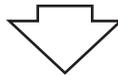


Next Steps Following An Autism Diagnosis in British Columbia

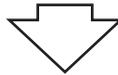
STEP 1

Signing an Autism Funding Agreement



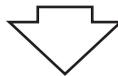
STEP 2

Learning About Autism Treatments



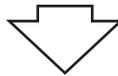
STEP 3

Finding Professionals to Work with Your Family



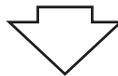
STEP 4

Hiring and Contracting with a Service Provider



STEP 5

Building and Maintaining a Strong Team



STEP 6

Continuing the Learning About Autism

Welcome to ACT – Autism Community Training

ACT has prepared this *Next Steps Guide* as part of the *New Diagnosis Parent Package* which we send, in a glossy red folder, to diagnosticians across British Columbia. The purpose of this document is to help parents put an intervention program in place for their child who has been newly diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (which we will refer to as autism).

Even if a family has suspected for some time that their child has autism, confirmation of the diagnosis can be both a shock and a relief. ACT has many resources to help families through this process—you will find an overview on page 12. We also provide ongoing support and information to parents, individuals with autism (regardless of age), and the professionals who support them. Much of our information is relevant to special needs other than autism and we welcome all of those who find our resources useful.

Please keep in mind that the information in this guide is an overview. Each child with autism is unique. They often change dramatically as they grow older and, in my experience, make significant progress.

Whatever your child's age at diagnosis, from 2 to 18, this information opens the door to developing new ways to interact with him or her to help your child make sense of their world.

In parenting a child with autism, many families come to realize that while autism can cause disruption, confusion and extraordinary expenses, a child with autism can also provide joy, amusement and the opportunity to see the world with fresh eyes.

In the months and years ahead, please consider ACT as a constant source of support and information. We look forward to your calls, emails, visits to our office and meeting you at ACT events.

Sincerely,



Deborah Pugh
Executive Director
ACT – Autism Community Training



ACT's New Diagnosis Hub – Your Online Resource

Find the latest versions of all the resources mentioned in this *Next Steps Guide* at the **New Diagnosis Hub**: www.actcommunity.ca/newdiagnosishub



It is worth checking "The Hub" to find the latest updates and more details than we can provide in this guide.

ACT will mail or fax information to those without Internet access.

ACT Information Officers are available to help explain all of our resources. They can provide support in English, Mandarin & Cantonese.

Weekdays, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Phone: 604-205-5467
Toll-Free: 1-866-939-5188
Email: info@actcommunity.ca

Drop in to ACT's Family Resource Centre, Mon – Thurs; 1:00 – 4:30 pm
Suite 150-2250 Boundary Road
Burnaby, British Columbia

ACT – Autism Community Training is a not-for-profit society funded by the B.C. Ministry of Children and Family Development to provide information and support to families with children with autism across the province. ACT relies on sponsors to provide training to parents and professionals and to develop resources relevant to adults.

ACT's mission is to provide excellent information and training, in accordance with international best practices. Our 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.

For an overview of all the services that ACT provides, see page 12.

Thank you

A special thanks to all the families who have provided their engaging family photos for ACT's information and awareness work.

STEP 1: Signing an Autism Funding Agreement

In order to apply for Autism Funding, the parent or guardian must contact their local office for Children and Youth with Special Needs, part of the British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

- Find your local MCFD office for Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN) office by contacting ACT or see www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs/contacts.htm.
- When you call your local MCFD office, explain that your child has just received a diagnosis of autism and you would like to talk with a CYSN Intake Worker to apply for autism funding.
- For details of exactly what documents you need to bring to the MCFD office, see Quick Tips – ID.
- Move quickly! The month your local MCFD office receives your signed application, along with necessary documents, is the month your child's funding will start to accumulate.
- Look for your Autism Funding Agreement, in the mail, one to two weeks after you apply. You will find a link to a sample agreement, and other MCFD forms on the New Diagnosis Hub (or see page 12).
- Sign and return two copies of the agreement to the Autism Funding Branch in Victoria within two weeks.
- Contact the AFB to receive an update on your child's funding status.

