



All About Autism

RESOURCE LIST FOR PARENTS



Early Signs of Autism – Receiving a Diagnosis

- The **Early Signs of Autism** may appear quite young (6 -24 month of age) for some children. Recognizing these symptoms early will allow you to get a diagnosis and access interventions earlier. **Don't wait and see!** Speak to your child's physician about the early signs of a social communication delay or risk for Autism. Early signs include:
 - No big smiles or warm, joyful expressions by 6 months
 - No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles or other facial expressions by 9 months
 - No babbling by 12 months
 - No back-and-forth gestures such as pointing, showing, reaching or waving by 12 months
 - No words by 16 months
 - No meaningful, two-word phrases (not including imitating or repeating) by 24 months
 - Any loss of speech, babbling or social skills at any age
 - Unusual visual fixations, strong and persistent examination of objects
 - Abnormal repetitive behaviors
- **The Early Signs Clinic** is a partnership with Children First and The Summit Centre for Preschool Children with Autism, providing Psychological Assessments for toddlers and young children under 30 months, to obtain (or rule out) a diagnosis of Autism. Your child can be referred to the Early Signs Clinic by your child's doctor. Preschool Speech/Language Pathologists from John McGivney Children's Centre or Talk 2 Me-Connections Early Years Family Learning Centre may also refer your child, following a speech/language assessment, to the Early Signs Clinic for an assessment with your consent. There is no charge for these assessments.
- Children age 6-18 years of age may be referred to Hotel-Dieu Grace Healthcare Regional Children's Centre for a diagnostic assessment.
- You may choose to pay for a **private assessment**. A diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can only be made by a Psychologist or specially trained doctor. You should investigate the qualifications of anyone providing private assessments or treatment.
- When your child receives a **Psychological Assessment** be sure to request a written diagnosis. Many intervention programs require a written diagnosis or report in order to put your child on a waiting list.
- Request a referral to a **Pediatrician** to get a full medical evaluation to rule out any medical causes for the delays. Many medical conditions may co-exist with or look similar to an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Early Intervention Programs

Children First 519-250-1850 www.children-first.ca

- Children First provide services to families and children birth to 6 years who have developmental and/or mental health challenges. Services may include assessment, consultation and intervention, and support and advocacy. Services may occur in family's homes, in-centre and in licensed child care centres, in Windsor and Essex County. Staff includes resource consultants (Early Intervention Specialists), speech/language pathologists, social workers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and psychologists.

John McGivney Children's Centre 519-252-7281 www.jmccentre.ca

- For children and youth up to 21 years of age with disabilities and special needs. Rehabilitative services may include: speech/language therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

Talk 2 Me – Connections Early Years Family Centre 519-252-0636 www.connectwithus.ca

- The local Preschool Speech and Language Program for children up to 5 years of age. Services may include: speech/language assessments, intervention, educational workshops and parent programs including: More than Words - The Hanen Program for Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Related Social Communication Disorders; and TalkAbility – The Hanen Program for Parents of Verbal Children with High Functioning Autism or Asperger's Syndrome.

Thames Valley Children's Centre - Autism Program 519-685-8716 or toll free 1-866-516-5368 www.tvcc.on.ca

- Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)-based services and supports for children and youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders is a joint partnership between Thames Valley Children's Centre (TVCC) and John McGivney Children's Centre (JMCC). Providing a collaborative process to support children and youth with a confirmed ASD diagnosis using a group-group based model, consultation and training for parents/care givers and community providers. This service will focus on one priority goal in one of four areas of development: communication, social/interpersonal, daily living and behaviour management/emotional regulation using ABA strategies. For further information contact TVCC's Intake Department at 519-685-8700 or toll free at 1-866-590-8822.

The Summit Centre for Preschool Children with Autism 519-255-1195

Email: info@summitcentre.org, www.summitcentre.org

- Registered charity providing early intensive behavioural intervention to children with a diagnosis in the autism spectrum up to the age of 6. The centre has 2 main programs 1.) Children receive 5 full days of one-on-one treatment (must be 48 months or younger at beginning of treatment) and 2.) A 12-week intensive parent training course where parents learn to provide treatment to their children (must be under 5 years 8 months at the beginning of treatment).

Hotel-Dieu Grace Healthcare Regional Children's Centre 519-257-5215

www.hdgh.org/regionalchildrenscentre

- For children ages 6-18 years old. A mental health centre specializing in social, emotional, developmental, and/or behavioural issues. There is an autism and related disorders program which provides assessment and consultation.

