



DC AUTISM
COLLABORATIVE

AUTISM RESOURCE GUIDE

for Community Providers

Version 1 • Spring 2022

Overview

The DC Autism Collaborative (DC-AC) is a multidisciplinary, public-private coalition of professionals, community leaders and parents whose goal is to strategically address barriers to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) care and advocate for solutions that will increase early and equitable access to high-quality ASD diagnosis, treatment and coordinated care. The education, outreach, and engagement subgroup identifies and strengthens education and outreach efforts related to ASD for families and care providers.

Goal

Create a relevant, useful, and current toolkit/resource guide for DC community providers in order to navigate ASD concerns in early childhood.

DC Autism Collaborative

Education, Outreach, Engagement Subgroup

Azeb Adere • Jane Anderson • Carla Ware Easterling
Chioma Oruh • Christopher Chapman • Jamell White
Ivy Giserman-Kiss • Leandra Godoy • Meghan Sullivan
Meagan Mattos • Elizabeth Rihani • Rochanda Hiligh-Thomas
Olivia Soutullo • Marsha Stephensky • Stephen O'Connor
Renee Williams • Yetta Myrick • Serene Habayeb



Evaluations and Treatment through Medical Systems

In order for a child to receive intervention services covered by medical insurance, children typically require a formal diagnosis from a medical professional. Below are some resources to complete a diagnostic evaluation. See the following page for services children can receive through the educational system.



Children's National Hospital Departments

This webpage page lists all of the departments at Children's National Hospital that serve children with ASD through evaluation and treatment programs.



<https://childrensnational.org/healthcare-providers/refer-a-patient/referral-guidelines/autism-and-neurodevelopmental-referral-guidelines>



MedStar Georgetown University Hospital: Autism and Communications Disorders Clinic

The clinic provides evaluation services.



<https://www.medstarhealth.org/services/autism-and-communications-disorder-clinic>



Or call: **202-444-2722**



Early Intervention/School Based Services


Below are resources for children to receive services through the educational system including services covered under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Strong Start

The District of Columbia's Early Intervention Program (DC EIP) provides support and services to families with children, from birth through three, with developmental delays and disabilities. Strong Start early intervention services are provided in a child's natural environment. Strong Start uses a coaching interaction style to build on the capacity of families and caregivers to help their child learn and develop.




 <https://osse.dc.gov/service/strong-start-dc-early-intervention-program-dc-eip-information-families>


 Start the referral process today by contacting the Strong Start Intake Hotline at **(202) 727-3665** or <https://eip.osse.dc.gov>.

Early Stages DC

Early Stages is an evaluation center that works with families to identify and address developmental delays in children between 2 years 8 months to 5 years 10 months. A program of DC Public schools, they provide evaluations for DC residents who have not yet entered the school system or are currently homeschooled. The program can also provide community referrals for children in private or charter schools. Early Stages also provides professional development and parent workshops in the community. All Early Stages services are free.


 www.earlystagesdc.org
www.earlystagesdc.org/page/workshops


 Refer a child by visiting the Early Stages website at or www.earlystagesdc.org/form/refer-a-child. Walker-Jones Location Phone: **202-698-8037** or Minnesota Avenue Location Phone: **202-442-7201**

 Questions? Email info@earlystagesdc.org for general questions or education@earlystagesdc.org to schedule a workshop.

Healthy Futures

Healthy Futures is a program in which licensed mental health professionals provide on-site mental health consultation services aimed at building the capacity of directors and staff at Child Development Centers to reduce challenging behaviors and promote positive social-emotional development. Services for Children/Families include services to improve social-emotional competence, education about children's mental health, individual child & classroom observations, screening for early identification of social-emotional concerns, and referrals & linkages to community resources & services. Services for Staff/Centers include support with child behavior and classroom management, crisis intervention services, training on behavior management techniques & accessing resources, promoting staff wellness, team building, & staff support, and consultation on program policies about social-emotional mental health issues.

 A list of sites that work with Healthy Futures can be found [here](#).

 For more information contact Stephen O'Connor: Stephen.oconnor2@dc.gov

Legal/Advocacy Organizations

The following resources can assist families who may require additional legal support or support in advocating for their child's needs.

Children's Law Center

Provides free legal services to DC residents. Children's Law Center can help support resources related to education, SSI, adult guardianship, Medicaid denials, housing conditions and more.



<https://childrenslawcenter.org/>

DC Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education

An impartial, independent and neutral office that uses mediation and conflict resolution to resolve complaints and concerns for parents, families and schools regarding public education.



