

# A Parent's Handbook

Your Guide to  
Autism Funding Programs



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

Ministry of Children  
and Family Development

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# INTRODUCTION

## What is autism spectrum disorder (ASD)?

Autism spectrum disorder or ASD is a neurological disorder that makes it difficult for people to understand what they see, hear or sense. ASD affects reasoning, social interaction and communication. It can affect the functioning and development of the brain and is usually evident before a child turns three years old. ASD is a spectrum disorder, which means there is a wide variation in how it affects children.

ASD occurs in approximately 1 in 167 children and is four to five times more common in boys than girls. The causes are still unknown. There is no medical test for ASD. Assessment and diagnosis should be multi-disciplinary and involve an experienced team of qualified diagnosticians.

Autism spectrum disorder is a general term that includes the following disorders: Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS), Rett's Disorder, and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder.

For now, there is no cure for ASD. There are, however, treatment and intervention methods available that can help individuals and their families manage the characteristics of this disorder. Many children with ASD can learn to communicate effectively, share in family life and attend school.



## Early Indicators of ASD

If you think your child may have autism spectrum disorder, take a look at the list below. Please note that these symptoms may also be the result of other special needs conditions and should be checked by a professional or specialist (see page 31).

The following may be some signs of autism spectrum disorder:

- Seems disinterested in sharing enjoyment with others.
- Does not speak, or uses very few words.
- Appears to understand very little.
- May seem deaf or doesn't respond when name is called.
- Unusual sensitivity to light or sound; for example, flickering lights or a vacuum cleaner can provoke uncontrolled screaming.
- May walk on his or her toes. When excited, may flap hands.
- May not make eye contact as other children do.
- May resist cuddles and hugs.
- Frequent tantrums when required to do anything new or when asked to change activities without advance warning.
- Does not point to show you interesting things.
- Does not engage in make-believe play.
- May line up toys and obsess on strange objects.
- Doesn't show objects to others.
- Doesn't look to where you are pointing.
- Likes things to be done the same way all the time.
- Exhibits loss of social, play or language skills.

## HOW DO I GET MY CHILD DIAGNOSED?

The first step in getting your child assessed for autism spectrum disorder is to make an appointment with your family doctor. Your doctor can refer you to a professional within the BC Autism Assessment Network to arrange for an assessment as close to your community as possible.



The BC Autism Assessment Network is made up of specialists and health-care professionals from around the province. The Provincial Health Services Authority, funded by the Ministry of Health Services, supports the network. Clinicians associated with the BC Autism Assessment Network provide diagnostic assessments for children who may have ASD in communities throughout B.C. Assessment services are available in each of the five health authorities. A multi-disciplinary assessment and diagnosis must be made by a pediatrician, child psychologist or registered psychologist, supported by additional assessments including an assessment by a speech-language pathologist (SLP).

Qualified Clinical Diagnostician	Supported by Additional Assessments by		
Pediatrician	Psychologist	SLP	
Child Psychiatrist	Psychologist	SLP	Pediatrician (for a medical assessment)
Psychologist		SLP	Pediatrician (for a medical assessment)

Private assessments are also accepted by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, but must meet certain criteria and include specific tests. The private assessment form is available at [www.phsa.ca/patients/autism.htm](http://www.phsa.ca/patients/autism.htm).

## AVAILABLE SERVICES

Early intervention may help children with ASD grow and develop in their homes, schools and communities. For this reason the primary intent of autism funding is to assist families to purchase intervention services for their child.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development offers a wide range of services to support and maintain the independence and integrity of BC's families.



The services which children and youth with ASD and other special needs may be eligible for include: the Infant Development Program, Supported Child Care, the At Home Program, respite, speech therapy, occupational therapy and more. The Autism Spectrum Disorder Parent Resource Directory, published by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, contains information on services offered by the various ministries that are available for children and adults with autism spectrum disorder.