How Autism Funding Works

Each child has an account with the Autism Funding Branch:

- The money does not go directly to the parent. The service provider is allowed to invoice the account only with the parent's written permission. Parents should request service providers provide them with copies of invoices when they are sent to the AFB.
- The funding period starts based on the child's birthdate.
- All services must be paid for from the funding period in which they were delivered, i.e., providers cannot pre-bill.
- Unspent funds from one spending period cannot be carried over to the next year.
- MCFD has very specific rules around what expenses can be claimed in terms of eligible expenses. For details, see *A Parent's Handbook - Your Guide to Autism Funding* at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/publications.htm.



See page 12 for links to all MCFD resources, offices and forms.

Connecting with a MCFD Children and Youth with Special Needs Worker

In B.C., Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN) workers specialize in helping families who have children with special needs access resources to care for their children.

Each child who receives autism funding is assigned a CYSN worker. CYSN workers can tell you what services are available in your community for your child, other than autism funding. Details of the services available for all children with special needs can be found in Chapter 6 of ACT's *Autism Manual*, "MCFD Services Available to All Children with Special Needs."

Often parents of children with special needs find it difficult to request help. However, parenting a child with special needs is complex at times and this is why CYSN workers exist.

Your CYSN worker will know what programs may be starting in your community — indeed, parents can advocate for new programs if they know of needs that should be met.

Contact your CYSN worker regularly to let them know how your child is progressing or could be better supported.

See Page 4 for information on connecting with other families or forming a community group.

Quick Tips – ID

Bring to the meeting:

1. Clinical outcomes form or confirmation of diagnosis form (a private diagnosis also requires written report(s))
2. Proof of child's age (e.g., birth certificate/passport)
3. Child's BC Care Card
4. Autism Program Application

STEP 2: Learning About Autism Treatments

In order to build an effective treatment team, parents need to learn about autism and how it impacts their child. This is especially important in B.C., where parents decide who to hire and what to prioritize in terms of therapy — within the limits set by Autism Funding policy.

Many parents like having the flexibility to make these key decisions. Others find this role overwhelming at first. Either way, ACT is committed to providing information to make this journey easier. Call us!

ACT's Approach – Positive, Practical, Evidence-informed Support

ACT encourages parents to look carefully at approaches that are supported by research as it is likely that these will provide faster improvements. However, no treatment will have the same effect on all children — the causes of autism are complex and how it impacts each child varies significantly.

Be aware of those who promote services or products that promise great results with all children with ASD and base their claims on individual testimonials. There are many bogus treatments promoted.

There are common components to excellent intervention programs. The majority of children with autism respond well to a balanced program targeting:

- Enhancing communication skills and socialization.
- Stretching the child's ability to cope with changes in routine.
- Involving parents by providing them training because parents know their child best and can provide many opportunities to help their child practice their new skills across the day. (Professionals come and go, but it is the parents who provide continuity.)



Autism Information Database

In the information we provide on the Autism Information Database (AID), ACT promotes resources that help parents improve the quality of their child's and family's life by targeting communications and social interaction and addressing concerns like anxiety. Think of it as "Goggle for Autism" — but more reliable! Before you invest your family's funds in a new therapy, search the AID to ensure that it is safe, and well supported by research. Search at www.actcommunity.ca/aid. Or call ACT for help in your search.

Connecting to Your Community

Once you have had time to absorb all of the new information in this guide, you may want to find out more about your local autism community. There is a lot to learn from other parents or siblings in your community.

Search the AID under **Community Resources**, select **Community Groups** and input your postal code to locate a self-help group near you or call ACT. Search the AID: www.actcommunity.ca/aid.



For tips on starting your own group, see Chapter 11 of ACT's *Autism Manual*, "ACT's Guide to Building a Community Group." See www.actcommunity.ca/autism-manual.

Pooling Your Funding

Families in smaller communities can consider pooling funding to cover the travel costs of professionals. Ask your CYSN worker to share your contact information with other families who may be interested.

Developing Community Resources

If your community or school district is under-resourced, consider contacting your Member of the Legislative Assembly or School District Trustee to explain your concerns. ACT has a number of resources that can help you improve the situation of all children with special needs in your community.

