

## **Employment Questions & Answers**

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

While having prior experience is helpful, we are looking for candidates that demonstrate a willingness to learn and are committed to supporting individuals with ASD. We aim to provide the training and mentoring that will give you the tools and strategies to make a difference in the lives of the students that attend the Summer Program.

### **What about training?**

We will conduct approximately 24 to 30 hours of training for all staff (new and returning) prior to the beginning of the Summer Program. This training is mandatory and will be conducted in the first week of July, prior to the start of the summer program and may include Saturdays (see Job Description for dates and times). This training will include discussions on ASD, strategies and approaches to supporting students with autism. Although we can't teach you everything in a week, it is our hope that our training will give you the tools and resources you'll need to be successful as a support worker. If necessary, some training may be conducted over a video conferencing service like Zoom.

### **Who attends the Bruce Awad Summer Program?**

We provide support to children and youth over 6 years of age that live in Windsor and Essex County and have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder.

### **When does the Bruce Awad Summer Program begin?**

The summer program begins the second week of July and runs for six weeks ending in mid-August. The program runs Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 3:30pm. except for 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. Staff are also required to help with the take-down which takes place the final day of the program.

### **Who works at the Bruce Awad Summer Program?**

Our support staff are typically comprised of college and university students from Windsor and Essex County. Many are enrolled in education, psychology, Autism and Behavioural Science, Child and Youth Worker and Educational Assistant programs, but some are majoring in fields not related to ASD. Many of our returning staff work in the education system during the school year.

All employees over the age of 18 years must provide a **NEW Broad Record Check (BRC) Police Clearance (you might find this New BRC listed under the Vulnerable Sector Check on your Police Services Website)**. In addition, support 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 (generally on a Saturday before or after the training schedule).

## How do I apply?

Complete the online application. Your application must include the submission from two references. You will find the required reference form and application online at [www.autismservicesinc.com](http://www.autismservicesinc.com). Only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Our interviews are done over a video conferencing service like Zoom, or at our office Location at 3640 Wells St. Cottage #2 at Maryvale. Once the interviewing process is complete, we will offer successful candidates a conditional position. All potential hires will be required to submit a Broad Record Check Police Clearance and valid certifications as a condition of employment.

Please note: We do not accept resumes.

## 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, many require almost constant supervision. At times, support workers are surprised at how much assistance some of the students may need. Prompts, reminders, structure, and the use of routine are typically sufficient for most students to understand what to do. Students are encouraged to be as independent as possible, and it is the role of the staff to assist them beyond that point as needed.

An important part of the daily program includes outings in the community, including swimming three times per week at public pools. You are expected to assist your students in preparing for swimming, as well as support them while in the pool. There will always be lifeguards on duty while in the pool.

Behaviour struggles are also a part of ASD for many of our students. Behaviours may seem inappropriate (e.g., asking repetitive questions, flapping ones' hands, touching their private areas, 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 position. 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. Many support 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 most likely that should you work at the Bruce Awad Summer Program, you will find yourself asking "What have I gotten myself into?" But you will have plenty of support from experienced co-workers and supervisors who will provide guidance, strategies, and encouragement.

Your occasional frustrations and stress should be more than balanced by the gratitude of the students and families, your personal feelings of accomplishment, the many fond memories, and the lasting friendships with fellow support workers. 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.

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