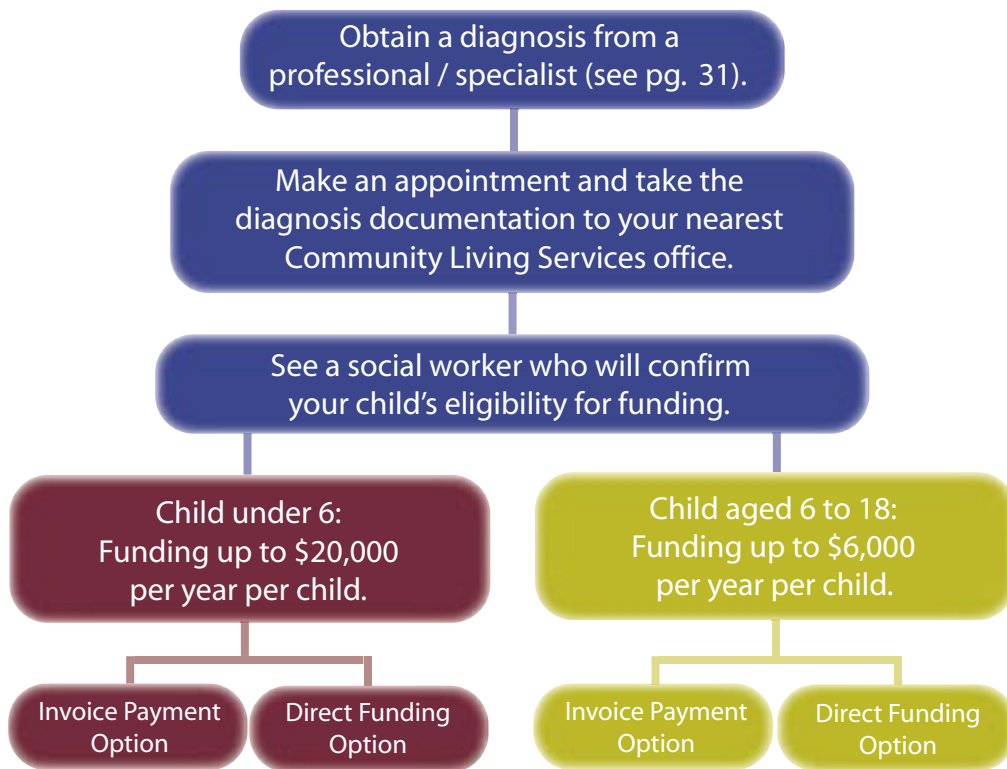
More information about available services as well as copies of the ASD Parent Resource Directory are available at your nearest Community Living Services office or on the ministry website at [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca). The ministry also contracts with a community agency to provide information kits on ASD and maintain a Qualified Service Providers List of professionals who have experience working with children and youth with ASD. A link to the Qualified Service Providers list is available at [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/).

NEXT PAGE

If your child has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, follow the diagram on the next page to find out how to access funding for services. The Ministry of Children and Family Development offers two funding programs (**Autism Funding: Under Age 6** and **Autism Funding: Ages 6-18**) and two funding options for each program (the Direct Funding Option and the Invoice Payment Option).

My child has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

## What should I do?



The details of these programs are described in the following pages:

- If your child is under 6, please refer to pages 7 -11.
- If your child is between 6 and 18 years old, please refer to pages 12 - 16.

## AUTISM FUNDING: Under Age 6

If you are eligible to receive Autism Funding: Under Age 6, you may purchase services from a behavioural consultant on the [Qualified Service Providers List](#) to first develop your child's behavioural plan of intervention (see page 30). After the behavioural plan of intervention has been developed you may purchase intervention services as described in the plan. The Autism Funding: Under Age 6 program allocates families up to \$20,000 per year per child to purchase autism intervention services and gives parents a choice as to how they will receive those dollars for their child.



More detailed information on the two funding options starts on page 19. A link to the [Qualified Service Providers List](#), maintained by a community service provider on contract with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, is available at [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/).

To ensure the delivery of quality intervention services, parents are asked to use this list to choose service providers for their child. But first, let's look at how to tell if your child is eligible.

### What should I bring to the eligibility interview?

Make an appointment for an eligibility interview with a social worker at your nearest Community Living Services office. The social worker will confirm whether your child is eligible for Autism Funding: Under Age 6. You will be required to fill out an Application for Autism Funding form with the social worker and also provide the following information:

#### TO BRING

- Your child's PANTER form (see page 31), which specifies his or her diagnosis, completed by either a pediatrician, neurologist, psychiatrist or registered psychologist.
- Birth Certificate as proof that your child is under age 6.
- A current B.C. Care Card as proof of residency in B.C.



## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

### What are my eligible expenses?

The primary intent of autism funding is to assist families with the cost of purchasing direct autism intervention. Parents may choose the type of behavioural treatment, as identified in the child's behavioural plan of intervention, that suits their child's needs and follows the Best Practice Guidelines (see page 18). Up to 20 per cent of the family's annual funding may be used to purchase training, travel and equipment related to autism intervention.



The social worker will also need to confirm that you are not participating in the Early Intensive Behavioural Intervention (EIBI) program and that you are not receiving any other government funding for autism treatment.

### FUNDING MAY BE USED TO PURCHASE THE FOLLOWING:

#### Intervention Services

- Behavioural consultants from the Qualified Service Providers List to design and develop the behavioural plan of intervention and provide clinical supervision.
- Behavioural interventionists (see page 29) who meet the minimum qualifications.
- Professionals/specialists (see page 31) from the Qualified Service Providers List.
- Employer's portion of any applicable Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, and Workers' Compensation Board premiums and 4% vacation pay.

## Administrative Expenses and Fees\*

\* Only eligible if choosing the Direct Funding Option.

- Employment-related expenses if families have an employer/employee relationship with service providers. These include employee income tax, Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, and Workers' Compensation Board premiums.
- GST and PST on eligible expenses.
- A bookkeeper, accountant or agency to assist with payroll and completing financial statements. Eligible administrative expenses include those incurred by another individual or agency for payroll administration.
- Record keeping required under the funding agreement.
- Bank charges related to the account established in trust for the child.

