

Your Child has received a Diagnosis of ASD: Handout for Physicians and NPs to Give to Families



Physicians and Nurse Practitioners can make referrals for a “**New Diagnosis Social Work Clinic**” at Niagara Children’s Centre after making a diagnosis of ASD. Our Social Workers will support families as they review the information in this handout and assist with next steps. Families can also self-refer after receiving a diagnosis outside of a Niagara Children’s Centre medical clinic by calling the Centre at 905-688-1890 ext. 110. If the diagnosis was made at Niagara Children’s Centre, the referral to the Social Work Clinic is automatic.

Your child’s new diagnosis will not change the services you are receiving or waiting for Niagara Children’s Centre (if applicable). In some cases, additional services or alternate clinicians may be recommended based on your child’s needs. Your services may change at various points (e.g. when beginning kindergarten), however clinicians will engage you in conversations about any changes.

Please visit the **Niagara Children’s Centre website**: <https://www.niagarachildrencentre.com/family-supports>

- [Parent Education and Support](#) opportunities & [Open Registration Events Calendar](#)
 - Financial Support workshops (Money Matters provides an overview of options and Paperwork Party offers support for completing financial applications)
- [Online Parent Support Group](#) (Closed Facebook Group accessible from the Centre’s Facebook page)
- [Parent Talk Support Group](#)
- [Family Mentorship Program](#)

Learn more about the **Ontario Autism Program (OAP)**. The OAP offers support to children and youth with a diagnosis of autism up to age 18. There are 5 service streams:

1. Foundational Family Services
2. Caregiver Mediated Early Years Programs (12-48 months of age)
3. Urgent Response Services
4. Core Clinical Services
5. Entry to School Program (3-6 years of age)

- **AccessOAP** is the intake organization that helps families access the supports and services of the Ontario Autism Program. AccessOAP includes an online portal and Care Coordinators that help families understand the services available to them. You must register with AccessOAP to obtain an Ontario Autism Program number and access OAP services. Registration options include phone, online or mail (see link above)
- **Register as soon as possible after you receive a diagnosis** (i.e. within days when possible). Some OAP service streams have age cut-offs, so delaying registering can result in not being eligible for certain programs. Additionally, your wait time for other OAP service streams starts when you receive an OAP number. Check your email frequently to find out if you qualify for **Caregiver-Mediated Services** (for children 12-48 months in age). Delays in your response could result in ineligibility. Emails will come from Ontario Autism Program or AccessOAP.
- **You can reach out to a Care Coordinator at AccessOAP** at any time to ask questions about registration with AccessOAP, obtaining an OAP number, and questions about OAP services.

Helpful Hint

Make a copy of your child’s diagnostic letter. It is recommended that you keep many copies of this letter as you may need it for additional applications in the future. You will need a copy to apply to the OAP.

Learn more here: <https://accessoap.ca/oap-services/>

Register your child with AccessOAP here: <https://accessoap.ca/for-families-new-to-the-oap/>

Your Child has received a Diagnosis of ASD: Handout for Physicians and NPs to Give to Families



Foundational Family Services are available to all families with a registration number from the OAP. These services are offered from multiple organizations across Ontario. You can access foundational family services from multiple organizations (virtually or in-person).

- Bethesda is within Niagara: <https://bethedaservices.com/en/youth/foundational-family-services> (you can access Bethesda's foundational services immediately without an OAP Registration number)
 - Social Workers will help connect families to Bethesda during "New Diagnosis Social Work Clinics"
- Other organizations: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-autism-program-foundational-family-services>

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES:

- Respite services are available through Bethesda: <https://bethedaservices.com/en/youth/autism-spectrum-disorder-respite-services>
- Autism Speaks 100 Day Kit for newly diagnosed children: <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/100-day-kit-young-children>
- Private OAP service providers in the area: <https://www.oaproviderlist.ca/search>
- Genetic testing options for children with ASD: https://www.bmc.org/sites/default/files/Patient_Care/Specialty_Care/GeneticTestingandAutism.pdf
- Ongoing research study recruitment: <https://pond-network.ca/ongoing-studies-and-recruitment/>

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR:

Diagnosis Letter Required/ Physician Signature NOT Required:

- The **Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities** program provides financial support for low to moderate income families to cover some of the extra costs of caring for a child who has a disability. Online application: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/assistance-children-severe-disabilities-program>
- The **Special Services at Home (SSAH)** program helps families who are caring for a child with a developmental or physical disability. Online application: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/special-services-home>

Physician Signature Required:

- The **Disability Tax Credit** (Revenue Canada Form TT201): A child with a prolonged impairment in physical or mental functions may be eligible for the disability tax credit (DTC). Once eligible for the DTC, the disability amount could be claimed on the return and you can claim certain deductions, credits, and benefits on your income tax. You will complete Part A of the DTC via your myCRA account. You will receive a reference code to send to your physician to complete Part B. Link to instructions: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/segments/tax-credits-deductions-persons-disabilities/disability-tax-credit/how-apply-dtc.html>
- **Easter Seals Incontinence Grant:** A child between the ages of 3 to 18 years of age with a valid Ontario health card & chronic disability resulting in irreversible incontinence or retention problems lasting longer than 6 months. More information here: <https://services.easterseals.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Incontinence-Supplies-Grant-Application-2020v2.pdf>