<https://educationombudsman.dc.gov/>



Call: **202-741-0886**



Email: ombudsman@dc.gov

Advocates for Justice and Education (AJE)

AJE is the federally-designated Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center for the District of Columbia, funded under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA). AJE supports families of children birth through 26 with disabilities by providing free information, resources, direct services, training, and advocacy to help their children receive access to an appropriate education. Parent resources are provided to support advocating for their child and understanding their rights as a parent of a child with disabilities.



<https://www.aje-dc.org/>



Call: **202-678-8060**



Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (PADD) program

Disability Rights DC (DRDC) at University Legal Services is the federally-designated protection and advocacy program for people with disabilities in the District of Columbia and is the Client Assistance Program under the Rehabilitation Act. DRDC's mission is to advocate for the human, civil, and legal rights of people with disabilities in the District of Columbia. Under the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (PADD) program, DRDC advocates on behalf of people with developmental disabilities for equal access to government services and public accommodations, appropriate and inclusive special education services, quality community-based supports and services and the right to make their own decisions. DRDC also monitors the services and supports provided in institutional and community placements and schools and investigates when it receives complaints or has probable cause to believe people with developmental disabilities have been subjected to abuse and/or neglect.



<https://www.uls-dc.org/protection-and-advocacy-program/disability-rights-dc/>



Center for Child and Human Development, Georgetown University

The center provides interdisciplinary services to support children, youth, adults, and their families, including those with disabilities.



<http://gucchd.georgetown.edu>



Or call: **202-687-5000**





Peer/Community Supports

The following support organizations can assist family members supporting children with ASD.

DC Autism Parents

DC Autism Parents (DCAP) is a parent-founded and operated 501(c)3 non-profit organization. DCAP offers a monthly newsletter, monthly support group call, parent workshops/webinars and family & community resource navigation.



www.dcautismparents.org



Call: **202-271-9262**



Email: info@dcautismparents.org

DC Developmental Disabilities Council

The DC Developmental Disabilities Council is an independent, community-based advisory committee funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, and the Council possesses a membership of fifteen dedicated individuals charged with identifying and addressing the most pressing needs of people with developmental disabilities in the DC community. The DD Council seeks to strengthen the voice of people with developmental disabilities and their families in support of greater independence, inclusion, empowerment and the pursuit of life as they choose.



<https://ddc.dc.gov/>



Call: **202-724-8612**



Email: ddc@dc.gov

DC Advocacy Partners

DC Advocacy Partners is a leadership training program designed for self-advocates and family members of individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities as well as professionals working with people with disabilities. There is no cost to participate in the program.



<http://dcpartners.iel.org/>



Call: **202-656-5048**



Email: faheyc@iel.org

Ethiopian Eritrean Special Needs Community

A non-profit organization whose mission is linking a support group of parents, educators, and professionals in the DMV community to provide support, education, and guidance to families raising children with special needs so they can become effective advocates for their children.



<https://eesnc.org/>



Call: **240-476-5908**




Email: autismsupport@eesnc.org



Family Ties of DC

Family Ties of DC (FTDC) is a unique parent-to-parent support program that matches a Support Parent who has a child/children with disabilities with the Referred Parent, who is seeking emotional support, information and resources from someone who has travelled their path.

 <https://www.dcqualitytrust.org/family-ties/>


 Call: **202-459-4002**

 Email: **rwhite@dcqualitytrust.org**

Help Me Grow

Help Me Grow DC is an information and referral helpline District residents available at no cost that provides parents, physicians and providers with the knowledge and resources they need to make a difference in the lives of prenatal parents and families with children through age 5.

 <https://helpmegrow.dc.gov/>


 Call: **1-800-MOM-BABY**

 Email: **helpmegrow.dc@dc.gov**

HSCSN Health Plan

Health Services for Children with Special Needs, Inc. (HSCSN) is the contracted health care plan provider for the District of Columbia's Child and Adolescent Supplemental Security Income Program (CASSIP) for children and young adults. CASSIP manages medical care, dental care, behavioral health services, and drug and alcohol abuse services. HSCSN serves children and young adults up to age 26 who live in Washington, DC are Medicaid Eligible, and receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

HSCSN Process/Tips: Apply for HSCSN using the CASSIP Provider Request form (signed by provider) through DHCF. The completed CASSIP request form, in addition to supplemental documents that include clinical support of the existence of a physical or mental impairment, can be sent to Surobhi Rooney (DHCF) via email (surobhi.rooney@dc.gov) or fax (202-442-4790). Families can get HSCSN even if SSI hasn't been approved through the Katie Beckett Waiver through DHCF.

