



Tiffany MacDonald: Family Support Coordinator

I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about me! After graduating from a two year program in Law & Security/ Customs and Immigration from Loyalist College in 2000, I moved to Northern Ontario and started my career as an Educational Assistant working with children diagnosed with Autism and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). My family and I moved to Central East Region where I had the opportunity to work in a residential setting with adults on the spectrum. My role while working in the residential setting was to advocate on behalf of the residents in the community and school settings, to implement programming, facilitate life skills, social skills and communication skills. I also supported individuals in their job placements and volunteer placements.

I then began to work with transitional aged youth in helping them plan for their future. I facilitated Person Centred Plans to help with the transition planning of post-secondary education, interviewing techniques, employment opportunities, volunteer placements, transit training, meal preparation, time management, money management and organizational skills. This is where I feel in love with the community aspect of my job and then transferred into a permanent community setting as an Autism Consultant. My role was to provide families with resources, services and supports within the York / Durham Region. To work collaboratively with agencies in the community, assist in building local capacity in ASD service provision and ASD awareness within the school boards, local colleges and universities, community and community agencies. I was also responsible for implementing programming as well as determining and addressing specific local needs for programs.

I also worked as a respite worker by providing families with respite in which I implemented weekly social opportunities for a group of young boys to connect and interact with one another while participating in a variety of activities within their community.

I have continued my education at Laurentian University by taking courses from the Native Human Services Honours Bachelor of Social Work Programme. I am currently enrolled at Mohawk College in the Autism Behaviour Science Program.

I have lots of energy, ideas and hope that the Potential Program will make a difference in Central East Region. I welcome any ideas, suggestions and feedback that you may have. You can reach me by telephone at 905-723-8405 and 705-748-0910 or by email at tiffany@autismontario.com. I look forward to building community capacity, agency partnerships and working with families in Central East Region.

Regards,

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The Family Support Coordinator roles and responsibilities is to provide family support services in relation to ASD including sharing resources, education and direction to available supports and resource materials; liaise with parents and families in multiple ways including face to face and via telephone, email, support group meetings and Skype.

Responsible for the complete implementation of all identified program deliverables as well as determining and addressing specific local needs for programs, resources, education and professional supports if available. Consider all resources available through government, community-based agencies and private providers, with an emphasis on promotion of evidence-based practices.

Create a greater awareness about ASD in the local communities through the development, coordination and sharing of resources.

Assist in building local capacity in ASD service provision by working directly with the Community Events Coordinator and identifying Expert Speaker Workshops for visiting professionals.

Work collaboratively with the local Chapter Leadership Council, Program Director, Provincial office staff and all staff and volunteers in the Chapters with the overall goal of providing the right supports and service.

Work in collaboration with the Consultant for French Language Services, francophone staff and volunteers to better understand and respond to needs of francophone children and youth with an ASD and their families.

Build the volunteer support base by recruiting, working with and encouraging participation and involvement at events.

Design and present up-to-date training materials for parent and community groups that will assist and support parents in parenting children with ASD.

Develop other resources as required including informational resources such as topic specific tip sheets, educational materials, etc for caregivers.

Provide direct supports to the Potential Programs in other parts of the province as required by phone, email or face to face meetings.

Encourage greater participation among staff and volunteers on certain activities based on qualifications such as representation on various Autism Ontario committees and working groups or local community ASD groups.

Develop collaborative relationships and network with related service providers to strengthen external partnerships, ensure leveraging of community resources, and avoid duplication of services.

Track, maintain and report work activities to support Autism Ontario reporting requirements and to describe activity and progress.