*Note: The maximum amount that can be paid towards administration expenses and fees each month is \$100, not including employment-related expenses (e.g., WCB, EI) or GST and PST.*

## Travel, Training and Equipment

- Autism-specific training within British Columbia for parents or service providers and related travel costs.
- Travel costs to access autism intervention. Families unable to access service providers in their community may claim expenses for the most cost-effective method of receiving services as close to their home as possible. Options may include travel to the service provider or bringing the service provider to the community.
- Families who travel with their own private vehicle may claim a travel allowance of up to \$0.40 per kilometre if the round trip exceeds 80 kilometres and the travel is specifically related to accessing autism intervention or training within B.C.
- Recommended equipment and materials related to intervention, not including regular educational supplies. See the following page for guidelines.

*Note: The combined total of travel, training and equipment expenses must not exceed 20 per cent of total funding.*

Families may want to consider pooling funds with other families to increase the cost-effectiveness of travel and training options.

## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

### Travel, Training and Equipment (cont'd from page 9)

#### EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES:

- Equipment must be recommended in writing by a professional/specialist (see page 31) as necessary for effective intervention and must be consistent with intervention recommended in the child's behavioural plan of intervention. The written recommendation must explain the outcomes that the recommended equipment will help achieve.
- Other avenues of funding for equipment purchases or loans must be explored, and purchases must not duplicate those that would be approved under SET-BC, the At Home Program, or other agencies providing equipment.
- Where possible, the child should use equipment available from other sources (e.g., loaner equipment, equipment in the pre-school setting, etc.).

Please call the Autism Funds Processing Unit at (250) 387-3530 or toll-free at 1 (877) 777-3530 for information regarding reimbursement for travel, training and equipment.

## Exceptional Expenses

As stated previously, the primary intent of funding is to assist families with the cost of purchasing direct autism intervention. However, a parent may use funds for exceptional expenses with prior written approval of the Community Living Services manager.

Community Living Services managers will review requests for exceptional expenses on a case-by-case basis. All requests for consideration must include a written recommendation from a professional/specialist (see page 31) indicating that the recommended item or service is essential for effective autism intervention. No additional funding over and above the maximum \$20,000 annually will be provided for exceptional expenses.

Families must provide the written recommendation from a professional/specialist and the written approval from the Community Living Services manager when submitting expense records and receipts. Please note, pre-school enrollment fees are not an eligible expense.

If you are applying for funding for the first time, complete the **Application For Autism Funding** form. For a comprehensive explanation and comparison of each funding option, turn to page 19 of this booklet.

## AUTISM FUNDING: Ages 6 to 18

If you are receiving Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 you may purchase autism intervention services as recommended by a professional/specialist (see page 31). Autism funding is intended for intervention in addition to a child's school services, but not during a child's educational program. The Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 program allocates families up to \$6,000 per year per child to purchase autism intervention services and gives parents a choice as to how they will receive those dollars for their child. More detailed information on the two funding options for Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 begins on page 19. But first, let's look at how to tell if your child is eligible.

### What should I bring to the eligibility interview?

Make an appointment for an eligibility interview with a social worker at your nearest Community Living Services office. The social worker will confirm whether your child is eligible for Autism Funding: Ages 6-18. You will be required to fill out an Application For Autism Funding form with the social worker and also provide the following information:

#### TO BRING

- If your child was diagnosed with ASD prior to April 1, 2004: Confirmation of Diagnosis form completed by either a pediatrician, neurologist, psychiatrist or registered psychologist.
- If your child was diagnosed after April 1, 2004: PANTER form completed by either a pediatrician, neurologist, psychiatrist or registered psychologist.
- Birth Certificate as proof that your child is between ages 6 and 18.
- A current B.C. Care Card as proof of residency in B.C.

If you were receiving autism funding from the under 6 program or the EIBI program, you do not need to reapply, but you must ensure that a behavioural plan of intervention is on file. The social worker will also need to confirm that you are not receiving any other government funding for autism intervention services.

## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES



### What are my eligible expenses?

The primary intent of autism funding is to assist families with the cost of purchasing direct autism intervention. Using the Best Practice Guidelines (see page 18) as a reference, parents choose the type of treatment and intervention that suits their child's needs. Up to 20 per cent of the family's annual funding allocation may be used to purchase training, travel or equipment related to autism intervention.

### FUNDING MAY BE USED TO PURCHASE THE FOLLOWING:

#### Intervention Services

- Behavioural consultants to develop or update the child's behavioural plan of intervention.
- Behavioural interventionists who meet minimum qualifications (see page 29).
- Professionals/specialists (see page 31) or service provider agencies employing professionals/specialists and/or behavioural interventionists.
- Employer's portion of any applicable Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, and Workers' Compensation Board premiums and 4% vacation pay.
- Dietary or nutritional counselling from a registered dietitian/nutritionist or physician.
- Family counselling therapy.
- Out-of-school learning support/tutoring that is not part of the regular school program.
- Life/social skills trainer or group facilitator.
- General enrolment fees for specialized, therapeutic recreational activities, out-of-school programs and camp fees, where programming is designed specifically to meet the child's ASD needs and interventions are appropriate.
- Other interventions recommended by a professional/specialist.

## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

### Administrative Expenses and Fees\*

*\* Only eligible if choosing the Direct Funding Option.*

- Employment-related expenses if families have an employer/employee relationship with service providers. These include employee income tax, Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, and Workers' Compensation Board premiums.
- GST and PST on eligible expenses.
- A bookkeeper, accountant or agency to assist with payroll and completing financial statements. Eligible administrative expenses include those incurred by another individual or agency for payroll administration.
- Record keeping required under the funding agreement.
- Bank charges related to the account established in trust for the child.

*Note: The maximum amount that can be paid towards administration expenses and fees each month is \$50, not including employment-related expenses (e.g., WCB, EI) or GST and PST.*

### Travel, Training and Equipment

- Autism-specific training within British Columbia for parents or service providers and related travel costs.
- Travel costs to access autism intervention. Families unable to access service providers in their community may claim expenses for the most cost-effective method of receiving services as close to their home as possible. Options may include travel to the service provider or bringing the service provider to the community.
- Families who travel with their own private vehicle may claim a travel allowance of up to \$0.40 per kilometre if the round trip exceeds 80 kilometres, and the travel is specifically related to accessing autism intervention or training within B.C.
- Recommended equipment and materials related to intervention. This does not include regular educational supplies. See the following page for guidelines.

*Note: The combined total of travel, training and equipment expenses must not exceed 20 per cent of total funding.*

Families may want to consider pooling funds with other families to increase the cost-effectiveness of travel and training options.

## Travel, Training and Equipment (cont'd from page 14)

### EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES:

- Equipment must be recommended in writing by a professional/specialist (see page 31) as necessary for effective intervention and must be consistent with intervention recommended in the child's behavioural plan of intervention or in the Intervention Options section of either the PANTER or Confirmation of Diagnosis forms. The written recommendation must explain the outcomes that the recommended equipment will help achieve.
- Other avenues of funding for equipment purchases or loans must be explored and purchases must not duplicate those that would be approved under SET-BC, the At Home Program or other agencies providing equipment.
- Where possible, the child should use equipment available from other sources (e.g., loaner equipment, equipment in the pre-school setting, etc.).

Please call the Autism Funds Processing Unit at (250) 387-3530 or toll-free at 1 (877) 777-3530 for information regarding reimbursement for travel, training and equipment.



## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

### Exceptional Expenses

As stated previously, the primary intent of funding is to assist families with the cost of purchasing direct autism intervention. However, a parent may use funds for exceptional expenses with prior written approval of the Community Living Services manager.

Community Living Services managers will review requests for exceptional expenses on a case-by-case basis. All requests for consideration must include a written recommendation from a professional/specialist (see page 31) indicating that the recommended item or service is essential for effective autism intervention.

No additional funding over and above the maximum \$6,000 annually will be provided for exceptional expenses. Families must provide the written recommendation from a professional/specialist and the written approval from the Community Living Services manager when submitting expense records and receipts.

If you are applying for funding for the first time, complete the **Application For Autism Funding** form. For a comprehensive explanation and comparison of each funding option, turn to page 19 of this booklet.

## EARLY INTENSIVE BEHAVIOURAL INTERVENTION

The Early Intensive Behavioural Intervention (EIBI) program is delivered by three service-provider agencies. These agencies provide early intervention services to 75 children under 6 years of age in eight BC communities.

These communities include:

- Thompson Okanagan Autism Program (Kelowna, Penticton, Vernon and Kamloops);
- Delta Association for Child Development – The Early Intensive Behavioural Intervention Program (Surrey, Delta and Langley);
- Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health – Autism Early Intervention Program (Greater Victoria).

Early intervention may help children with ASD grow and develop in their homes, schools and communities.



If you would like to find out if your child is eligible for EIBI, make an appointment for an eligibility interview with a social worker at your nearest Community Living Services office. You will be required to fill out an Application For Autism Funding form with the social worker and also provide the following:

TO BRING

- Your child's diagnosis form (PANTER form) that the professional/specialist (see page 31) has completed. The form confirms that a multi-disciplinary assessment has been completed and that your child has ASD.
- Birth Certificate as proof that your child is under age 6.
- A current B.C. Care Card as proof of residency in B.C.

It is important to note that this program may have a waitlist, since it only accepts 25 children at a time in each of the three programs. Also, if your child is receiving funding and service through the Autism Funding: Under Age 6 program, he or she will not be eligible for EIBI. You may, however, choose to place your child on the EIBI waitlist and, while waiting, receive Autism Funding: Under Age 6.

## What if I am a foster parent?

If you are fostering a child who has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, you can work with your Community Living Services social worker to purchase services for your child. Make an appointment with your child's social worker, who will be pleased to explain the various funding and intervention options to you.