Local Contacts Specific to Autism

Autism Ontario Windsor-Essex Chapter 519-250-1893 Email: livia.windsor@autismontario.com

- A charitable organization that raises money in order to offer funding and support to our local families. Membership fee of \$50 includes free annual summer picnic, Holiday party, summer funding support, social skills groups, cooking class and so much more are provided with your yearly Autism Ontario membership.

**Potential Programme - A Program of Autism Ontario www.autismontario.com
519-250-9410 Email: kathleen@autismontario.com Family Support Coordinator
226-787-0333 Email: marti@autismontario.com Community Event Coordinator**

- This program connects families with resources in the community by offering a Family Support Coordinator and a Community Event Coordinator who organize community events, speakers and workshops.

**Autism Services Inc. (ASI) 519-966-7283 Email: autism@mdirect.net.
www.autismservicesinc.com**

- ASI offers a multi week Summer Program to individuals with a diagnosis of Autism ages 6-21 years. ASI is in partnership with the Windsor Police Services coordinating the Autism Registry (see Other Key Support Options on page 4 for details). ASI also has an extensive Resource Lending Library with books, videos, DVD's, software and educational toys on the topic of autism that can be borrowed free of charge. Teachers can access library material through the inter school courier system. For more information please call or email.

Accessing Supports Including Funding and Services

- **Easter Seals 519-944-0044 Ext. 223 www.easterseals.org**
For children 3 years of age and up with incontinence issues. Funding is provided for supplies. Receipts for supplies must be submitted annually. See your family doctor to complete necessary paperwork.
- **Family Respite Services 519-972-9688 www.familyrespite.org**
Provides help to find respite providers or in home workers through a database called respiteservices.com. Families who have funding are able to advertise for a respite provider and screened respite providers are able to post their qualifications and availability. No identifying information is viewed on line. Contact them to register.
- **SSAH - Special Services At Home 519-972-9688**
SSAH helps children with developmental disabilities and their families by providing funding to purchase services and supports. (Family Respite Services coordinates SSAH in Windsor and Essex County.)
- **ACSD - Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities 519-254-1651**
This government program provides financial help to assist with some of the extra costs of caring for a child with a disability. Financial and medical criteria must be met.
- **Ministry of Children and Youth Services www.children.gov.on.ca**
Click on 'Special Needs' on that site for the latest government information about supports and services.
- **Hotel-Dieu Grace Healthcare Help Link Access Services 519-252-2313**
Information, referral and community service coordination for children, youth and families in Windsor-Essex.
- **We R Kids Mental Health www.werkidsmentalhealth.ca**
A website developed to assist in the search for services, supports and resources in the area of mental health for children and youth in Windsor and Essex County.
- **ODSP - Ontario Disability Support Program 519-254-1651**
Income and/or Employment Supports for persons with a disability who are 18 years or older. Check the Ministry of Community and Social Services website for more info **www.mcass.gov.on.ca**.
- **Developmental Services Ontario: South West Region 1-877-480-2726**
This is your access point to apply for Adult Developmental Funding and Services including Passport funding to purchase supports for community participation after high school.

- **Windsor Essex Brokerage 519-966-8094 Email: info@webps.ca http://www.webps.ca**
We believe that people should have a full life in their neighbourhood and community. We provide unencumbered/independent facilitation and planning with individuals with a developmental disability and their families, ensuring that the person's voice is heard. Other services include mediation, negotiation, support network development and assisting with the formal and informal contractual agreements for services purchased when requested.

Other Key Support Options

- **Disability Tax Credit** is for people who have a severe and prolonged mental or physical disability and is claimed through annual income tax submission. The form to use from the Canada Revenue Agency is a T2201. For previous years you would request form T1-ADJ.
- **Accessibility Parking Permit - APP** (Formerly known as Disabled Person Parking Permit) You may qualify for this permit because Autism is a neurological disorder. The form, to be completed by a physician, can be found at www.mto.gov.on.ca by typing 'APP' in the search bar at that site.
- **Windsor Essex Project Lifesaver 519-982-9988** for a GPS safety tracking device for your child should darting or wandering be an issue. A set-up fee and monthly fee will apply. More information can be found at www.windsor-essexprojectlifesaver.com.
- **Street Signs** for Windsor and Essex County that say 'Autistic Child Area' can be obtained by calling the Autism Ontario Windsor-Essex Chapter office **519-250-1893**.
- **Autism Registry** for families with a child or adult with autism spectrum disorders who reside in Windsor (or attend school or daycare in Windsor). This is a partnership with the Windsor Police Services and Autism Services Inc. The Autism Registry promotes communication and gives police access to critical information about a registered person with ASD in a police emergency. To access the online registry and for details visit www.police.windsor.on.ca/online_reporting/autism_registry/. For other Essex County Municipalities please contact your municipal offices or local police services and ask about a wandering persons/vulnerable persons registry.

