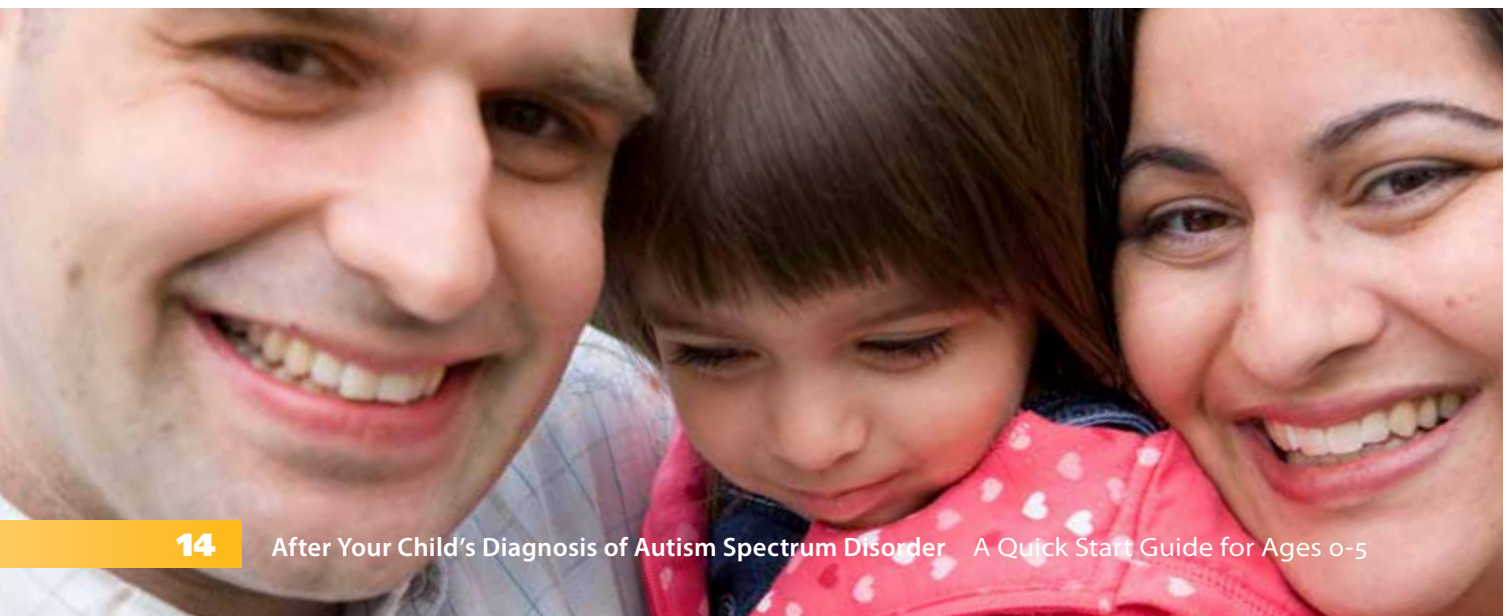
*A Parent's Handbook: Your Guide to Autism Programs is available in nine languages at [gov.bc.ca/autism-forms-resources](http://gov.bc.ca/autism-forms-resources)*

It is strongly recommended that you consider having a written agreement (contract) with all your service providers. *See page 9 of this guide for more information.*

A written contract outlines both the service provider's responsibilities, expected costs for service and the parents' obligations.

**Autism Information Services  
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We're Here to Help**

Visit [gov.bc.ca/autism](http://gov.bc.ca/autism) or call  
**1 844 878-4700**





# Who Can Help With the Paperwork?

## How to Contact the Autism Funding Branch (AFB)

The AFB has Customer Service Representatives who are there to help you.

- ▶ Office Hours: 8:30am – 4:30pm M-F (excluding statutory holidays)
- ▶ Phone: [250 387-3530](tel:2503873530)  
Greater Victoria Toll Free Line:  
[1 877 777-3530](tel:18777773530)
- ▶ Email: [MCF.AutismFundingUnit@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MCF.AutismFundingUnit@gov.bc.ca)
- ▶ Fax: [250 356-8578](tel:2503568578)
- ▶ **Autism Funding**  
P.O. Box 9776 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9S5
- ▶ My Family Services (MyFS) Support  
1-877-777-3530, select option 3  
Email: [SPS.ClientPortal@gov.bc.ca](mailto:SPS.ClientPortal@gov.bc.ca)

## Paying Your Service Provider

Once you have decided on your team, you will need to complete some forms in order to pay your service providers or purchase equipment or supplies. NOTE: forms to pay your service providers need to be completed and submitted each funding year.