## How do I know my child is receiving quality intervention?

It's important to ensure your child is receiving high-quality intervention. A comprehensive intervention program should be based on Best Practice Guidelines, which include:

### BEST PRACTICES

- Intensive, direct one-to-one intervention at home, in pre-school programs and in a variety of community settings on a year-round basis. (Note: preschool enrollment fees are not an eligible expense for Autism Funding: Under Age 6).
- Highly supportive, structured teaching methods, based on the principles of applied behaviour analysis (ABA), that incorporate a variety of strategies to facilitate efficient skill acquisition, generalization and maintenance.
- Using functional assessment and positive behavioural support techniques for supporting children with problem behaviours.
- Development of an individualized plan of intervention.
- Use of multiple, integrated therapies, such as speech-language pathology, occupational therapy and physical therapy.
- Integration with typical children in preschool/daycare settings (Note: preschool enrollment fees are not an eligible expense for Autism Funding: Under Age 6).
- Family involvement in training and in the development, implementation and review of intervention and service plans.
- Transition planning from preschool to kindergarten.
- Trained staff.
- Monitoring and continual evaluation.

## FUNDING OPTIONS

As mentioned previously, there are two funding programs (Autism Funding: Under Age 6 and Autism Funding: Ages 6-18) and two funding options for each of these programs (the Invoice Payment Option or the Direct Funding Option). No matter which funding option you choose, the following terms and conditions will apply.

### **Terms & Conditions:**

- 1) The program funding for each year ends and may be renewed at the end of the month of the child's birthday.
- 2) The program funding ends and the child is no longer eligible for this program:
  - at the end of the month of the child's sixth or nineteenth birthday;
  - if the child is receiving other contracted autism services such as EIBI or any other government funding for autism intervention treatment;
  - when the parent or child are no longer eligible to receive funds;
  - when the child no longer lives in British Columbia.

### **The Invoice Payment Option**

When parents choose the Invoice Payment Option, an amount of funding (up to \$20,000 for children under age 6, or up to \$6,000 for children ages 6-18) is set aside and held by government. The funds are available for parents to use for autism intervention services. Funds are renewed at the end of the month of the child's birth date as long as he/she is eligible to receive funding. Parents choose the services they need and the ministry pays the service provider directly.

The Autism Funds Processing Unit will administer your funds and give you authorization to spend these funds. They will send a letter to both you and your service provider that includes a billing number that must be put on any invoice submitted to the ministry for services your child has received.

With the Invoice Payment Option, parents remain responsible for employment-related expenses, such as WCB and EI, where there is an employer/employee relationship. The ministry cannot make these payments on behalf of parents but can reimburse parents for these expenses.

## FUNDING OPTIONS

### The Direct Funding Option

The Direct Funding Option provides funding directly to families through a funding agreement. Families, in turn, pay for intervention services using these funds. With this option you will be required to enter into a legal contract known as a funding agreement with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. All terms and conditions of this agreement must be met to ensure the most efficient and effective use of public funds and that your child is receiving the highest quality of intervention possible. For more information on the Direct Funding Agreement, turn to page 26.

Parents are also expected to maintain an account in which funds can be held in trust for their child. Parents must also hire and pay service providers, be responsible for any employer/employee relationship with service providers and report expenses on a regular basis to the Autism Funds Processing Unit.

Please note that you may switch over to the Invoice Payment Option from the Direct Funding Option at any time by contacting your social worker and requesting cancellation of the Direct Funding Agreement. The social worker will then work with you to complete the necessary forms for the Invoice Payment Option and ensure that you have met all the terms and conditions of the previous funding agreement.



## What are my parental responsibilities with each funding option?

Each funding option has different parental responsibilities. If you take a look at the chart below, you'll see what you are required to do as a parent, depending on which option you choose. The Invoice Payment Option is a new funding option created in response to requests from many families who have found the Direct Funding Option too time consuming or too difficult to manage.

INVOICE PAYMENT OPTION	DIRECT FUNDING OPTION
<p><b>Funding</b>                      Up to \$20,000 annually (under 6)                      Up to \$6,000 annually (ages 6-18)</p>	<p>Up to \$20,000 annually (under 6)                      Up to \$6,000 annually (ages 6-18)</p>
<p><b>Flexibility</b>                      Same choice and flexibility for families</p>	<p>Same choice and flexibility for families</p>

### Parental Responsibilities

(For both Autism Funding: Under Age 6 and Autism Funding: Ages 6-18)

1. Manage Service Providers:

- Select professionals/specialists (see page 31) as service providers. If your child is under 6, you must choose service providers from the Qualified Service Provider List (see page 31).
- Select a behavioural interventionist, ensuring minimum qualifications are met.

1. Manage Service Providers:

- Select professionals/specialists (see page 31) as service providers. If your child is under 6, you must choose service providers from the Qualified Service Provider List (see page 31).
- Select a behavioural interventionist, ensuring minimum qualifications are met.

# FUNDING OPTIONS

## INVOICE PAYMENT OPTION

## DIRECT FUNDING OPTION

### Parental Responsibilities

(For both Autism Funding: Under Age 6 and Autism Funding: Ages 6-18)

- Ensure all service providers have a clear criminal record check.
- Mail or fax a Request to Pay Service Providers/Suppliers form to the Autism Funds Processing Unit to obtain a billing number (see page 34 for fax number and address).
- Recruit, hire/terminate, train and schedule service providers.
- Determine whether there will be an employee/employer relationship with the service provider or whether the service provider will be an independent contractor.
- Comply with the Employment Standards Act, Worker's Compensation Act, Human Rights Act, Employment Insurance Act, Income Tax Act, or Canada Pension Act, or similar laws to which they may be subject.
- Pay all taxes, fees and assessments due under employment laws listed in the previous point.
- Address insurance and other liability requirements.

