

Employment Facts and Questions

Do I need experience working with people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

Absolutely not! While having prior experience is great, we are looking for staff members that demonstrate a willingness to learn and do the job well. We can, and will, teach you everything else you need to know.

What about training?

We will conduct approximately 25 hours of training for all staff (new and returning) prior to the beginning of the Summer Program. This training is mandatory and is usually conducted over a two week period in June and may include Saturdays. This training will include seminars on ASD and our approaches to supporting those who are affected autism. We can't teach you everything in a week, but it is our hope that our training will give you the tools and resources you need to be successful as a support worker.

Who attends the Bruce Awad Summer Program?

All of our clients live in Windsor and Essex County and have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Clients range in age from 6 years to 21 years.

When does the Bruce Awad Summer Program begin?

The summer program begins the second week of July and runs for six weeks usually ending in mid August. The program runs Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 3:30pm. with the exception of the Civic Holiday. Staff will be required to help with the classroom set-up which usually takes place the Thursday or Friday before the first day of the program.

Who works at the Bruce Awad Summer Program?

Our staff is typically comprised of college and university students from Windsor and Essex County. Most of our staff members are pursuing a degree in education, psychology, Child and Youth Worker or Educational Assistant, but some are majoring in fields not related to ASD. All staff must provide current police clearances. In addition staff must possess a valid First Aid & CPR certificate which is WSIB and Heart and Stroke Foundation compliant and have up-to-date BMS (Behaviour Management Systems) training or recent recertification. If you do not have a BMS certification, BMS training will be available through ASI for a small fee.

How do I apply?

Complete the online application. Unfortunately, we are only able to contact those candidates who we select for an interview. Our interviews are done at our office at 3600 Curry Ave. We will try to let you know within a couple of weeks of your interview if you are hired. If you are hired to work at the summer program, you must submit a Police Clearance (Vulnerable Sector Name Check) before we can offer you an official position.

What should I expect at the summer program?

Persons with ASD vary greatly in abilities and behaviours. While a small percentage of these individuals can live relatively independently, the majority require almost constant supervision. At times, support workers are surprised at how much assistance some of the clients may need. Prompts, reminders, structure, and the use of routine are typically sufficient for most clients to understand what to do. Clients are encouraged to be as independent as possible, and it is the role of the staff to assist them beyond that point as needed.

Behaviour problems are also a part of ASD for many who are affected. Behaviours may seem inappropriate (e.g., asking repetitive questions, flapping ones' hands, attempting to masturbate in public, etc.), disruptive (e.g., refusing an activity, yelling, throwing objects, damaging property, etc.) or even aggressive (hitting, kicking, biting, scratching, etc.). Staff members are trained in how to deal with the types of behaviours described above as well as other situations commonly encountered at the program. Most clients are not aggressive. These issues are being mentioned so you will be aware of some of the aspects of the job you may not have thought about. Please ask questions about these issues during your interview if you have any concerns.

Most support workers find the challenges of the job to be a great learning experience that facilitates wonderful personal growth. A number of staff will return each summer and many will go on to careers in autism or special education after their time at our program.

It is almost guaranteed that should you work at the Bruce Awad Summer Program, you will probably have a brief moment or two when you ask yourself "What have I gotten myself into?" But you will have lots of support from other in your exact same position and from experienced staff members who can give you ideas, suggestions, and encouragement.

Your occasional frustrations and stress will be more than balanced by the gratitude of the clients and parents. Your personal feelings of accomplishment, many fun memories, and lasting friendships with fellow staff members. We truly believe that the benefits of your job will far outweigh the challenges, and we look forward to giving you the opportunity to experience the summer program.