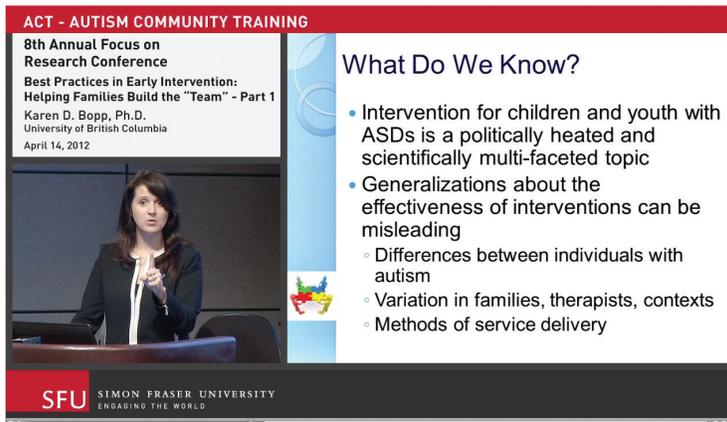
Search for "Advocacy" on the AID



Best Practices in Autism Treatment

Many approaches to autism treatment share these “best practices”; they are supported by extensive research:

- ❑ Intensive, direct one-to-one intervention at home, in preschool programs and in a variety of community settings on a year-round basis.
- ❑ High levels of predictability and routine.
- ❑ Highly supportive, structured teaching methods, based on the principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA), that incorporate a variety of strategies to help your child acquire, generalize, and maintain new skills.
- ❑ Use of functional assessment and positive behavior support techniques to address problem behaviors.
- ❑ Collaboration between therapists, including behavior consultants, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists.
- ❑ Interaction with typical children in preschool or daycare settings.
- ❑ Family involvement in development, implementation and review of intervention plans, and training in order to help their child progress.
- ❑ Trained and adequately supervised staff.
- ❑ Regular, ongoing monitoring of the child’s progress by parents and professionals, and periodic reassessment and evaluation of the program.



Behavior Plan of Intervention

A behavior plan of intervention (BPI) is individualized to target areas where the child needs help. It is developed and written by a behavior consultant in collaboration with the parents of the child, and includes input from professionals who are members of the child’s team (e.g., speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist).

The initial plan also establishes a baseline — “where the child is now” — and sets goals. Data should be collected and, through regular reviews, progress measured. It is important that parents are part of the planning and review processes.

The information on this page is drawn from www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/bestpractices.htm.

Quick Tip – The Basics!



It is vital children with autism develop routines for eating, sleeping, toileting and playing so that family life is manageable and fun. If your child has difficulty in any of these areas, make sure you ask for help to address them. It is possible to resolve these issues — they do not have to be endured just because your child has autism.

Autism Videos @ ACT (AVA)

Autism Videos @ ACT (AVA) is a free, online resource aimed at helping families and clinicians understand the many dimensions of autism treatment as well as the vital role of parents. Dr. Karen Bopp’s presentation is a good place to start: *Best Practices in Early Intervention: Helping Families Build the “Team.”*

AVA provides engaging videos by experienced clinicians who use Positive Behavior Support to overcome everyday hurdles, including how to:

- ❑ Tackle Toilet Training
- ❑ Solve Sleep Issues
- ❑ Manage Disruptive Behaviors
- ❑ Meet the Challenges of Puberty
- ❑ Engage in Community Recreation

www.actcommunity.ca/videos

Search for “Positive Behavior Support” on the AID.



STEP 3: Finding Professionals to Work with Your Family

The Registry of Autism Service Providers

The Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) is designed to ensure that parents of children with autism under six have access to service providers whose education and experience meets basic standards for early intervention. Only if the professional is on the RASP can parents have them reimbursed for their services using Autism Funding.

Parents of children six and over do not have to choose professionals from the RASP. However, parents of children across the age range and with a variety of special needs will find the information contained here useful when making decisions about hiring professional support.

ACT manages the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) following the policies set by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

Accessing the RASP List

The Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) is updated weekly by ACT on our website and is searchable by region and by profession. New behavior consultants, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists and physical therapists are added frequently. Please note, if a professional provides service to a child before they have been accepted to the RASP, the professional will not be reimbursed by the Autism Funding Branch.

Do not rely only on the advice of others, look at the RASP list. Many of the Behavior Consultants have provided profiles linked to the RASP—read several to help you research the best options for your child.

Agencies

ACT reviews the credentials of individual professionals but not the services of an agency as a whole. ACT recommends that parents check carefully the professionals associated with an agency:

- How many of them can work independently of supervision?
- How closely supervised are consultants and behavior interventionists?
- How many well-qualified professionals are associated with the agency?
- If the agency does not have any professionals listed on the RASP, check that they still have staff with at least a Master's degree in a relevant field to provide supervision to whoever is working with your child.