- Ensure all service providers have a clear criminal record check.
- Recruit, hire/terminate, train, schedule and pay service providers.
- Determine whether there will be an employee/employer relationship with the service provider or whether the service provider will be an independent contractor.
- Comply with the Employment Standards Act, Workers' Compensation Act, Human Rights Act, Employment Insurance Act, Income Tax Act or Canada Pension Act, or similar laws to which they may be subject.
- Pay all taxes, fees and assessments due under employment laws listed above.
- Address insurance and other liability requirements.
- Keep all employment records and a list of services purchased.

## INVOICE PAYMENT OPTION

## DIRECT FUNDING OPTION

### Parental Responsibilities Cont'd

(For both Autism Funding: Under Age 6 and Autism Funding: Ages 6-18)

- Take the billing authorization number included in the letter you will receive from the Autism Funds Processing Unit and put it on the invoice.
- Sign the service-provider invoice.
- Invoice the ministry directly for travel, training and equipment costs.

#### 2. No administration of funds.

- One of the benefits of the Invoice Payment Option is that there is no need for parents to administer the funds, as this is handled by the ministry.

- Submit a completed and signed funding agreement and all documentation of eligibility to the local MCFD Community Living Services office.

#### 2. Administer Funds:

- Maintain a separate bank account in trust for your child (see page 25).
- Maintain financial records, including invoices, receipts and bank statements.
- Record services purchased with Autism Funding: Under Age 6 or Autism Funding: Ages 6-18.
- Submit monthly expense records (every month for Autism Funding: Under Age 6 and every three months for Autism Funding: Ages 6-18) including: reports, original receipts, invoices and bank statements.



# FUNDING OPTIONS

## INVOICE PAYMENT OPTION

## DIRECT FUNDING OPTION

### Parental Responsibilities Cont'd

(For both Autism Funding: Under Age 6 and Autism Funding: Ages 6-18)

#### 3. Ministry Notification:

- Notify MCFD within 30 days when the parent's address changes, the child is for any reason no longer in the parent's care or custody, or there is a change in circumstances that may eliminate or reduce the need for funding.

- Mail expense records to:  
Autism Funds Processing Unit  
P.O. Box 9776  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8W 9S5
- Retain copies of all of the above for personal files or auditing purposes.
- Submit a final financial statement within 60 days of the end of the funding agreement.

#### 3. Ministry Notification:

- Notify MCFD within 30 days when the parent's address changes, the child is no longer in the parent's care or custody, or there is a change in circumstances that eliminates or reduces the need for funding.
- Return any unused funding at the end of the funding agreement to MCFD. If funds are not returned, they will be deducted from any new agreement. There is no provision for over-expenditure.

## INVOICE PAYMENT OPTION

## DIRECT FUNDING OPTION

### Parental Responsibilities Cont'd

(For both Autism Funding: Under Age 6 and Autism Funding: Ages 6-18)

4. No requirement to open or maintain a bank account in trust for the child.

4. Open and maintain a bank account in trust for the child:

- Families are required to set up a bank account that is held in trust for the child with one or both parents as signing authority on the account. This will ensure easy accounting records and protect the funds from bankruptcy or garnishee claims.

- While financial institutions may differ in their view of the type of account required, the key is the creation of a separate account designated by the parent and bank as a trust for the child.

- Only Autism Funding: Under Age 6 or Autism Funding: Ages 6-18 direct funds will be deposited in this account, and only funds being used to pay eligible expenses withdrawn. A letter to financial institutions from MCFD to explain the account is available at: [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/).

## Understanding the Direct Funding Agreement

If you choose the Direct Funding Option, you will be asked to sign a Direct Funding Agreement with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. This agreement is a legal document with terms and conditions that must be met in order for you to receive autism intervention funding for your child. Direct funding payments are made on a monthly basis for Autism Funding: Under Age 6 and every three months for Autism Funding: Ages 6 - 18. Payments will be temporarily withheld whenever autism funding payments exceed the total expenses reported on your Schedule B by \$3,400.00 for Autism Funding: Under Age 6 and \$1,000.00 for Autism Funding: Ages 6 - 18. Payments will resume once your Schedule B shows that there is less than the applicable amount (\$3,400.00 or \$1,000.00) held in the account.

It's important to understand how this agreement works. Here is a list of the things you should do as you make your way through the agreement:

1. Receive the Direct Funding Agreement from your social worker and read it thoroughly. Become familiar with the terms and conditions in the agreement and understand what your responsibilities are with regard to the agreement.
2. Schedule A – This is page three of the agreement. Read this page thoroughly. This is the part of the agreement that states how much your family will receive on your child's behalf and when the payments will be made to you.
3. Schedule B: Monthly Expense Reports – This section of the agreement consists of two pages. The first page explains how to fill out the Schedule B expense form that is on the next page of the agreement. It is important to become familiar with these forms, as you will be required to submit them to the Province once a month if your child is under 6, or every three months if your child is between 6-18.

