

KPRC “PARENT’S GUIDE TO AUTISM”

BEFORE THE DIAGNOSIS

A QUICK 5-STEP CHECKLIST

1. Ask your pediatrician for an Autism Evaluation.
2. If your child is 3-years-old or younger contact ECI, Early Childhood Intervention, for an evaluation. If your child is grade school age contact your district’s special education department for an evaluation.
3. After diagnosis, ask your provider and/or school what services are available for your child.
4. Contact and interview possible therapy providers and make a plan for your child’s treatment
5. Contact your Health Insurance to find out what is covered by your insurance. Reach out to local nonprofits if you need financial assistance.

Getting Your Child Evaluated

Medical evaluations, private therapy evaluations and school evaluations are all different and often are required by each provider before services are suggested and implemented. Evaluations take time. Plan ahead and be patient.

- For Early Childhood Intervention, ECI, and other public school programs the child must be evaluated by the school district even if the child has a medical diagnosis. If a child is under 3 years old reach out to ECI for initial evaluation.
- If a child is school aged, 5 or older, reach out to the school district for evaluation. ECI and public schools will require the district to evaluate a child before any services are offered and provided. Once evaluated and offered services these programs are FREE to children that qualify.

AFTER THE DIAGNOSIS

100-Day Kit from Autism Speaks

Autism Speaks (please imbed link so the word Autism speaks lead to the link <https://www.autismspeaks.org/>) created a 100-day-kit specifically for families of children recently diagnosed with Autism to make the best possible use of the 100 days following the diagnosis. The kit is available in Spanish, and an Asperger syndrome/high-functioning tool kit is also available.

CLICK TO GET A FREE COPY OF THE 100-DAY-KIT FROM AUTISM SPEAKS

please imbed the link <https://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits/100-day-kit>

Advocacy Tool Kit from Autism Speaks

The Advocacy Tool Kit aims to help both individuals on the spectrum and their families develop and use critical advocacy skills in order to achieve the best possible outcomes.

CLICK TO GET A FREE COPY OF THE ADVOCACY TOOL KIT FROM AUTISM SPEAKS

please imbed the link <https://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits/advocacy>

Therapies Your Doctor Might Suggest

ABA

Applied Behavior Analysis is one of the leading therapies in treating Autism. The therapy is the application of the principles of learning and motivation from Behavior Analysis, and the procedures and technology derived from those principles, to the solution of problems of social significance. For further information on what ABA is and what it looks like follow this link: <https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/treatment/applied-behavior-analysis-aba>

Many other types of therapies might be suggested. For a full list and explanation of Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy and many more therapies follow this link: <https://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits/100-day-kit/treatments-therapies>

INSURANCE & HEALTHCARE RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

Aetna

http://www.aetna.com/cpb/medical/data/600_699/0648.html

Cigna

https://cignaforhcp.cigna.com/public/content/pdf/coveragePolicies/medical/mm_0447_cover_agepositioncriteria_autism_pervasive_developmental_disorders.pdf

United Healthcare

<https://www.uhcprovider.com/content/dam/provider/docs/public/policies/signaturevalue-mmgi/intensive-behavioral-therapy-autism-spectrum-disorder-sv.pdf>

Medicaid/CHIP

<https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/benefits/autism/index.html>

<https://www.medicaid.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/faq-09-24-2014.pdf>

Texas Children's

<https://www.texaschildrens.org/departments/autism>

Kaiser

<https://provider.ghc.org/open/render.jhtml?item=/open/referralsAndClinicalReview/aba-therapy.xml>

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

Public School Resources

Evaluations from the school district are needed to receive services from the school district even if a child has a medical diagnosis. From Kinder to 12th grade the school will have meetings to help set up and implement education services for children that qualify.

ARD

“ARD” is an acronym for Admission, Review and Dismissal. An ARD is a meeting between parents, teachers, therapists, specialists and school district employees. In this meeting an education program will be formulated for the student. Parents can have private therapists and advocates participate in ARD meetings but it is good form to notify the school of anyone a parent is bringing to an ARD meeting. Although many ARD meetings are annual it is important that Parents know they can call for an ARD meeting at any time. Before an ARD Meeting ask to see the proposed IEP. This will allow extra time to go over the proposed education plan for the student. If there are aspects of the program that should be improved or changed SPEAK UP!

IEP

“IEP” is an acronym for Individualized Education Program. An IEP is a document that is developed for each public school child who needs special education. The IEP is discussed and finalized in an ARD Meeting. It is developed by district specialists, therapists and teachers but above all Parents should be involved. It is important to participate in ARD meetings and speak up about what is in an IEP. This is a document that the school HAS to implement. It is imperative to have everything that a child needs in their IEP. Parents will be asked to sign off on their child’s IEP. It is important that Parents know they do NOT have to sign an IEP until they are happy with the plan for their child.