 <http://www.ssa.gov/applyfordisability/child.htm>
and <http://dhs.dc.gov/service/apply-benefits>
and <https://hscsnhealthplan.org/about>

Recreational Resources

The following resources offer adapted recreational opportunities for children with autism.

Smithsonian's Morning at the Museum Program

Morning at the Museum is a free, sensory-friendly program for families of children, teenagers, and young adults with disabilities including intellectual disabilities, autism, sensory processing disorders, and other cognitive disabilities.



<https://access.si.edu/program/morning-museum>



Email: Access@si.edu

Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN) of Greater DC - Baltimore

KEEN provides 1-to-1 sports and recreational opportunities for children and young adults with developmental and physical disabilities for free



<https://www.keengreaterdc.org/>



Call: **301-770-3200**



Email: info@KEENGrDC.org

Kids in Action

Kids in Action is an adaptive sports and social activities program for children and young adults with disabilities and their siblings.



<https://childrensnational.org/hsc/hsc-pediatric-center/community-and-rec-therapy/kids-in-action>



Email: kidsinaction@hshealth.org

Music for Autism

Music for Autism is enhancing quality of life and raising public awareness through autism-friendly, interactive concerts developed specifically for individuals with autism and their families.



<https://www.musicforautism.org/concerts/>



Call: **877-863-7473 Ext. 1**



Email: rsvp@musicforautism.org



Helpful Websites

This list of miscellaneous websites provide additional information about ASD and associated supports.

ASD Toolkit for Primary Care Providers in DC

A toolkit for PCPs that includes helpful resources across DC including information and resources about IEPs and 504 plans.

 https://www.dchealthcheck.net/documents/ASD_Toolkit_FINAL%20080920.pdf


Association for Science in Autism Treatment

A resource to explore the research behind different autism treatments.

 <https://asatonline.org/>

Autism Navigator/Baby Navigator

A collection of web-based tools, videos, and courses about early social communication development and ASD.

 <https://autismnavigator.com/>
<https://babynavigator.com/>

Autism Society of America

An organization that provides advocacy, education, information and referral, support, and community at national, state and local levels.

 <https://autism-society.org/>

Autism Speaks and Autism Speaks First 100 Days Toolkit for Young Children

An advocacy organization with a variety of helpful resources including toolkits for parents, such as the "First 100 Days" toolkit.

 <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/100-day-kit-young-children>


Autistic Self Advocacy Network

An advocacy organization run by autistic self-advocates

 <https://autisticadvocacy.org/>


Caregiver Skills Training

Caregiver Skills Trainings from Autism Speaks is a free online training program that teaches caregiver's day-to-day skills to help boost the well-being and development of children with autism and other developmental disabilities

 <https://openwho.org/courses/caregiver-skills-training>


Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "Learn the Signs. Act Early" Program and Act Early DC

Free resources to track children's development and information on how to act early should there be any concerns.

 <https://actearlydc.org>
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly>
<https://www.facebook.com/actearlydc>
<https://www.facebook.com/milestonesmatter>


Charting the LifeCourse

A series of easy-to-use life planning tools.

 <http://www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/exploring-the-life-stages/>

Kennedy Krieger Video Tutorial

A video tutorial designed to help support parents in identifying the early signs of ASD.

 <https://www.kennedykrieger.org/patient-care/centers-and-programs/center-for-autism-and-related-disorders/outreach-and-training/early-signs-of-autism-video-tutorial>



Picture Exchange Communication Systems

The Picture Exchange Communication System, or PECS, allows people with little or no communication abilities to communicate using pictures.



<https://nationalautismresources.com/the-picture-exchange-communication-system-pecs/>



Parent Encouragement Program

A resource for parent education, training, and support.



<https://peparent.org/>



Sesame Street and Autism

A Sesame Street initiative offering a series of videos and resources to support families in manage common challenges and to help improve connections with families' social networks.



<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/autism/>



Vanderbilt Family First Website

TRIAD's Families First Program is a free program for caregivers of young children (ages 2-7) newly diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The primary goal is to equip caregivers with practical tools to support their child, to provide resources to more easily apply strategy and planning ideas, and to give caregivers an opportunity to meet other caregivers with similar questions or concerns.



<https://vkc.vumc.org/vkc/triad/fam/>



Wandering Resources

Tips to keep kids from ASD safe from wandering



<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/Autism/Pages/Autism-Wandering-Tips-AAP.aspx>





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