For a detailed guide of how to compile your expense report, please refer to the information on the next two pages.

# DIRECT FUNDING: Expense Reports

## Filling out Expense Reports

You only need to send in expense reports if you have chosen the Direct Funding Option for your child. If you have chosen this option, please look carefully at your funding agreement. Schedule B of your agreement is a monthly expense report form. Additional forms can be printed from [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/).

If your child is under 6, you will need to submit a Schedule B form every month. If your child is between 6 and 18 years of age, you will need to fill out the form each month but submit them, three at a time, every three months.

You should save and then submit bank statements, reports, original invoices and receipts for all eligible expenses. Once you've collected your receipts for one month, make a photocopy of them and retain them in your personal files.

## Schedule B

Next, take the Schedule B expense form from your funding agreement and begin to fill it in. There are two sections on this form. In section 1, list all services purchased from a service provider. In section 2, list all other eligible expenses, such as travel, training, equipment and supplies.

### In Section 1:

Include information on the kind of service you have purchased (i.e., speech language pathologist, nutritionist, etc.) and the month you purchased it. These services must have been recommended by a professional/specialist (see page 31) on the interventions options form for ages 6-18 or on the behavioural plan of intervention for under age 6. They must also be used to alleviate the condition of autism spectrum disorder, or be used as part of a plan of intervention developed by a behavioural consultant (see page 29).

## DIRECT FUNDING: Expense Reports

In Section 2:

List all eligible expenses, such as travel, training, equipment and supplies.

**Travel:** Indicate in the first column that the “type of expense” is travel. In the second column, state the purpose for the travel. Attach a separate sheet outlining the cost of transportation (i.e., gas, airfare, etc.) and hotel rate (if applicable). Enter the total amount paid and date of payment, then sign your name.

**Training/conference attendance:** Indicate in the first column that the “type of expense” is training/conference attendance. In the second column, include the name of the training/conference. In the columns on the far right, include the total amount paid and the date of the payment, then sign your name at the bottom.

**Equipment or materials:** Indicate in the first column that the “type of expense” is equipment or materials. In the next column, include the name of the item purchased. In the far right columns, put the cost of the expense and the date of payment, then sign your name at the bottom. Make sure you attach a letter from a professional/specialist (see page 31) that explains how the equipment or materials will benefit your child in alleviating the condition of autism spectrum disorder.

Now attach all the original receipts to your expense form and mail the whole package to:

Autism Funds Processing Unit  
Autism Funding Programs  
P.O. Box 9776  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8W 9S5

Just a reminder: Please be sure to submit your expense reports on time to continue to receive funding.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)** — Includes Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS), Rett's Disorder, and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder.

**Behavioural consultant** — Refers to the person responsible for the design and development of the child's behavioural plan of intervention and for the ongoing supervision of that plan.

Minimum qualifications for behavioural consultants to develop a behavioural plan of intervention for children under 6 include:

- Registered Psychologist, Master's of Education, Speech-Language Pathologist eligible for certification with the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) and registration with the BC Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (BCASLPA), or Master's Degree in a closely related field. Must have a strong behavioural background working with young children with ASD, and knowledge and experience with Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) as it relates to the treatment of children with autism spectrum disorder.
- OR completion of a training or apprenticeship program (certification, degree, diploma) under the supervision of an individual with the above qualifications and who has several years direct experience designing and implementing behavioural treatment programs for young children with ASD.
- Must have a clear criminal record check.

**Behavioural interventionist** — Refers to a person of the parent's choice, such as a child care worker, who works with the child to achieve goals ideally set out by a behavioural consultant. This person usually works one-on-one with your child and ideally has experience with children with autism spectrum disorder. This person must be 19 years or older and have a clear criminal record check.



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Behavioural plan of intervention** — A plan developed by a qualified behavioural consultant, with parental input, that promotes developmental growth with both broad and specific goals related to improving daily living skills and increasing independence in a social or school environment. The plan is used by a family in deciding what services are needed and what goals should be reached through those services.

**Best Practice Guidelines** — Methods proven in research to be the most effective in helping young children with ASD to develop critical communication, play, social, self-care and other skills (see page 18).

**Multi-disciplinary assessment and diagnosis** — A clinical diagnosis by a pediatrician, child psychiatrist or registered psychologist that consists of:

1. The clinical diagnostic assessment (CDA), which includes the following components:
  - history from multiple sources, including interviews with a caregiver and other involved professionals;
  - consultation with professionals from other disciplines;
  - an evaluation of developmental level, based on history and examination, or formal measure;
  - a standardized ASD diagnostic interview (ADI) with the primary caregiver(s); and
  - a standardized observation of social and communicative behaviour and play (ADOS).
2. In addition, the information from the CDA must also be integrated with results from a recent comprehensive multi-disciplinary assessment, that includes the following:
  - a psychological assessment of cognitive level and adaptive functioning;
  - a comprehensive speech-language-communication evaluation;
  - a comprehensive medical evaluation, which may include a detailed physical exam and appropriate laboratory investigations.

