

Ontario Autism Program

Where does the School fit in?



Did you know?

Kids spend an average of 1,400 hours per school-year at school, not counting the commute and before and after school programs and potential extra-curriculars! During that same timeframe, the average preschooler will sleep approximately 2,400 hours. Don't forget; there's soccer, doctor's appointments, gymnastics, tutoring, therapy, homework, family time, dinner, the Wiggles, bath-time, mental health time, transition, transition, transition....



What do we know about Autism?

- If you've met one kid with Autism, you've met ***one kid with Autism!***
- Autism is not going away and there is no real “cure” only intervention.
- “About 1 in 94 children have been identified with an ASD in Canada.
- The Autism “spectrum” creates a uniqueness to the way in which each child's strengths and needs present themselves.
- Early Autism specific intervention can promote a better outcome.
- Autism can be associated with other co-morbid disorders.
- A coordinated approach amongst service providers and families supports and encourages student achievement.

What do we know about Autism & the Educational Setting?

- Fairness is not sameness.
- Early intervention is crucial to student achievement.
- PPM 140 *Incorporating methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)* requires that school boards/schools provide programs and services using ABA methods.
- The IEP is a working document that in collaboration with the family, special education staff and paraprofessionals/community service providers must reflect the individual student's strengths and needs and how they will be reflected in the individual student's learning plan.
- Each student with an IEP must be provided with a transition plan that targets their specific needs and the plan must indicate how and who will ensure the plan is implemented and, this is also a working document.
- “For students with ASD, the level of need does not always correspond to level of functioning – an apparently higher functioning teenager may still have high needs. Funding to support students with ASD should not be tied to students' intellectual scores.” [Making a Difference For Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Ontario Schools - From Evidence to Action](#)

What do we know about the new Ontario Autism Program?

- **A single point of access.** There will be one access point to the OAP in each of the nine service areas to make it easier for families to access services for their child.
- **Family-centred decision making.** As key partners in their child's care, families will be actively engaged in the assessment, goal-setting and intervention planning process for their child.
- **Collaborative approach to service.** A foundation of the new OAP will be the collaborative approach taken by community support service providers, clinicians and educators to support children's needs at home, during service and in school.
- **Service based on need.** Services will be flexible and individualized. The intensity and duration of the services a child or youth receives is based on their needs and strengths, regardless of age. Each child's service plan will be determined by clinical assessment.
- **A direct funding option.** A new direct funding option will be implemented by the end of this year. This will provide all families with a choice between receiving direct service or receiving funding to purchase their child's service.
- **Safe, effective autism services.** The province intends to regulate ABA practitioners to help ensure families receive safe, high-quality services, have confidence in their providers and know where to go if they have a concern.

What does it all mean?

ABA (Applied Behaviour Analysis)

- Guided by child's learning pattern and current functional level.
- Structured intervention process where skills are targeted & taught.
- Prompting from simple gestures to hand-over-hand is provided and then faded once child becomes independent.
- As skills are mastered, more complex behaviours are taught (generalization).
- The core of ABA is $A+B=C$ which is **Antecedent + Behaviour = Consequence**.
- Data collection is an essential part of ABA; providing accountability in the delivery of the intervention & clearly showing if the child is making progress and/or where changes in delivery must be made.

