

# Children

While we try to teach our children all about life,  
our children teach us what life is all about.

Angela Schwindt

## Autism

Autism, or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is one of a group of 5 disorders that fall under the label of Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PPD).

These 5 disorders are Autism

- Autism
- Asperger's Syndrome
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PPD NOS)
- Rett's Disorder
- Childhood Disintegrative Disorder

Autism typically appears during the first three years of life, although with Asperger's Syndrome and High Functioning Autism, a diagnosis may not be made until the child is in the education system.

There is no known medical test for ASD. The diagnosis is made by a pediatrician or psychologist and is based on observations of the child's communication, social skills and general behaviour.



Although some signs and symptoms of children with ASD might be similar, no single learning approach or therapy can be applied to every child. Our programs are individualized to meet specific developmental needs to enable each child to reach his or her full potential.

We help families dealing with Autism through these programs:

### Autism Intervention Program

The Autism Intervention Program uses an Intensive Behavioral Intervention (IBI) approach to improve key learning skills in the key areas of cognitive, language and social development for children or youth with moderate to severe Autism. IBI is based on the scientific principals of Applied Behavior Analysis.

The program individualizes a comprehensive range of clinically appropriate goals targeting a broad range of developmental areas. Intervention is ordinarily provided intensely and requires between 20 and 40 hours of therapy per week. Children or youth who experience significant benefit will show increased readiness for participation in the educational and other community programs.

The program will support children or youth in their integration and generalization of gains from IBI into the school setting. Up to one year of transition support is available to assist this process.

### Behaviour Communication Therapy Services

Through parent coaching, Behaviour Communication Therapy Services teaches a child with ASD positive behaviours and appropriate skills. Through consultations with parents, Hands facilitators provide direct therapy through in-home coaching, develop behavioural protocols with parents and/or community team including a functional behaviour assessment.

A Hands facilitator who specializes in ASD coordinates programming between home, school and community, provides skills training sessions to small groups of children and adolescents, and provides education and prevention in-service on topics related to ASD behaviour.

### School Support Program – Autism Spectrum Disorder

The School Support Program provides consultations with school board staff to develop effective behavioural teaching methods to supports children with ASD in school. Training through conferences, workshops, and other resource materials are provided to school board staff to enhance knowledge of ASD and evidence-based practices.

The School Support program works collaboratively with school staff to ensure the most effective interventions and supports are implemented for children with ASD in the classroom and larger school setting.

Planning sessions are then facilitated with the school to develop a strategy to implement the newly learned effective behavioural teaching methods.



Hands

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