



Optimal Beginnings

Families

First 100 Days Kit, Autism Speaks

This kit provides information to help families get through the first steps of an autism diagnosis.

A Parent's Guide to Evidence-Based Practice and Autism

This manual from the National Autism Center aims to assist parents as they make difficult decisions about how best to help their children with autism spectrum disorders reach their full potential.

Autism Source, Autism Society of America (ASA)

ASA's Autism Source is a database of resources in local communities. It includes contact information for ASA chapters and other local supports.

Autism NOW

Autism Now is an initiative of The Arc and The Administration on Developmental Disabilities. This national autism resource and information center is a central point of resources and information for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and other developmental disabilities, their families, and other key stakeholders.

Autism Wandering Awareness Alerts Response Education (AWAARE)

Working to prevent wandering incidents and deaths within the autism community.

Department of Education

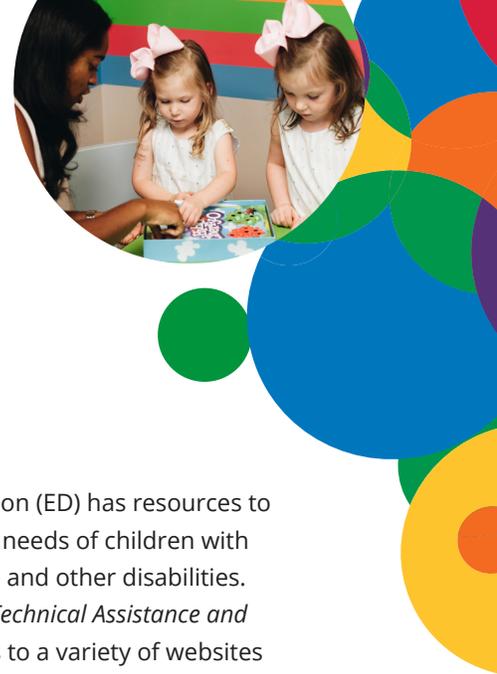
The Department of Education (ED) has resources to assist with the educational needs of children with autism spectrum disorders and other disabilities. The *ED's Special Education Technical Assistance and Dissemination Network* links to a variety of websites and online resources that focus on special education issues, such as policy, technology, curriculum, and parent trainings. In addition, the *Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)* within the ED has resources for parents and individuals, school districts, and states in the areas of special education, vocational rehabilitation, and research.

Mental Health Services Locator, National Mental Health Information Center

The Mental Health Services Locator helps families and professionals find information about mental health services and resources by state and/or region. The National Mental Health Information Center is part of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Operation Autism for Military Families

Operation Autism is a web-based resource specifically designed and created to support military families that have children with autism. It is from the Organization for Autism Research (OAR) and the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation.



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School Accreditation, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
NAEYC provides accreditation for schools that meet certain standards, as well as resources, tools, and information for families and childcare providers.

State Programs, National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)

Locate organizations and agencies within each state that address disability-related issues. NICHCY has compiled a resource directory by state that lists key programs for children with developmental disabilities and their families. The lists include state agencies serving children and youth with disabilities, state chapters of disability organizations and parent groups, and parent training and information projects.

Financial Resources for Health Care

Children's Health Insurance Program

Insure Kids Now! is a national campaign to link the nation's 10 million uninsured children--from birth to age 18--to free and low-cost health insurance. It is sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services. Each state has a Children's Health Insurance Program that provides free or low-cost health insurance for eligible children. The website has basic facts about these programs as well as links to every state's program for children. The site also has information on where you can learn who is eligible for the program, how to apply, and what services are covered. You can get information in English and Spanish.



GovBenefits.gov

GovBenefits.gov is a partnership of Federal agencies with a shared vision - to provide improved, personalized access to government assistance programs. This website can help you determine if there are government benefits you can receive.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a federal program that helps certain groups of people pay for medical care. Each state regulates its own Medicaid program, so the rules may be slightly different state-to-state. To get information, contact the Medicaid office in your state.

The Arc Medicaid Reference Desk

The Medicaid Reference Desk is a tool to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities find out what Medicaid can offer them. It is a project of The Arc and the Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

Social Security Benefits

This booklet is for the parents, caregivers or representatives of children under age 18 who have disabilities that might make them eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments. It is also for adults who became disabled in childhood and who might be entitled to Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. (SSDI benefit is called a "child's" benefit because it is paid on a parent's Social Security earnings record.)

