



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Toronto, Ontario, February 12, 2019

Statement from Autism Ontario

On February 07, 2019 the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services made an announcement about the changes being made to the Ontario Autism Program. Given our communications with various stakeholders and in reviewing various comments on social media since the announcement, it became clear that there were a number of misunderstandings or assumptions about Autism Ontario's views or actions that we wish to address.

- Autism Ontario neither proposed nor endorsed the announced changes to the OAP and is concerned about the impact these changes will have on children and families accessing the program.

Autism Ontario spoke with multiple media outlets in response to the announcement and also released our own [statement](#) on February 08, 2019. Autism Ontario's input to the Ontario Government regarding the OAP since Fall 2018:

- As a host of [ABACUS](#) website, we report quarterly to MCCSS about the numbers of self-listed ABA providers and trends regarding communications with providers and caregivers accessing the site.
- We have shared the results of our 2017 and 2018 Annual Province-wide Survey with MCCSS. Key highlights of the 2017 survey have been available on our website in [an infographic](#) and shared widely through social media and in our magazine Autism Matters.
- On January 15, 2019 we presented an oral and [written submission](#) to the Minister of Finance at its pre-budget consultations regarding a range of issues facing autistic children and adults and their families and highlighted 10 top areas of concern identified by caregivers and autistic adults who responded to our 2018 province-wide survey. This presentation also included our views regarding rumoured changes to the OAP.

In keeping with its support to families through its 25 Chapters for 46 years and through MCCSS funded Family Support Coordinators for the past 12 years, Autism Ontario has agreed to:

- Expand our supports to assist families in navigating the changes to the OAP beginning April 2019 as they use their funding in local communities across Ontario.

We will not be managing intake into the OAP or making decisions about eligibility or funding levels for individual families, or managing OAP financing.

About Autism Ontario: Autism Ontario has a 46 year history of representing thousands of families and people with ASD across Ontario. We are the only organization in Ontario that has formal parent representation in all areas of the province through our 25 Chapters. We advocate on behalf of all people with ASD and their families – at all ages and stages of life, reflecting a wide range of expression and abilities. To connect with us, visit www.autismontario.com

Vision: Acceptance and Opportunities for all people with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Mission: To ensure that each individual with ASD is provided the means to achieve quality of life as a respected member of society.

New to Autism? Find help for navigating the system after a diagnosis, school issues, and other ASD information; please contact your local **Family Support Coordinator** [here](#).

CONTACT:

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