Be wary of situations where:

- The behavior consultant is not taking an active role in your child's program but is simply signing the invoices, while allowing an unqualified person to provide service with minimal supervision.

Resources on the Hub



All of the resources below can be found on the New Diagnosis Hub. ACT will continue to add new resources. For the latest, see: www.actcommunity.ca/newdiagnosishub.

- Information about the RASP: www.actcommunity.ca/rasp/information-for-parents/
- Search the RASP: www.actcommunity.ca/rasp
- Call ACT for individualized support if you do not have access to a computer or need assistance.

Quick Tip – Keep a Record!



Track all your contacts with MCFD CYSN workers, the Autism Funding Unit and all service providers. This will help in case you have to check on what was promised by whom, and when. Start by confirming that your Autism Funding Application has been received! Follow up by email or fax confirming what has been agreed.

Quick Tip – RASP Support



ACT Information Officers are available to advise families making choices about hiring a professional from the RASP. ACT will not direct families on who to hire, but we can help narrow down the options based on:

- The child's age and their level of functioning;
- Where the family lives;
- The approach to intervention the family is interested in.

For Children under the Age of Six

Children under six receive \$22,000 a year in funding that their families can use to pay for services, training and materials approved by the Autism Funding Branch. While this is a large sum, it can be used up very quickly unless families budget carefully. Families should also think of it as a time when they need to address their own training needs, so that when the funding drops to \$6,000 a year when their child turns six, the family is better prepared to manage their child's program.

Parents, siblings and the extended family are the core of the team

Children with autism are complicated; it often takes a team of people to understand how to engage him or her at first. Parents have crucial information but they need encouragement to build their skills and their confidence so they can learn how to help their child. This is important because parents are there for the long-haul and can have an amazing impact when they are given the tools. Siblings too, are powerful allies; they need to be provided with age-appropriate information on their sibling with special needs, as does the entire family.

RASP Professionals

If the child is under six, the following professionals must be selected from the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) list, in order to use Autism Funding:

- ❑ **Behavior Consultant/Analyst (BC)*:** Specializes in assessment and development of goals and instructional strategies to target a wide range of skills across all areas of development, including communication, social and daily living skills. BCs also conduct Functional Behavior Assessments and design programs to address challenging behaviours. In most cases, the BC develops a detailed plan of intervention (BPI), trains and supervises BIs on how to implement the plan, and works collaboratively with family members and other members of the therapy team.
- ❑ **Speech-language pathologist (S-LP):** Specializes in assessing and treating a child's speech, language and social communication difficulties. They can work directly with a child or provide consultation to the team providing ideas on how to target specific communication and social challenges.
- ❑ **Occupational therapist (OT):** Provides assessment, diagnosis and treatment in the area of functional living skills including play, dressing, feeding, school readiness skills, printing, keyboarding and social skills.
- ❑ **Physical therapist (PT):** Provides assessment and intervention that focus on the prevention, identification and easing of movement challenges. They can either provide direct treatment or consult to the team.

** Behavior Analysts are certified by the U.S.-based Behavior Analyst Certification Board following a series of courses and a period of supervised practice. As of 2015, roughly 60 percent of RASP Behavior Consultants have this advanced certification.*

Behavior Interventionist (BI)

BIs are not on the Registry of Autism Service Providers, but they can invoice the Autism Funding Branch. BIs work one-on-one with your child on goals outlined in the behavior plan of intervention (BPI), developed by professionals on your team. BIs may work in the home, school, or community. It is very important that BIs are supervised by Behavior Consultants. Without supervision, BIs are not competent to deal with challenging situations and are not able to maximize the impact of a BPI.

For more details of the role of all RASP professionals, see *A Parent's Handbook: Your Guide to Autism Programs* at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/handbook.htm.

Autism Funding – Eligible Expenses

The Autism Funding Branch has strict rules about what families can spend Autism Funding on. For example, vitamins, special foods, services provided out-of-province, and renovations of the family home are not accepted.

Before signing up for a program, or spending your family's money in the expectation of being reimbursed through Autism Funding, read the documents you will find at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/publications.htm.

You can also call ACT for suggestions or call the Autism Funding Branch at 1 877- 777-3530.

Misunderstandings can happen so ACT recommends that when you have received advice from the Autism Funding Branch that you type up your understanding of the instructions and either fax or email it to the AFB to confirm that you are on the right track.