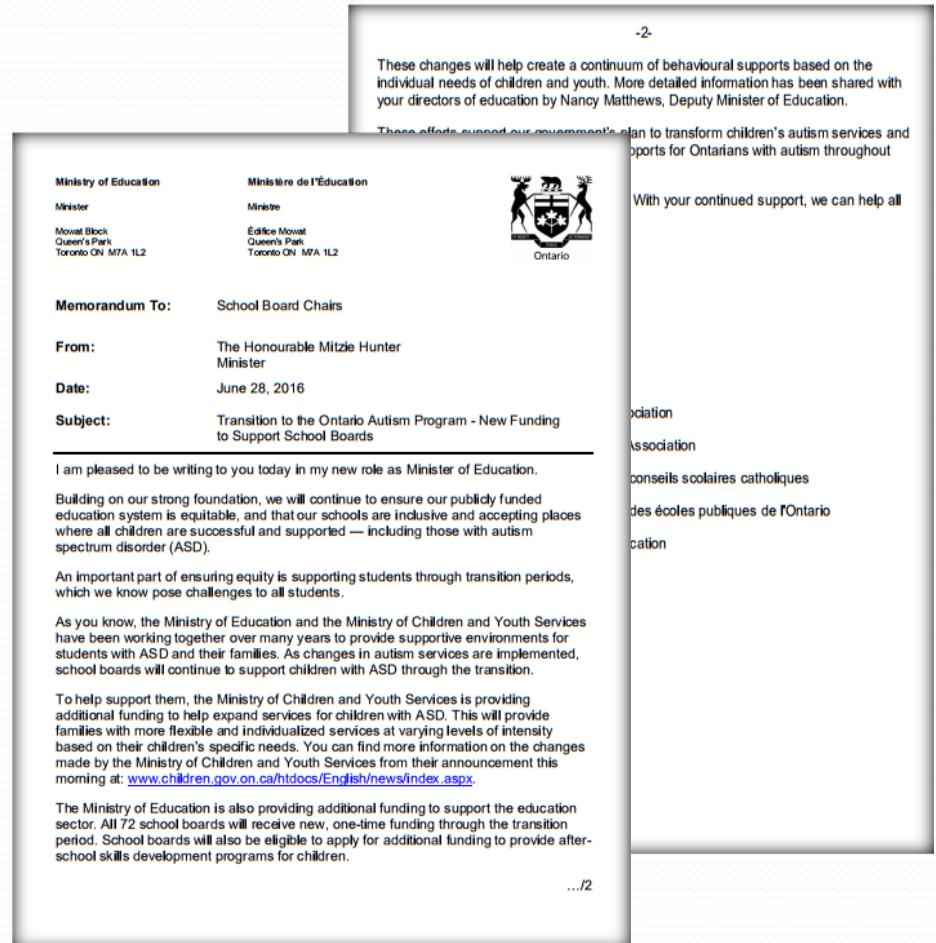
IBI (Intensive Behaviour Intervention)

- An intensive service delivered for a minimum of 20 hours per week.
- Usually provided on a one-to-one or small group basis.
- Was developed for young children with autism spectrum disorders, based on the scientific principles of the broader field of ABA
- Requires frequent and direct measurement of the child's performance and progress according to their customized plan.
- Designed to improve key learning skills in the areas of cognitive, language, and social development and must be provided intensively during the child's best learning periods, typically during a regular daytime schedule.
- Treatment is meant to increase the child's developmental trajectory.
- Connections for Students, a joint initiative between the MCYS and the MoE supports a seamless transition for children and youth leaving an IBI service delivery model and entering an ABA-education model within the publicly-funded school system.

The Province provided Ontario district school boards with an opportunity to apply for additional funding to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

The letter from Education Minister Mitzie Hunter states that “as changes in autism services are implemented, school boards will continue to support children with ASD through the transition.”

The funding opportunity is meant to “expand services for children with ASD” and school boards were able to apply for additional funding to create and provide “after school skills development programs for children”
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos/june2016/transition_autism.pdf



Autism Ontario would like to know...

- Has the TCDSB applied for the additional funding as offered in the MoE's letter dated June 28, 2016?
- What has been implemented during this transition and beyond to support students with ASD using the additional funding received?
- What collaborative role does the TCDSB share with the MCYS and/or the MoE in the transition and implementation of the new OAP?
- How does *Connections for Students* support students with ASD transitioning to school and beyond and is there supportive data?
- Does the TCDSB employ ABA facilitators? If yes, what is their role?
- How much is the Behaviour Expertise Amount (BEA) allotment for the TCDSB and to what capacity is it being used according to its purpose?
- How are students with ASD in K-12 supported using ABA methods in achieving their academic and socio-emotional goals to their fullest potential and what measurable data has been collected and is available to show that it's working?
- Will PPM 149 and its associated TCDSB policies be amended to accommodate the collaborative relationship that the TCDSB will have with the MCYS in supporting achievement for students with ASD through the new Ontario Autism Program?

Thank You!