**PANTER form** — Your child’s diagnosis form, which must be completed by a pediatrician, neurologist, psychiatrist or registered psychologist. This form confirms that a multidisciplinary assessment has been completed and that your child has autism spectrum disorder.

**Parent** — The child’s parent or legal guardian, having primary care or custody.

**Province** — The Province of British Columbia, represented by the Minister of Children and Family Development, and the Deputy Minister and any person authorized to act on his/her behalf.

**Professionals/ specialists** — Refers to behavioural consultants, physiotherapists, speech language therapists or occupational therapists.

**Qualified Service Providers List** — The list identifies qualified service providers for hire by parents of children with autism spectrum disorder who are 6 or younger and is maintained by a community service provider under contract with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. A link to the list is available at [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/).

**Resident** — The Medicare Protection Act definition of a “resident” means a person who:

1. Is a citizen of Canada or is lawfully admitted to Canada for permanent residence.
2. Makes his or her home in British Columbia.
3. Is physically present in British Columbia at least 6 months in a calendar year.
4. Is deemed under the regulation to be a resident (does not include a tourist or visitor to British Columbia).

**Therapist** — Refers to a person who is either a speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist or physical therapist; is qualified and licensed to practice in British Columbia; and has a clear criminal record check.



## B.C. SERVICE & AUTISM ORGANIZATIONS

### ACT – Autism Community Training Society

A not-for-profit society providing information and training on a wide range of autism-related topics.

Phone: (604) 205-5467 or

Toll Free: 1 (866) 939-5188

Email: [actbc@shaw.ca](mailto:actbc@shaw.ca)

Web: [www.actbc.ca](http://www.actbc.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.

Phone: (604) 434-0880 (lower mainland)

Toll Free: 1 (888) 437-0880

Web: [www.autismbc.ca](http://www.autismbc.ca)

### BC Autism Assessment Network (BCAAN) - Provincial Health Authority on Autism

Information on assessment/diagnosis of children who may have autism spectrum disorder.

Phone: (604) 453-8343

E-mail: [autism@phsa.ca](mailto:autism@phsa.ca)

Web: [www.phsa.ca/AgenciesServices/services/autism.htm](http://www.phsa.ca/AgenciesServices/services/autism.htm)

### BC Ministry of Health

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

Phone: (250) 952-1742

Toll Free: 1 (800) 465-4911 (in B.C.)

Web: [www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/cpa/publications/asd\\_standards\\_0318.pdf](http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/cpa/publications/asd_standards_0318.pdf)

### The Knowledge Network

Information about treatment options available in B.C.

Web: [www.knowledgenetwork.ca/know\\_tool/autism/index.html](http://www.knowledgenetwork.ca/know_tool/autism/index.html)

### 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.

Web: [www.featbc.org/](http://www.featbc.org/)

### Family Support Institute

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

Phone: (604) 875-1119

Fax: (604) 875-6744

Email: [fsi@bcacl.org](mailto:fsi@bcacl.org)

Web: [www.familysupportbc.com](http://www.familysupportbc.com)

### Ministry of Children and Family Development – Autism Initiatives Branch

Information on autism funding.

Web: [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm)

### Ministry of Education – Special Education: Autism

Information on special education programs and autism initiatives.

Web: [www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/#Autism](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/#Autism)

### Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders

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.pop.deltasd.bc.ca/](http://www.pop.deltasd.bc.ca/)

### Victoria Society for Children with Autism (VSCA)

A forum for parents and professionals to communicate on issues surrounding autism and a network for family support.

Phone: (250) 818-4662

Fax: (250) 361-1300

Web: [www.victoriaautismsociety.com](http://www.victoriaautismsociety.com)

## CONTACT US

We're here to help and want to make sure you have the best information possible. This will ensure your child receives the quality care he or she needs to grow and develop at home, in school and in the community.

If you have questions regarding eligible expenses, monthly reporting of expenses, or other issues concerning Autism Funding: Under Age 6 or Autism Funding: Ages 6-18, please call us. If you have any further questions or concerns, or would like to locate the Community Living Services office nearest you, contact us through our website or by email and we will be happy to assist you.

Toll Free: 1 (877) 777-3530

Local: (250) 387-3530

Fax: (250) 356-8578

Web: [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/)

E-mail: [MCF.AutismFundsProcessingUnit@gems5.gov.bc.ca](mailto:MCF.AutismFundsProcessingUnit@gems5.gov.bc.ca)

Address: Autism Funds Processing Unit

P.O. Box 9776

Victoria, B.C.

V8W 9S5



To contact any of the provincial government ministries, call Enquiry BC:

In Victoria: (250) 387-6121

In Vancouver: (604) 660-2421

Elsewhere in BC: 1 (800) 663-7867

Outside British Columbia: (604) 660-2421

Email: [EnquiryBC@gems3.gov.bc.ca](mailto:EnquiryBC@gems3.gov.bc.ca)





# A Parent's Handbook

## Autism Funding Programs



**Ministry of Children  
and Family Development**