Texas School Districts Offering Autism Services

Aldine I.S.D (Aldine Independent School District)

<http://www.aldine.k12.tx.us/cms/main.cfm?siteID=20&PageID=195>

Alief I.S.D (Alief Independent School District)

<https://www.aliefisd.net/domain/139>

Cy-Fair I.S.D (Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District)

<https://www.cfsd.net/en/parents-students/academics/special-education/overview/>

F.B.I.S.D (Fort Bend Independent School District)

<https://www.fortbendisd.com/Page/666>

<https://www.fortbendisd.com/site/Default.aspx?PageID=186&PageType=17&DomainID=77&ModuleInstanceID=346&EventDateID=461455>

H.I.S.D (Houston Independent School District)

<http://www.houstonisd.org/Page/61465>

Humble I.S.D (Humble Independent School District)

<https://www.humbleisd.net/domain/5542>

Pasadena I.S.D (Pasadena Independent School District)

https://www1.pasadenaisd.org/departments/departments_n-s/special_education/eligibilities/autism/

Lamar C.I.S.D (Lamar Consolidated Independent School District)

<https://www.lcisd.org/departments/academics/special-programs>

Spring I.S.D (Spring Independent School District)

<https://www.springisd.org/domain/86>

Katy I.S.D (Katy Independent School District)

<http://www.katyisd.org/dept/sped/operatingguidelines/Pages/Autism.aspx>

Private Schools

The Next Step Academy

<https://www.thenextstepacademy.org/>

The Westview School

<http://www.westviewschool.org/>

The Joy School

<https://www.thejoyschool.org/>

The Hub Houston

<https://www.thehubhouston.org/>

The Monarch School

<https://www.monarchschool.org/>

TEXAS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AUTISM CENTER

TEXAS CHILDREN'S AUTISM CENTER (please imbed link here:

<https://www.texaschildrens.org/departments/autism>

The Texas Children's Autism Center is a great resource filled with information on the following topics and more:

- **Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECI)** (imbed link
<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services>
- **Financial Resources** (imbed link
<https://www.texaschildrens.org/departments/autism/community-resources/financial-resources>
- **Behavioral Interventions** (imbed link
<https://www.texaschildrens.org/departments/autism/community-resources/behavioral-interventions>
- **Social Skills Training** (imbed link
<https://www.texaschildrens.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Social%20Skills.pdf>
- **Support Groups** (imbed link
<https://www.texaschildrens.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Support%20groups.pdf>

LOCAL NON-PROFITS HELP FAMILIES PAY FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL AND MEDICAL BILLS

F.A.C.E.S

<https://facesautism.org/>

Autism Rescue Angels

<https://autismrescueangels.org/>

Know Autism

<http://www.know-autism.org/>

Hope for Three

<https://www.hopeforthree.org/>

Texas Interest Lists

Included are a few links relating to Texas Medicaid Waiver programs in the state of Texas. Something incredibly important to do is call your Local Authority (which is based on your residential address/county you live in) and let them know you'd like to put your child on the Texas Home Living and HCS interest lists. The wait can be long.

You'll provide basic contact information and basic information about your child. The Local Authority will not ask for any documentation for getting put on the lists. You should get a call yearly to ensure contact information remains updated, but that's about it. When the slot finally is available, you'll be notified by mail (which is why it's really important to keep contact information current.)

Sometimes reading through the resources can still be a little overwhelming when trying to understand what both TxHmL and HCS actually are. In a very short version, they are programs that provide services to those with intellectual and development disabilities. The difference in TxHmL and HCS is that HCS includes funding for a residential component (such as a group home, host home – which can also mean living with their own family, or paying for a staff member to assist the individual if living independently but still needs support.) These waiver programs offer a lot of services to support our individuals with IDD. The best thing you can do is get on this list! You'll have plenty of time to learn about the programs while waiting for a slot to come available.

<https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/long-term-care-providers/local-intellectual-developmental-disability-authority-lidda/enroll-hcs-interest-list>

<https://www.txdisabilities.org/waiting-lists>

<https://texasmedicaidwaivers.com/interest-lists/>

Local Authorities in Houston and surrounding areas:

The Harris Center – (713) 970-7000

County served: Harris County

Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare – (936) 521-6200

Counties served: Montgomery County, Walker County, Liberty County

Texana Center – (281) 239-1363

Counties served: Austin County, Colorado County, Ft Bend County, Matagorda County, Waller County, Wharton County

Gulf Coast Center – 1-888-839-3229

Counties served: Galveston County, Brazoria County

Included in this link is a full list of all Local Authorities and what counties they serve along with contact information.

<https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/long-term-care-providers/local-intellectual-developmental-disability-authority-lidda/local-authorities-directory>