

What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life: it is the result of a neurological disorder that affects the functioning of the brain.

ASD is one of the most common developmental disabilities. Based on recent studies by Canadian researchers, the prevalence rate of ASD is 1 in 165. In Ontario, there is an estimated 70,000 individuals with ASD.

Questions ?

If you have any questions about transitions contact any of the following agencies:

Early Intervention Services
Ages 0-6 years
1-888-703-KIDS Ext. 2

Children's Treatment Network Simcoe York
Ages 6-18 years (not yet diagnosed)
1-866-377-0286

Kerry's Place Autism Services
Ages 6-18 (already diagnosed)
1-905-713-6808 Ext. 350

Developmental Services Ontario - Central East
Ages 18+
1-855-277-2121

211 Social Services Directory
Any Age
211 or www.211ontario.ca



Additional Resources

CanChild-Keeping it Together
<http://www.canchild.ca/en/canchildresources/kityouthkit.asp>

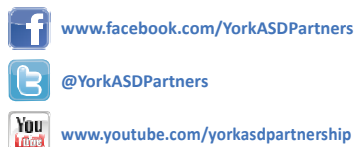
How to run a meeting
<http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/RunningMeetings.htm>

Bloorview timetable
http://www.hollandbloorview.ca/resourcecentre/growing_up/growing_up_timetable.php

Connections Manual
<https://www.yssn.ca/resources-publications/>

For other resources, check out the ASD Partnership website

<http://www.yorkasdpartnership.org>



THINKING ABOUT TRANSITIONS?

**Starting Kindergarten
Becoming a Teenager
Graduating from High School**

**It is never too early
to start planning!**

Change happens to everyone throughout their life. These changes are called transitions. When planning for the future, children and their families should start early.

Any change or transition will be more successful with planning that can be broken down into four phases:

- **Prepare**
- **Plan**
- **Practice**
- **Make the transition**



Everyone has a role to play!

Role of child/youth/adult transitioning

- Have a voice in the process.
- Be involved to the greatest extent possible.
- Be included in discussions and meetings from the beginning.
- Share your goals for the transition and your future.

Role of parent/natural support person*

- Develop and share goals of the person transitioning.
- Consider how the person's voice can be heard in the process.
- Lead the transition process to keep it moving.
- Your knowledge and experience are vital. Share what you know works best.

Role of service providers/school staff/formal support**

- Explain the services they provide.
- Share additional resources and options that are available.
- Provide service based on the needs of the person transitioning.

** Natural supports are the relationships that occur in every day life: this might include a friend, neighbour, a sister etc. who you would turn to for support - you may want to invite them to participate and help you.*

*** Formal supports usually involve some sort of payment for services and may include relationships with service providers.*

Prepare

- Identify and think about the transition or change that is coming.
- Gather information about goals, strengths, needs, abilities, interests, likes and dislikes.
- Identify who can help, build your transition team.
- Choose a lead; it can be you, a professional or a person you trust and rely on.
- Make a list of the equipment, tools and strategies that work. What do others need to know for you to succeed?

Plan

- Arrange and participate in a joint meeting of all service providers and other significant people involved. Create an agenda, take attendance and take notes.
- Make sure everything is in writing and that the meeting notes are shared with the team. Documentation may include; case notes and Individual Education Plans etc.
- Share the information, skills, tools and strategies, people will need to know for the transition to be successful.
- Think about how sounds, lighting, scents, textures, etc., can impact and plan for that.
- Express your thoughts, hopes, needs, wants, fears and ask questions.
- Create a communication plan. Decide how and when you will communicate with various team members. This may include; communication books, emails, phone calls and meetings, etc.
- Create a transition plan that outlines the steps necessary.

Practice

- Practice the plan - this helps everyone know what works, what happens next and make changes as necessary.
- Visit and explore new setting(s) as many times as possible.
- Introduce people as well as places - Names and faces.
- Use visuals (pictures, videos, stories and schedules) as part of your practice to help feel more comfortable with the change. Share and use what works.
- PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE.

Making the Transition

- Follow through on your plan.
- Assess if things are working.
- Plan meetings to review how things are going, get updates from everyone involved.
- Make changes as needed.

Be patient!

Everything takes time.

Expect the Unexpected!

Don't panic when something happens that you are not prepared for. Revisit your plan, then prepare, plan and practice again.