What to Look for in Your Community

- **Ontario Early Years Centres**
These are free 'stay and play drop-in centres' where parents and caregivers of children can participate in early learning activities and parenting programs www.ontarioearlyyears.ca
- **Nursery Schools, Preschools, Daycares**
Explore what's in the community as an option for your child to benefit from socialization in a language-rich environment. Make visits, ask questions.

- **Local Recreational Programs and Services: Check out any of the following:**
 - Special Olympics - LaSalle Windsor **519-978-0193**, www.lwspecialolympics.com
 - Windsor-Essex Therapeutic Riding Association **519-726-7682**, email: info@wetra.ca, wetra.ca
 - SPEQTRA Special Equestrian Therapeutic Riding Association **519-322-2463**, www.speqtra.ca
 - Access 2 Entertainment Card, www.access2card.ca/
 - City of Windsor Parks and Recreation offer a limited number of special integrators for special needs children. Call **311** for general information, or **519-253-2300** for detailed inquiries. Also offered are swimming lessons and gymnastics specifically for children with autism. www.reconnectwindsor.ca
 - Fantastic Fridays for ages 12 & up @ Vollmer Culture & Recreation Complex **519-969-7771**, www.lasallecultureandrecreation.ca
 - Municipal recreational and swimming programs in Windsor and Essex County usually allow for a support worker, friend or family member to attend as well to support the child at no additional cost. Ask ahead.
 - WEC Special Stars Soccer League for children and young adults 4 to 25 years with Autism or Aspergers only **226-345-0228**, email: wec.specialstars@hotmail.com , www.wecspecialstars.com
 - Miracle League Baseball **519-919-4641** www.amherstburgmiracle.com
 - Hockey With Heart is a league for kids ages 4 to 11 with ASD, email: sdmachan@hotmail.com, <https://sites.google.com/site/hockeywithheartwindsor/home>
 - Whole Note Music Therapy Services **519-478-0060**, email: info@wnmusictherapy.com, www.wnmusictherapy.com
 - ASI Board Game Night for ages 4 to 13 years with ASD and their siblings **519-966-7283**, email: asigamenight@gmail.com, www.autismservicesinc.com
 - Winstars Gymnastics offers sessions for special needs children and youth **519-972-1397**, www.winstarsgym.com
- **Parent Support Groups:**
 - **High Functioning Autism Group 519-972-8381 or 519-972-927**
This parent's group meets monthly. Call for more information.
 - **The Summit Centre for Preschool Children with Autism 519-255-1195**
All parents welcome. Typically the last Monday of the month from 5:00-6:30 p.m. Childcare for the parent's child with autism is provided as long as parents call the centre prior to the group. See the Facebook page for updates www.facebook.com/SummitCentreAutismWindsor
 - **Windsor-Essex Family Network 519-974-1008**
A family-to-family support organization for families touched by disability across the lifespan. Small family gatherings for support and information are held from time to time based on common family interests. Our mission is to strengthen and empower families through: learning, family-to-family mentoring, resources in our lending library, and sharing personal experiences. Email: info@windsor-essexfamnet.ca
 - **Ensemble 519-776-6483 Ext .225 www.ensembleunderstands.com**
A parent-directed resource for families caring for someone with a disability. Please see Educational Workshops/Learning events section for more details or email: ensemble@communitylivingessex.org.
- **Sibling Support Groups:**
 - **Autism Ontario Windsor-Essex Chapter 519-250-1893**
Sibshops, a program for brothers and sisters of a person with ASD, is offered in Windsor and Essex County. Call for details and to register.

- **Family Respite Services and Children First** work together to provide a group for children between the ages of 7-11 who have siblings with disabilities. The fun group is run monthly, with games and activities and opportunities to share experiences. Call Family Respite Services **519-972-9688** or Children First **519-250-1850** to register.
- **The Summit Centre for Preschool Children with Autism 519-255-1195**
Any siblings welcome from ages 5-12. This group runs at the same time as our monthly parent group. Teen group will run at the request from parents or teens.