The Role of Other Professionals Psychologists, General Practitioners, Pediatricians and Psychiatrists

Psychologists, General Practitioners, Pediatricians and Psychiatrists do not usually play an active role in the treatment team, but they play an important role in addressing the physical and mental health needs of a child with autism.

For more detailed information on the roles of all these professionals, see *ACT's Autism Manual for B.C.:*

- ❑ Chapter 2: "Developing a Treatment Team for a Child with ASD"
- ❑ Chapter 3: "Medical Issues in Autism Treatments"



For Children Six and Over

The average age of a child when diagnosed with autism in B.C is seven years of age. Many parents are very distressed when diagnosis is delayed, concerned that their child will not have the opportunity to progress. However, research demonstrates that children and adults with autism continue to progress, especially when they have good support at home and school. Many parents report significant progress year after year, well into adulthood, even for children who received a diagnosis in their teens.

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

It is not a requirement to hire a professional from the Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) for children six and over, but it is an excellent starting point. Working with older children requires a different skill set than working with very young children, but it still advisable that whoever is providing you professional support is supervised by someone who has at least a Master's degree in a related discipline like psychology or special education.

Mental Health Issues – Anxiety and Depression

Children with a late diagnosis can often be complex, which sometimes explains why they were not diagnosed much earlier. An area to keep a careful eye on is mental health, especially anxiety and depression. ACT has many resources we are pleased to share. Either call ACT or search the AID. There are also relevant videos available free on AVA – Autism Videos @ ACT.



Direct Funding Option

If your child is 12 years or older, MCFD provides the option of Direct Payment Funding, after the family has "successfully managed" Invoice Payments for at least two full years. Funding will be provided directly to the parent or guardian at the beginning of the child's funding period. There is more information on the requirements for Direct Funding on "The Hub."



School-Age Children with Autism

In most cases, children six and over receive support and services through B.C.'s public school system, although there are increasing numbers of children with special needs being schooled in the family home or in private schools.

If you have questions or concern regarding resources and support within the public school system, or alternatives, these chapters from ACT's *Autism Manual* are relevant:



- Chapter 7: "The B.C. Education System – An Introduction for Parents of Students with ASD"
- Chapter 8: "The Role of Parental Advocacy in Navigating the B.C. School System"

For three excellent presentations that address school and/or mental health issues, see Autism Videos @ ACT (AVA):

- *Education, Integration, Inclusion: Key Information for Parents of Children with Special Needs*
- *Transitioning from High School to Work*
- *Mental Health and Individuals with ASD*

Quick Tip – POPARD



If your child's school team is struggling to meet your child's needs, you may request your school district to arrange a visit with a POPARD consultant. The Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders (POPARD) is funded by the Ministry of Education to "provide consultation, training and support services to all public and independent schools... with a primary focus on increasing the capacity of school district staff to support students with ASD."

www.autismoutreach.ca/

Step 4: Hiring and Contracting with a Service Provider

Important considerations before hiring a professional

Although the government of B.C. provides the funding for a child's program, it is the parent who takes responsibility for spending the funds wisely. Essentially, the parent is entering into a private contract with a service provider.

- **Do not rush into signing a contract.**
Take the time to meet with a few professionals to speak with them directly about the services and programs they are able to provide. Meeting face-to-face with a potential service provider helps to decide who will be the best fit for your child and family.
- **Will the approach to treatment work for your family?**
Be cautious when providers insist that their approach works for all children. Consider:
 - Are they listening to your family's priorities?
 - How many direct hours of intervention for your child does their program provide?
 - What are the costs?
 - Are you expected to implement the strategies with little direct support?
 - Do you have financial resources to contribute to funding the program, in addition to Autism Funding?
 - If you are a single-parent or a low-income family you will need to consider carefully the full financial picture.
 - If you are a two-parent family, do you both work? How much time can you contribute to managing the people coming into your home to provide therapy?
 - Is there a centre-based program which offers a better fit?

These are all considerations which you can discuss with an ACT Information Officer.

- **Make sure you understand the contract.**
The contract should outline both the service provider's responsibilities as well as the parent's obligations. See Chapter 5 from ACT's *Autism Manual for B.C.*, "Contracting with Professionals on the RASP" — it provides further information on the importance of signing a contract and the details it should include.
- **Require a monthly invoice.**
Many families become distressed when they realize that their child's autism funding account has been emptied more quickly than planned because they gave a blanket permission to invoice the child's account and did not track the invoices each month:
 - Require a monthly invoice and review it carefully; it should be sent to you at the same time it is sent to the Autism Funding Branch.
 - Set limits in the contract on how much can be debited each month.
 - Require written authorization for services which are above the limits set in the contract.
 - On the New Diagnosis Hub, there are more details, including a sample MCFD invoice.