## Find Forms at: [gov.bc.ca/autismfunding](http://gov.bc.ca/autismfunding)

The most commonly used forms include:

- ▶ **Request to Pay (RTP):** Use this form to indicate services, service providers or other eligible expenses that will be paid for out of your child's autism funding account
- ▶ **Request to Amend (RTA):** Use this form to request changes to a current authorization
- ▶ **Justification for Equipment/Supplies (JFE):** Use this form to request equipment and supplies required for your child's autism intervention, which must not exceed 20% of the annual funding
- ▶ **Reimbursement of Autism Expenses:** Use this form to request reimbursement for eligible expenses
- ▶ **Release of Information (ROI):** Use this form to authorize the Autism Funding Branch to disclose information about your child's autism funding to the person or people you specify

# How are My Service Providers Paid?

You and the service provider will each receive an authorization letter from the Autism Funding Branch (AFB) confirming that the service has been authorized. A billing number will be included.

Service providers invoice the AFB using the billing number after the services have been provided. The AFB will then pay service providers directly.

Families can ask service providers to share all invoices with them before submitting to AFB for processing. Families have the option of contacting the AFB to request that all submitted invoices be signed by the parent before they are paid.

# What Other Services Are Available in British Columbia?

MCFD **Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN)** Social Workers have specialized training and expertise to support families of children and youth with special needs.

Contact your CYSN Social Worker to find out about other respite and family support services and how you can access them. There are a variety of these services and your CYSN Social Worker can work with you to find the ones that fit the best for your child and family.

## Additional Financial Resources

### Provincial Funding

#### Child Care Subsidy

This is a program to assist eligible families with child care costs. If you are eligible for Child Care Subsidy and have a child designated with special needs, you may be eligible for the Special Needs Supplement.

For more information visit [childcare.gov.bc.ca](http://childcare.gov.bc.ca)

#### Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative

Contact Autism Information Services BC if you need assistance in learning about these or any other additional services or resources. Call [1 844 878-4700](tel:18448784700) or visit [gov.bc.ca/autism](http://gov.bc.ca/autism)

### Federal Government Funding

#### Disability Tax Credit

This is a tax credit that is not income tested that you can claim when you file your income tax every year.

#### Child Disability Benefit

This is a monthly tax-free benefit in addition to the Canada Child Tax Benefit available to all families. This benefit is income tested and available to families who care for a child under the age of 18 who is eligible for the Disability Tax Credit.

#### Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)

The RDSP is a federal initiative that helps parents save for the long term financial security of their child.

To receive and access the above federal programs, you will need a qualified professional to complete the T2201 Disability Tax Credit Certificate form and mail it to the Disability Tax Credit Unit at your tax centre.

# Support in the School System

For school-aged children, your Autism Funding is intended to cover a variety of services and resources *outside* of your child's school day.

Once children with ASD start school, they also benefit from the education programs and services that are available through the school system. School districts receive funding to provide in-school supports to children with extra learning needs.

Before your child starts to school, it is important to meet with your school team to start to plan for a successful transition. Once your child is in school, let the school team know about what services your child is receiving outside of school. Open communication with the school will allow the services between home and school to be collaborative and consistent.

## Additional School Resources

- ▶ **POPARD (Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders):** POPARD is a Ministry of Education service. It provides consultation, training and support services to all public and independent schools across BC, with a primary focus on increasing the capacity of school district staff to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). For more information, visit: [autismoutreach.ca](http://autismoutreach.ca)
- ▶ **SET-BC (Special Education Technology – BC):** SET-BC is a BC Ministry of Education Provincial Resource Program established to support inclusive practices by assisting school districts in utilizing technology with students whose access to the curriculum is restricted by physical, sensory, communication or learning challenges. SET-BC provides districts with three tiers of services: district-based professional learning support, classroom-based student learning support, and individual student-based complex needs support. Visit [setbc.org](http://setbc.org)

## Additional Public Resources

**Health Link BC** has navigators, registered nurses, dietitians, exercise professionals, and pharmacists who can provide information on these topics. Call 8-1-1 to speak with Health Link BC.

