

The Ontario Autism Program

www.ontario.ca/autism

What is the Ontario Autism Program?

If your child or youth has a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) from a qualified professional, you are eligible to receive services in the Ontario Autism Program (OAP). These services will be flexible, individualized and family-centred, and based on a clinical assessment of your child's or youth's unique needs. Services are not defined by your child's age or the severity of their autism. All behavioural services delivered in the OAP are evidence based and integrate best research evidence into the decision making process. For more information about how to access the OAP, you can contact your Single Point of Access and/or visit: www.ontario.ca/autism

What services are available in the OAP?

The OAP will offer you a variety of evidence based behavioural services, family services and training. The focus of all OAP services is to help you and your child or youth learn and build skills that you can apply both at home, and in the community.

Family Services and Training: As part of the OAP, you will be provided with information about the family services and training available in your community. These services can be accessed once you register and will continue to be available throughout your time in the program. These services may include workshops, groups and seminars about ASD, brief consultation, information on Applied Behaviour Analysis, and how services are provided in the OAP.

Evidence Based Behavioural Services: The OAP offers a variety of evidence based behavioural services that can help to encourage functional and socially important skills, such as getting dressed or talking to other people. These services can also help to discourage challenging behaviour that interferes with learning and wellbeing. Behavioural services also involve teaching parents/caregivers the skills they need so they can support their child's development. The timing, duration, intensity and scope of the behavioural services your child or youth receives will change over time as your child's needs change. Services will be based on clinical assessments, and will be adapted to meet your child or youth's goals, strengths and needs.

Family Support Worker* (FSW): Once you enter the OAP, you will be assigned a FSW. At any point, while you are in the OAP, you may access a FSW, who will be available to answer your questions. Your FSW will contact you to begin developing your OAP Family Service Plan so that your goals are at the centre of your OAP services and that all professionals working with your child are working collaboratively. Ongoing involvement of the FSW is optional for families.

*Please note that the Family Support Worker title may differ across regional providers. After initial contact, families will be able to choose if and when they access the services of a Family Support Worker.

Can I choose who delivers my behavioural services?

Yes. Once your spot for evidence based behavioural services becomes available in the OAP, you will have a choice. You can either choose to receive behavioural services through your regional provider, or you can receive funding to purchase these services through a direct funding provider. These options are sometimes referred to as the **direct service option (DSO)** and the **direct funding option (DFO)**.

Direct Service Option (DSO): If you choose the direct service option, you will work with your regional provider to identify your child's or youth's goals, strengths and needs, and plan for behavioural services for your child.

Direct Funding Option (DFO): If you choose the direct funding option, you are responsible for choosing a provider who will work with you to identify your child's or youth's goals, strengths, and needs, and plan for behavioural services. Tools are available on the Ministry of Children and Youth Services [website](#) to support you in choosing a qualified provider.

In the direct funding option, the funding you receive will be based on the budget developed by the Clinical Supervisor and will fund the evidence based behavioural services that are included in your child's or youth's OAP Behaviour Plan. You will be responsible for purchasing services, managing and submitting invoices and payments. These evidence based behavioural services will be funded up to a maximum of \$55 per hour.

Whatever service option you choose, your family will be working with a clinical team who will be supervising and delivering the behavioural services. You may have only one person on your clinical team, the Clinical Supervisor, or you may be working with many individuals. This will depend on which provider you have chosen, the complexity of your child's or youth's needs, and the type of services you're receiving. The clinical team will work together with you to develop and deliver behavioural services that will meet your family's needs.

How will my behavioural services provider support my family?

Your provider will work with you to develop an OAP Behaviour Plan that will describe the evidence based behavioural services that your child or youth will receive. There will be one clinician, the Clinical Supervisor, who is responsible for developing and overseeing the behavioural services, and that person will need to meet required qualifications, or be working towards meeting those qualifications within a specific timeframe.

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In this way, you can be confident that you are receiving high-quality services from a knowledgeable and experienced clinician.

Decision-making in the OAP is family-centred, which means that you and your child or youth will have a central role to play in child's determining the services you receive in the OAP including ensuring that your service provider is a good fit for your family.

Whatever service option you choose, you will be fully involved in the development of your child's or youth's Behaviour Plan and will be asked to sign the plan once you agree with it.

To learn more about the OAP Behaviour Plan and how it is developed, please see the [OAP Guidelines](#) and the [OAP Clinical Framework](#).

What should I consider when choosing my provider?

For many families, making a decision about which service option to choose can be a challenge. Here are some questions to consider when deciding which option works best for you:

- Do you feel comfortable being responsible for purchasing services, managing and submitting invoices and payments on your own?
- Where do you think would be the best place for you to receive services? (e.g., at home, at an agency, in the community)
- Are you comfortable with professionals being in your home to deliver services?

- What time of day would work best for your family to receive services?
- Do you or your child/youth already have a relationship with a provider and would you like to keep working with that provider? Can you travel to access services?

Please feel free to contact your [regional provider](#) and/or Family Support Worker to discuss your options further.

What if I change my mind?

If you change your mind about your service option or provider, your Family Support Worker can answer any questions you may have and help you with next steps.

How can I find out my child's spot on the OAP waitlist?

You can contact your regional provider at any time for information about the waitlist. Your regional provider will also be able to tell you:

- The date your child was referred to the OAP;
- The date of referral for children and youth most recently served in the OAP;
- Any factors local to you that could influence your child or youth's wait time; and
- Information about the family services and training available in your community.

Your regional provider will help you stay informed about your child or youth's spot on the waitlist and answer any questions you may have.

I acknowledge having received this **OAP Information Sheet**, and having the opportunity to read and ask questions about it.

Date: _____

Child/Youth First and Last Name

Child/Youth Date of Birth

Parent/Caregiver First and Last Name

Parent/Caregiver Signature

Family Support Worker First and Last Name

Family Support Worker Signature

Family Support Worker Organization