Resources on ACT's New Diagnosis Hub



All of the resources below can be found on the New Diagnosis Hub. We continue to add new resources; for the latest see: www.actcommunity.ca/newdiagnosishub.

- Chapter 5 - "Contracting with Professionals on the RASP":*
 - The Importance of a Contract
 - Timesheets & Invoices
- "Talking to Professionals about their Qualifications"
- "Behaviour Institute Checklist for Evaluation of Intensive Behaviour Program"
- "Key Questions for Parents to Ask Service Providers"

*From ACT's *Autism Manual for B.C.*



Addressing Concerns

MCFD has asked ACT to be the first point of contact for complaints from parents and guardians regarding the service provided by RASP Professionals including Behavior Consultants, Occupational Therapists, Speech-Language Pathologists and Physical Therapists.

Parents who have concerns are welcome to call ACT. Our first step is to try to help open communications to resolve the issue. We can also put families in touch with either the Autism Funding Branch or the professional college involved, if that is appropriate. For more information, see <http://www.actcommunity.ca/rasp/information-for-families/rasp-complaint-process>.

Step 5: Building and Maintaining a Strong Team

Engaged, informed parents are key to a child reaching his or her potential. Understanding how autism impacts your child and how to manage his or her team will strengthen your ability to lead as your child matures.



To maintain a strong team, you will need to:

- Treat all members with respect and encourage ongoing, clear and positive communication.
- Submit invoice forms to the Autism Funding Branch right away to assist in getting your service providers paid as soon as possible.
- Comply with B.C. Employment Standards if anyone working with your child is considered an employee. See “Resources on ACT’s New Diagnosis Hub” (page 9) for more information.

Once your family’s intervention team is hired, it is important to remember your role as the parent and leader of your team. Be proactive:

- Meet regularly with team members
- Focus on whether your child is making improvement
- Review the information recorded by team members
- Review your child’s needs and communicate them to the team
- Consider whether you are seeing progress in meeting the goals set out in the Behavior Plan of Intervention
- Re-evaluate, if necessary, whether the team members are a proper fit for your child

Red Flags

Review your child’s program & provider if:

- The Behavior Consultant (BC) never asked about your family’s priorities in terms of the functional skills you wish to prioritize.
- You are charged every month for the BC’s services, but he or she rarely sees your child.
- The BC rarely or never observes the Behavior Interventionist either in person or by video.
- Your child has not made any discernable progress since the program started a year ago.
- All therapy is being done in a separate room; you are not encouraged to observe or coached on how to help your child use his or her new skills. For example, if he or she is learning to identify colours, you should be taught how to reinforce this from breakfast to bath time!

Step 6: Continuing to Learn about Autism and your Child

Workshops and Training

As children with autism develop and grow through different stages in life, parents often need new strategies. To equip you with positive, practical strategies, ACT, and many other organizations, offer a variety of training opportunities relevant to autism and other special needs, including:

- Social Skills
- Toilet Training
- Puberty and Adolescence
- Recreation & Children with ASD
- Positive Behavior Support
- Transition to Adulthood

Workshops and conferences are also a great opportunity to meet people who share your interests and to find out about new developments in research.

- ACT's Live Events: www.actcommunity.ca/events
- Non-ACT Events: events presented in B.C. by organizations other than ACT: www.actcommunity.ca/non-act-events

ACT's Autism Manual for B.C.: Living & Working with Children with ASD in British Columbia – A Manual for Parents & Community Professionals



Chapters from ACT's *Autism Manual for B.C.* provide more detail on topics covered in this guide and much more! All chapters are free and downloadable from www.actcommunity.ca/autism-manual-for-bc:

- Introduction: Getting Started on Your Journey
- Chapter 1: The Diagnostic Process in British Columbia
- Chapter 2: Developing a Treatment Team for a Child with ASD
- Chapter 3: Medical Issues in Autism Treatments
- Chapter 4: MCFD-funded Services for Children with ASD
- Chapter 5: Contracting with Professionals on the RASP
- Chapter 6: MCFD Services Available to All Children with Special Needs
- Chapter 7: The B.C. Education System – An Introduction for Parents of Students with ASD
- Chapter 8: The Role of Parental Advocacy in Navigating the B.C. School System
- Chapter 9: Preparing for the Transition from School to Work
- Chapter 10: Estate Planning for Families Who Have Children with Special Needs in B.C.
- Chapter 11: ACT's Guide to Building a Community Group
- Glossary: Glossary of Terms & Acronyms: A Guide to Acronyms in B.C.

