

Interventions for Young Autistic Children



Reports on Autism Interventions

- [2020](#) - *Evidence-based practices for children, youth, and young adults with Autism*. National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice Review Team.
- [2021](#) - *Evidence-based practices for children, youth, and young adults with autism: Third generation review*.

Ratings of Effectiveness

Table 1 - Different Terminology Used in Different Sources, ONTABA

EVIDENCE-BASED	EMERGING	NOT EVIDENCE BASED	
Good Evidence Showing Effective	Some (weaker) Positive Evidence	Insufficient Evidence To Inform Decision- Making	Good Evidence Showing Ineffective /Harmful
(Well) Established	Emerging	Unestablished	Ineffective
Empirically validated	Evidence informed		Not recommended
Empirically supported treatment	Probably efficacious		
	Practices with some support		Non-evidence based
Definitely Use	Use Only with Caution	Do Not Use	Definitely Do Not Use

Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC)

Providers AAC specialists, behaviour analysts, educators, speech-language pathologists

Type of Service Direct 1:1, consultation, caregiver or educator-mediated model

Description The assessment and implementation (direct teaching following a manualized intervention/evidence-based practice approach) of an aided or unaided system which may be low tech, mid tech, or high-tech for clarification of spoken messages or as a replacement for speech to increase expressive language skills and communication. Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), sign language, written language, speech generating devices (SGDs)

Ages All ages

Outcomes PECS – good outcomes; limited for speech generating devices

Rating Good evidence showing effectiveness for specific types; on the National Standards list; eligible under Core Clinical Services in the OAP

Activities of Daily Living

- ADLs - Activities of Daily Living

Providers	behaviour analysts, educators, occupational therapists, psychologists
Type of Service	Direct 1:1
Description	Direct teaching of the component and chained skills for daily living routines such as drinking, eating, sleeping, undressing, dressing, washing hands, drying hands, toileting, tooth brushing, hair brushing, bathing/showering, shaving, menstruation care
Ages	All ages
Outcomes	Improvement of self-help skills; increased independence
Rating	Good evidence showing effectiveness for specific skills if using behavioural approaches; eligible under Core Clinical Services in the OAP

Ayres Sensory Integration

Providers occupational therapists

Type of Service Direct assessment and treatment, 1:1, consultative

Description Interventions that target a person's ability to integrate sensory information (visual, auditory, tactile, proprioceptive, and vestibular) from their body and environment in order to respond using organized and adaptive behaviour

Ages All Ages

Outcomes Increased adaptive behaviour and decreased interfering behaviour

Rating Emerging evidence of effectiveness; 3 studies to date; included in the National Standards report; eligible under Core Clinical Services in the OAP

Comprehensive / Intensive Applied Behaviour Analysis

- Comprehensive or Intensive Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) – Early Intensive Behaviour Intervention (EIBI), Intensive Behaviour Intervention

Providers	behaviour analysts (BCBAs), assistant behaviour analysts (BCaBAs), registered behavior technicians (RBTs), ABA therapists
Type of Service	Intensive and comprehensive application of ABA; target goals must be socially significant for the individual
Description	Broad curriculum (15 or more domains/areas) delivered at greater than 21 – 25 hours per week); 1:1, small group as applicable
Ages	All ages
Outcomes	Significant increase in skill acquisition and/or decrease in interfering behaviours
Rating	Good empirical support; on the National Standards report; eligible under Core Clinical Services in the OAP

ESI / SCERTS

- **Early Social Interaction/Social Communication Emootional Regulation and Transactional Supports**

Providers	Speech-language pathologists, speech assistants/communicative disorders assistants (CDA)
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Type of Service	Caregiver-mediated program (parent coaching)
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Description	Parent coaching model; activity-based learning in a variety of settings
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Ages	All ages (throughout the lifespan); all disabilities
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Outcomes	Social communication, emotional skills, transactional supports (<u>may</u> lead to increased receptive language/understanding)
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Rating	Emerging evidence; eligible under Core Clinical services in the OAP
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Focused - Applied Behaviour Analysis

- Focused ABA – for teaching: Activities of Daily Living Skills (ADLs), Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), Functional Communication Training (FCT), challenging behaviour

Providers	behaviour analysts (BCBAs), assistant behaviour analysts (BCaBAs), registered behavior technicians (RBTs), ABA therapists
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Type of Service	Short term, infrequent, or less intense application of ABA; target goals must be socially significant for the individual
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Description	assessment and application of ABA principles for specific purposes (e.g., challenging behaviour, ADLs treatment, AAC, and FCT); 1:1, small and/or large group
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Ages	All ages
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Outcomes	Significant change to the specific goal/target
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Rating	Good empirical support; on the National Standards report; within Urgent Response Services and Core Clinical Services in the OAP
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Hanen: More Than Words

- More Than Words® — The Hanen Program® for Parents of Children with ASD or with Social Communication Difficulties

Providers	Speech-language pathologists or speech assistants/CDA supervised by SLPs
Type of Service	Structured parent coaching program
Description	Pre-program consultation, 8 small group sessions, 3 individual videotaped visits with review and feedback
Ages	Not specified
Outcomes	Social communication, play skills
Rating	Insufficient evidence to show child changes – good evidence for parent outcomes; not eligible under OAP funding

