

Autism Fast Start Checklist

This Fast Start Checklist was created to help parents who are concerned that their child is exhibiting signs of an Autism Spectrum Disorder. The FULL DOCUMENT, INCLUDING ACTIVE WEBSITE LINKS, can be found at: www.autismcouncilofutah.org.

Early Detection: www.firstsigns.org, www.autismspeaks.org/video

- If your child is 2 years old or younger:** Contact your local Early Intervention Agency for an evaluation. www.babywatch.org

If your child is 3-4 years old: Contact your local Early Childhood Special Education program.

If your child is 5 years or older: Contact your local school district, which will have a program for students with disabilities ages 5-22. ([Utah State Department of Education](#))

- Obtain diagnostic testing and/or assessment.** ([Valley Mental Health](#), [Wasatch Mental Health](#), [Utah Parent Center](#))
- If your child is diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, obtain a 100-Day Kit from *Autism Speaks*.** www.autismspeaks.org
- Obtain *My Next Steps DVD* to learn how to engage your child and work with your school.**
- Contact other parents who have children with Autism Spectrum Disorders.** ([Utah Parent Center](#), www.utahparentcenter.org)
- Contact the Division of Services for Persons with Disabilities (DSPD – www.dspd.utah.org)**
- Apply for Social Security and Supplemental Security Income.**
- Create a filing system for compiling important information and documents.**
- Videotape your child.** It may be helpful to review videos with providers to assist in diagnosis
- Review various service delivery options.** [Resources – Autism Council of Utah](#), [Autism Speaks](#), [Autism Society of America](#)
- Review various treatment options.**
- Learn about the law and your rights in your child’s education.**
- Determine which treatments are available in your area, most viable and beneficial** given your unique family situation, your child’s circumstances, and medical/psychological testing.
- Implement as quickly as possible**, observing one intervention at a time to measure effectiveness.
- Collaborate with professionals to monitor and evaluate progress** by taking careful notes and daily logs of behavior to discern which interventions are providing the best results.

- ❑ **Make necessary changes** in your child’s treatment plan for optimal response.
- ❑ **Don’t get discouraged!**

Since we don’t know the exact cause of autism and we don’t have a definite cure, many families have found that treating the symptoms using a multi-faceted approach to treatment is the most beneficial. Each child is a unique puzzle. Finding the pieces to your child’s puzzle will need to be tailored to his/her needs and response rates for each intervention. What may work for one child, may not work for another. Be persistent in finding the specific pieces that fit together for your child.

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DISCLAIMER: The information contained in this checklist should not be construed as medical advice. Please consult a professional to help guide you in your decision-making process.