**Provincial Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (PDHHS)** is dedicated to supporting the diverse and multicultural goals of Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind individuals and their families within an ASL and English environment. Visit [gov.bc.ca/autism](http://gov.bc.ca/autism) for the link to PDHHS for more information.

**BC Early Years Centres** are hubs to access information on where to go, who to connect with and how to prepare for meetings with health professionals. Contact Autism Information Services BC (AIS BC) for details about your local BC Early Years Centre.

**Child Development Centres** offer programs designed to support parents in a family-centred environment. They can help with assessment and referrals to child development health professionals and with services and supports for children's growth, development and learning.

Visit [gov.bc.ca/autism](http://gov.bc.ca/autism) for the link to BC Association for Child Development and Intervention.

# Continue to Learn About Autism and Your Child & Connect With Other Parents

As children with ASD develop and grow, parents may need new strategies for behaviour intervention approaches.

Contact the following organizations to learn more about how to connect with other parents and find local workshops, conferences, information, tips, and research happening in your community and across B.C.

## Workshops, Training and Helpful Resources



**ACT – Autism Community Training –**  
[actcommunity.ca](http://actcommunity.ca)

ACT provides information and training relevant to the autism community internationally. The goal is to enable parents, professionals and para-professionals to support children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder to live productive, satisfying lives within their families and communities.

ACT provides a variety of live and online training.

To watch free on-line videos, click under the tab: “Autism Education”

ACT hosts the Autism Information Database (AID) and the BC Community Resources database.



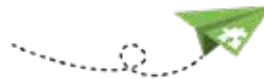
**Autism BC –** [autismbc.ca](http://autismbc.ca)

A parent based and directed society that has worked to provide support to British Columbians affected by autism since 1975. They provide information and support to families with live and online training events.



**CANUCKS AUTISM NETWORK**  
**Canuck Autism Network –**  
[canucksautism.ca](http://canucksautism.ca)

CAN provides year-round sports and recreation programs for children, teens, young adults and families living with autism, while increasing autism awareness and providing training in communities across British Columbia. In order to access programs, families can become CAN members for an annual fee of \$25 per individual.



**Pacific Autism**  
Family Network

**Pacific Autism Family Network (PAFN) –**  
[pacifiautismfamily.com](http://pacifiautismfamily.com)

PAFN’s core purpose is to be a Knowledge Centre: bringing together state of the art resources for research, information, learning, assessment, treatment and support; and building capacity to address the lifespan needs of individuals with ASD and related disorders.



**Autism Support Network of BC – [autismsupportbc.ca](http://autismsupportbc.ca)**

A parent-based organization that provides resources to families of those with ASD, including information, education and improved access to quality, scientifically-proven autism treatment.



**Family Support Institute of BC – [familysupportbc.com](http://familysupportbc.com)**

FSI provides information, training, and province-wide networking to assist families and their communities to build upon and share their strengths. Directed by families, FSI assists and supports families who have a family member with a disability by connecting them with local FSI Resource Families.



**Inclusion BC – [inclusionbc.org](http://inclusionbc.org)**

A provincial federation whose members include people with developmental disabilities, families and community agencies. Inclusion BC is dedicated to advancing rights, promoting abilities and building awareness as we work to support full citizenship for all.



**POPARD – [popard.ca](http://popard.ca)**

B.C.'s Ministry of Education funds Provincial Outreach Program for Autism & Related Disorders (POPARD) to provide a number of services at no or minimal cost to schools in B.C. POPARD offers courses in autism for education professionals and families.



Today I Met With:

My Child's  
Strengths Are:

Our Goals Are:

Services In My  
Community Are:

My Notes:





Autism Information Services  
British Columbia (AIS BC)  
***We're Here to Help***

*Call Toll-free* 1 844 878-4700

*In person* 3688 Cessna Drive Richmond, B.C.

*Website* [gov.bc.ca/autism](http://gov.bc.ca/autism)

*Email* [AutismInformation@gov.bc.ca](mailto:AutismInformation@gov.bc.ca)