JASPER

- Joint Attention, Symbolic Play, Emotional Regulation

Providers	psychologists, behaviour analysts (BCBAs), speech-language pathologists, early intervention specialists, paraprofessionals, parents
Type of Service	Caregiver-mediated program
Description	blend of developmental and ABA principles; 2-3 sessions per week for 12 – 24 weeks; 1-1.5 hours/session; requires parent involvement
Ages	12 months to 8 years
Outcomes	Increase in types of play; increase in spontaneous play; interaction duration; initiation of communication (gesture based)
Rating	Good evidence showing effective for children; on the National Standards list; eligible under Core Clinical Services in the OAP

Occupational Therapy Services

- Treatment of motor skills, coordination of movements, sensory input, and the application to daily life

Providers	occupational therapists (OT), occupational therapy assistants (under the supervision of an OT)
Type of Service	Direct and/or consultative assessment and treatment of motor and movements required for daily life tasks and/or a job/occupation
Description	1:1
Ages	All ages
Outcomes	An increase in the skills required to perform daily life tasks
Rating	Mixed evidence - depending on the specific goal and area of assessment/treatment

PEAK

- PEAK Relational Training System

Providers	behaviour analysts, psychologists
Type of Service	I:I, individualized ABA curriculum
Description	Comprehensive ABA curriculum that is appropriate for older children. Based on Relational Frame Theory in ABA.
Ages	3 years – 21 years
Outcomes	Increase in acquisition of required skills
Rating	Good evidence showing effectiveness; eligible under Core Clinical Services in the OAP (ABA)

Pivotal Response Treatment

- Known commonly as PRT

Providers	behaviour analysts (BCBA); ABA therapists (under supervision of a BCBA); speech-language pathologists, communicative disorders assistants (CDAs - under supervision of an SLP)
Type of Service	Caregiver-mediated program
Description	A naturalistic behavioural intervention which uses your child's motivation to teach communication and social engagement
Ages	2 years to 16 years
Outcomes	Joint attention, eye contact, requesting, social engagement, communication, turn-taking, play skills
Rating	Good evidence showing effectiveness for specific skills; on the

Project ImPACT

- Project ImPACT (Improving Parents as Communication Teachers)

Providers	behaviour analysts, speech-language pathologists, early interventionists, early educators
Type of Service	Caregiver-mediated intervention
Description	A caregiver-mediated intervention which combines small group sessions and individual coaching over a 12 – 14-week program; schedule can be tailored to your family needs
Ages	Infant to 6 years; may be used with older children with developmental delays
Outcomes	Social communication, imitation skills, play skills
Rating	Good evidence showing effectiveness; on the National Standards list; eligible under Core Clinical Services in the OAP

PROMPT Therapy

PPROMPTs for Restructuring Oral Muscular Phonetic Targets

Providers	speech-language pathologists
Type of Service	Direct I:I treatment for increasing articulation and intelligibility of speech
Description	a tactile-kinesthetic approach that uses touch cues to a patient's articulators (jaw, tongue, lips) to manually guide them through a targeted word, phrase or sentence
Ages	All ages
Outcomes	Intends to increase accuracy in speech sound production
Rating	Unestablished evidence (1 study to date for individuals with autism); not named in the national standards report; may be eligible und Core Clinical Services in the OAP

Sensory Diets

Providers occupational therapists

Type of Service Direct 1:1, consultative

Description A group of activities that are specifically scheduled into a child's day to assist with attention, arousal and adaptive responses – based on sensory integration theory

Ages All ages

Outcomes Increased adaptive behaviours

Rating Mixed evidence with some emerging evidence & some studies which showed negative effects

SLP Services

- articulation/intelligibility, expressive/receptive language skills, social skills, communication, swallowing, fluency

Providers	speech-language pathologists, speech assistants or communicative disorders assistants (CDAs) under supervision of an SLP
Type of Service	Direct and/or consultative assessment and treatment of speech, language, communication and related skill development
Description	I:I, small and/or large group
Ages	All ages
Outcomes	An increase in speech, language, and related skills
Rating	Mixed evidence - depending on the specific goal and area of assessment/treatment

Social ABCs

Providers	Early childhood educators, psychologists, speech-language pathologists, behaviour analysts
Type of Service	Caregiver-mediated intervention
Description	NDBI; focuses on improving a toddler's use of vocalizations to communicate and share positive emotions with others
Ages	12 months to 36 months (3 years)
Outcomes	child communication (intentional, directed, functional vocal communication); sharing meaningful, positive emotions with a primary caregiver
Rating	Emerging evidence of effectiveness; is eligible under OAP funding

SOS Feeding

- SOS – Sequential-Oral-Sensory feeding protocol

Providers	Occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists
Type of Service	Direct 1:1, consultative
Description	SOS Approach focuses on increasing a child's comfort level by exploring and learning about the different properties of food; allows a child to interact with food in a playful, non-stressful way; using a graduated process called the Steps to Eating
Ages	All ages
Outcomes	Increased food intake
Rating	Unestablished as an effective practice for children with autism; not on the National Standards report

The PLAY Project

- Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters

Providers

Speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, early intervention providers, early educators, social workers, counselors, psychologists, physicians

Type of Service

Caregiver-mediated

Description

naturalistic intensive behaviour intervention to teach play skills

Ages

Not stipulated

Outcomes

Parent-child interactions

Rating

Emerging evidence of effectiveness; eligible under OAP funding

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