Funding Training

Autism Funding

A percentage of Autism Funding can be used to cover parent training. For details, see "The Hub."



Bursaries

In 2014, ACT provided \$24,000 in bursaries to low-income families and those who must travel outside their region to attend ACT events. For details, call ACT or see www.actcommunity.ca/bursaries.

Autism Videos @ ACT

Autism Videos @ ACT (AVA) provide free, instantly accessible videos for parents and community professionals looking for high quality, practical information relevant across special needs. There will be over 15 videos available in 2015, including:

- Ready, Set, Coach - Supporting Children with ASD in Community Recreation* *NEW*
- Solving Sleep Problems in Children with ASD* *NEW*
- Toilet Training for Everyone: It's Never Too Late! – Revisited!* *NEW*
- Best Practices in Early Intervention: Helping Families Build the "Team"*
- Education, Integration, Inclusion: Key Information for Parents of Children with Special Needs*
- Mental Health and Individuals with ASD*
- Estate Planning for Families Who Have Children with Special Needs in B.C.*

AVA is constantly being updated with new presentations. For the latest updates, see: www.actcommunity.ca/videos

Quick Overview of ACT Resources

The needs of families and their children with ASD change greatly over time. ACT is available to provide ongoing information, training and support to families across B.C. and the professionals who support them.

Online Resources

- ACT's Website – ACT's website contains extensive information on the resources we provide as well as links to other terrific resources and activities happening across British Columbia. From research to recreation programs, parent groups to potty training! www.actcommunity.ca
- Autism Videos @ ACT (AVA) – Expert, practical insights on a range of topics; available on your computer on your schedule; professionally filmed and edited. Free! www.actcommunity.ca/videos
- The Autism Information Database – (AID)
 - Search by your postal code for autism-friendly services in your area.
 - A flexible keyword search will generate resources from credible websites around the world. www.actcommunity.ca/aid



- Registry of Autism Service Providers (RASP) www.actcommunity.ca/rasp/information-for-parents/

This is a searchable listing of over 500 autism professionals that families may contract using their autism funding.

- ACT's *Autism Manual for B.C.: Living and Working with Children with Autism in B.C. – A Manual for Parents and Community Professionals*
See page 10 of this guide for a listing of chapters.
www.actcommunity.ca/autism-manual



Individualized Support

Information Officers – ACT's team of friendly, knowledgeable Information Officers provide individualized support in English, Mandarin and Cantonese by telephone, Skype, email and in-person at the Family Resource Centre at our Burnaby office.

Protecting Privacy

ACT's services are confidential, your privacy will be protected. Callers can remain anonymous but we appreciate being able to collect information on the communities where they live; the issues that are concerning them; the ages of the children they are supporting. Nothing that can identify a child or their family is shared. However, ACT appreciates being able to document the concerns of those who use our services as a way of helping to identify the needs of the autism community around B.C., to better serve families and professionals. For details of ACT's Privacy Policy, see www.actcommunity.ca/about-us/privacy/.

MCFD Resources

A Parent's Handbook: Your Guide to Autism Programs
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/handbook.htm

Using Autism Funding: Eligible Expenses
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/publications.htm

Autism Funding Forms
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/forms.htm

Local MCFD Offices
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs/contacts.htm

Autism Funding Branch
1-877-777-3530

Monthly News Round-Up: Staying In the Loop

ACT is constantly developing new resources. We also keep parents and professionals in touch with developments within the autism community across B.C. and beyond. To receive ACT's Monthly News Round-Up and event announcements by email, sign-up at www.actcommunity.ca/mailling-list. This confidential information is not shared.

act Autism Community Training

Monday to Friday
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Suite 150-2250 Boundary Road
Burnaby, BC, Canada, V5M 3Z3

Phone: 604-205-5467
Toll-free: 1-866-939-5188
Email: info@actcommunity.ca
Web: www.actcommunity.ca