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Financial Resources for Health Care

Sound Advice on Autism

To answer parents' questions about autism spectrum disorders, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) offers a collection of interviews with pediatricians, researchers and parents.

Special Needs Trust/Estate Planning

Plan ahead for your child's financial future by writing a specialized will and preparing other documents that will help your child access his or her government benefits when you are gone.

Disaster Planning

AutismCares

A growing number of national autism organizations partnered to form AutismCares, a national initiative to help families with members who have autism that are challenged with disasters in their community. AutismCares registers families through a free online service to help manage and store their health care records and ensure that trained case managers are able to locate them more effectively in case disaster strikes their community.

Assistive Technology

People who have an autism spectrum disorder may use assistive technology (AT). AT is any item that helps people do things in their daily lives. Examples of AT devices include a keyguard that helps children find the right keys on a computer keyboard, a simpler remote control for a TV or stereo, an adapted mouse that makes getting around on the computer easier, switches that help children play with toys, and talking books.

Assistive Devices, MEDLINEplus

MEDLINEplus is an online service of the National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health. Updated daily, the site offers information on a range of health topics, including autism and assistive devices, in English and Spanish (En Español).

Technical Assistance Project

The Technical Assistance Project is sponsored by the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA), funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The project reduces barriers and increases access to assistive technology (AT) devices and services for people with disabilities of all ages. Visit the project's website to find an assistive technology program in your state or territory.

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Adults with Autism

Advancing Futures for Adults with Autism

Advancing Futures for Adults with Autism offers a resources webpage.

Autism Speaks

Autism Speaks provides an Adults with Autism resource list.

The Autism Speaks Transition Tool Kit

Serves as a guide to assist families on the journey from adolescence to adulthood.

Autism Society

Visit the Autism Society's Adulthood webpage for helpful information.

Autistic Self Advocacy Network

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN) is a non-profit organization run by and for people with autism. ASAN was created to provide support and services to individuals on the autism spectrum while working to educate communities and improve public perceptions of autism.

CDC's Disability and Health Program

To be healthy, people with disabilities require health care that meets their needs as a whole person, not just as a person with a disability. Most people with or without disabilities can stay healthy by learning about and living healthy lifestyles. This webpage provides tips on how to do so.

Easter Seals

Autism services for adults and tips on finding a job, moving away from home, and making friends.

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)

NICHCY's website offers information on services for adults with disabilities.

Organization for Autism Research (OAR)

OAR has provided a Guide for Transition to Adulthood (downloadable).

National Autism Resource & Information Center

Visit the National Autism Resource and Information Center for resources and helpful information for adults.



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Other Federal Resources

Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee

The Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC) coordinates all efforts within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) concerning autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Through its inclusion of both Federal and public members, the IACC helps to ensure that a wide range of ideas and perspectives are represented and discussed in a public forum.

National Institutes of Health

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) conducts and funds studies to improve the health of all people. The Autism Centers of Excellence (ACE) Program is a trans-NIH initiative that supports large-scale multidisciplinary studies on autism spectrum disorder with the goal of determining the disorder's causes and the best treatments for them. NIH has developed a National Database for Autism Research (NDAR) to support and accelerate research in autism. This resource highlights existing research and information about autism spectrum disorder and encourages new research by allowing greater access to data.

National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM)

NCCAM is the lead agency for scientific research on complementary and alternative medicine.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)

NICHD studies growth and development, including disabilities such as autism. NICHD studies growth and development, including developmental disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder.

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD)

NIDCD does research related to hearing, balance, smell, taste, voice, speech, and language. It studies medical and behavioral problems, and works to promote health, in people with communication problems, including those with autism spectrum disorders.

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)

NIEHS works to understand how the environment affects health. NIEHS and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) fund children's environmental health research centers to study possible links between the environment and children's health. Some of the centers focus on autism.

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

NIMH is the lead agency on the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee, which coordinates ASD-related activities in the Department of Health and Human Services.

National Institutes of Health Autism Coordinating Committee (NIH/ACC)

The NIH/ACC coordinates ASD-related activities among the NIH institutes listed above. In 2001, NIH/ACC funded several universities to research treatments for ASD. The committee also wants to find biological markers or medical tests that can tell if a person has an ASD.

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