

Other Things to Consider

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Spirale Factsheet #3: www.autismontario.com/spirale

Talk to Other Parents

Find out what their experiences are with different approaches and providers. It's also important to consider what you're hearing from whom. We all have different ideas, needs and ways of communicating, so what doesn't work for someone may work wonderfully for you. All feedback has some value - take the time to distil the information.

Ask Questions

It's important that you, the parent, have an understanding of the program and what it entails. Don't be afraid to ask a lot of questions. This will ensure you have a good understanding of what's expected of you and how it will impact your family. For example:

- Can the treatment be integrated into family life?
- Is there support provided to help the family build the plan into daily routine?
- Is there an additional fee for this service?

You will find a thorough listing of questions here under the 'Checklists' tab.

Testimonials

While exploring approaches there are many avenues in which you'll get information – websites, booths at a conference, professionals, word of mouth and from other parents. With all of this information comes testimonials, and as seductive as they may seem, testimonials are the least reliable evidence that an intervention is effective.

- In order to determine whether a service or treatment is a valuable tool for your child and family, ask yourself:
- What is the bias of the organization?
- How do they compare themselves to similar approaches/treatments?
- What objective evidence do they have about their service/product that is not from their own research?
- Who supervises the program and what are their credentials?
- How and when would you have access to their consultation?
- If you are unhappy with the service/product, what is their policy for refunds?

The Importance of Your Time

If you are trying a new approach or one with limited evidence for effectiveness for children with ASD, consider what you may be passing over. The majority of your resources are best spent on evidence-based practices for individuals with ASD, even while you continue to learn about promising interventions.

Remember

- Children with autism are all individuals; therefore what works well for one child may not be as effective for another child.
- Parents know their children best. If you feel an approach is not working for your child, or makes you or your child uncomfortable in some way, take the time to ask more questions.
- The needs of children and adults with autism will change as they develop and learn.