Educational Workshops/Learning Events

- **Autism Spectrum Disorder Education Series:** These are monthly workshops offered by Thames Valley Children's Centre and the John McGivney Children's Centre. For local area workshop schedules please see: <http://www.tvcc.on.ca/events/essex> or www.eventbrite.ca and search "ABA" or "TVCC". Contact Carrie Connell **1-866-590-8822 Ext. 53367** or email: carrie.connell@tvcc.on.ca.
- **Windsor Essex Family Network:** Topics for annual learning events coordinated by Windsor-Essex Family Network (in partnership with others) include: School Entry; Individual Education Plans; Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP); Wills & Estate Planning; Disability Tax Credit; My Home, My Choice; navigating high school; participation and inclusion in community and more. Visit our website at www.windsorsexfamnet.ca. Phone **519-974-1008**, or email: info@windsorsexfamnet.ca.
- **The Summit Centre for Preschool Children with Autism:** Provides Introduction to Applied Behaviour Analysis workshops twice a year. See www.facebook.com/SummitCentreAutismWindsor.
- **Ensemble:** A parent-directed resource for families caring for someone with a disability. Support is provided from diagnosis to adulthood. Families who register with Ensemble receive email tips, parent to parent support, upcoming events and networking opportunities. The Ensemble Team produces resource tools like "Special Kids, Special Parents" and works in partnership with the community to offer a family's perspective in decision-making and sharing ideas for inclusion. For details call **519-776-6483 Ext. 225** or email: ensemble@communitylivingsex.org or visit www.ensembleunderstands.com.
- **Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI) Autism Spectrum Disorder:** CPRI has many workshops and information sessions for families throughout the year at their centre in London. Many workshops are available via video conferencing at HDGH Regional Children's Centre in Windsor and through free webinars. For more information see <http://cpri.ca/families> or call **1-877-494-2774**.

Preparing For Elementary School

- **Assistance Navigating the System:** Autism Ontario, Windsor-Essex Chapter provides assistance in navigating the school system. They also have Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) representatives for each school board who advocate for educational services in school. Call **519-250-1893** or email: livia.windsor@autismontario.com.
- **'School Entry, Learn More About Registering Your Children with Special Needs for Kindergarten':** Annual information events held in January each year that are sponsored by Windsor Essex Family Network and the Enhancing Family Support for Education group. Call **519-974-1008** or email: info@windsorsexfamnet.ca.

- **Parent Tips for School Entry and Beyond:** A book written by families for families to assist parents in Windsor and Essex County with entry and very early years in school. Available in English and French. Contact Windsor Essex Family Network (info above).
- **Thames Valley Children's Centre (TVCC): Connections for Students** is a collaborative initiative designed to facilitate the smooth transition of child with Autism Spectrum Disorder from Autism Intervention Programs to publicly funded school boards in Ontario. www.tvcc.on.ca.
- **'Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and More':** Annual information sessions held in September and April each year lead by Windsor Essex Family Network in partnership with the Enhancing Family Support for Education group, Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board and Greater Essex County District School Board. To get the dates and details call **519-974-1008** or email: info@windsoressexfamnet.ca.

Life and Community

- **Windsor Essex Transition Planning for Youths with Developmental Disabilities** is a website to give parents and others who support young people with disabilities some tips, resources and practical information to help plan for the transition to life as an adult. <http://transitionplanningwindsoressex.ca/>
- **Developmental Services Ontario: South West Region 1-877-480-2726**
The DSO is your centralized access point to apply for Adult Developmental Funding and Services in Ontario including Passport funding to purchase supports for community participation after high school.
- **Roots2Wings** offers programming for youth and young adults living with a disability **519-982-6880** or email: roots2wings@outlook.com
- **Harmony in Action** provides opportunities for adults with developmental and/or physical disabilities **519-252-1207**, email: office@harmonyinaction.com, www.harmonyinaction.com
- **Reach for the Skye** is a day program for developmentally and/or physically challenged youth and adults **519-946-0263**, email: reachoffice@kelcom.net, www.reachfortheskye.ca
- **St. Clair College Community Integration through Cooperative Education (CICE)** is a two-year Ontario College Certificate to provide individuals with developmental disabilities and other significant learning challenges with the opportunity to experience college life, pursue a post-secondary education and develop skills which will help them prepare for employment **519-972-2727 ext. 4537**, www.stclaircollege.ca/programs/postsec/cice/
- **Community Living Essex:** In-home support, respite care, co-ordination of services and advocacy for all ages who have an intellectual disability. Phone: **519-776-6483**, www.communitylivingessex.org
- **Community Living Windsor:** Residential and support services for adults with an intellectual disability. Phone: **519-974-4221**, www.clwindsor.org
- **Partners for Planning:** A family-driven, non-profit organization with the goal of helping families overcome the challenges they face. Offers many online resources including webinars. www.partnersforplanning.ca

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