TACA’s AUTISM JOURNEY BLUEPRINTS©

A visual foundation of best practices for your child

This booklet contains TACA’s unique visual reference tools to help give you an overview of each process to guide you on the autism journey. We call these flow charts the TACA “AUTISM JOURNEY BLUE PRINTS” for every topic parents will face on their journey.

These step-by-step processes will help you to determine appropriate interventions and timelines for taking action in the realms of medical and dietary intervention, education, finances and home life. These flow charts will provide a visual foundation of best practices for your child, and the work families need to follow whether new to the journey, veterans, and everyone anywhere in between.

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Autism Journey Blueprint©
A visual foundation of best practices for your child

Autism Journey
Year One

Formal assessment and diagnosis: neurologist, behaviorist, speech & OT


Call ABA (Applied Behavioral Analysis) providers and get on wait list. Implement intensive 1:1 program.

Start the Gluten Free/Casein Free/Soy Free (GFCFSF) Diet

Encourage proper sulphation with nightly Epsom salt baths

Find a DOCTOR for the long term! Perform baseline medical tests and necessary medical treatments.

Remove allergens (from diet and environment)

Get support & information!! Attend regular TACA or other meetings.

Begin Omega supplements like Cod Liver Oil, or Flaxseed Meal, etc.

Investigate & try the “Bs” – B6, B12, TMG or DMG, SuperNuThera

Test for and treat YEAST (Go low-sugar and low-carbohydrates)

Start basic supplementation and probiotics.

See an audiologist for a complete hearing evaluation.

Remove additives, preservatives, and dyes from all foods. Go organic and clean diet.

It is all in the POOPS: deal with the constipation or diarrhea

Educate yourself about the potential risks of vaccination.

Evaluate Glutathione! – try oral, topical then IV – with your doctor’s help!

Consider chelation

Start Social skills development – with structured play dates at home

Hire a special education attorney or advocate. Learn your legal rights!

Understand health insurance coverage and reimbursement

On to Year Two!

Fathers are important too!

Remove toxins from water, bedding, clothes, etc.

Further refine diet: remove phenols, salicylates & corn

Help your child obtain 8-10 hours a sleep each night.

Keep your marriage & family intact.

This document is a “sample” checklist to consider in planning intervention for a child affected by autism. Please note, the order and action items will vary by child.

This is only a sample. Please consult with your child’s development and medical team for what is appropriate for their individual needs.
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Dietary Intervention

START

GFCFSF Basics
Remove all Gluten, Casein and Soy

Supplements
Don’t forget calcium. 600-1200mg per day

Allergies
Run IgG and IgE food allergy blood tests. Remove offenders.

Remove Basic Toxins
Nitrates, MSG, Aspartame, HFCS, fluoride, arsenic

Yeast
Learn what yeast looks like, what causes it.

Remove Other Toxins
Aluminum, chlorine, BPA, water

Phenols and Salicylates
Learn what they are, watch for reactions

Go Organic
9 is Fine! Remove colors and preservatives. Join a CSA.

Food Labels
Learn how to read food labels

Carb Junkie
Learn what carbs are, adjust diet

Cooking and Storage
Remove Teflon, aluminum, and plastics

$\$$ Costs $\$$
On-A-Budget, cook from scratch, buy and cook in bulk

GFCFSF not enough?

The End
Maybe…

SCD-CF
Redo Allergy tests first. Remember supplements.

lod
Research oxalates and run 24-hour urine oxalate test.

BED
Low carb, cultured foods, fats and probiotics.

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Dietary Intervention

1. Basics - Remove gluten, casein and soy

2. Supplements
   a. Calcium - you MUST give calcium when removing dairy
      i. 600-1200mg per day is the RDA
         1. Available in powder, pills, chewables and liquid
   b. Multivitamins
   c. Specialty supplements like B6, Magnesium, P5P, TMG, EFA’s etc.

3. Allergies - IgG and IgE food allergy tests, rotation diet

4. Toxins - MSG, aspartame, nitrates, arsenic, fluoride, aspartame, HFCS (high fructose corn syrup).
   b. http://www.ewg.org/foodnews/
   c. http://www.iatg.org (Arsenic in chicken and rice and rice milk.)

5. Yeast and carbohydrates
   a. Keeping the diet as low sugar as possible is important.
      i. http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/what-is-yeast-overgrowth/
   b. Recheck your diet, don’t supplant calories.
   c. Don’t create a carb junkie.
      i. http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/what-are-carbohydrates/

6. Learn to read food packaging labels

7. Go Organic
   a. Join a local organic CSA at
      http://www.localharvest.org/csa

8. Research Phenols/Salicylates - learn what they are and what reactions they give
9. Remove more toxins
   a. Test water and filter.
   b. Avoid aluminum in food packaging like juice, milk sub or broth boxes and cookware.
   c. Replace Teflon and aluminum pans with Stainless steel and cast iron.
   d. Replace plastic with glass.

    a. Special diet foods can be deducted on taxes
    b. Schools can provide special diet meals
       i. If you qualify, reduced- or free lunch and breakfast programs
    c. GFCFSF on Food Stamps
       i. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/gfcfsf-diet-on-food-stamps/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/gfcfsf-diet-on-food-stamps/)
    d. Cook whole foods from scratch, it will save you a ton of money

11. Other Diets
    a. SCD-CF - Specific Carbohydrate Diet, Casein-free
    b. LOD - Low Oxalate Diet
       i. [http://www.lowoxalate.info](http://www.lowoxalate.info)
    c. BED - Body Ecology Diet
Medical Interventions

**Autism Diagnosis**
- Genetic testing: MTHFR, Fragile X, Rett Syndrome, Wilson’s Disease, mitochondrial dysfunction, Chiari1, PON1 but only if insurance pays.

**Baseline testing**
- CDSA, lipids, Amino Acids, IgG and IgE food and environmental allergies, OAT, Comprehensive Metabolic Panel, CBC, RBC, zinc, 25-Hydroxy Vit D, blood and urine Immune panel, hearing, celiac, thyroid panel

**Neurological/Seizures**
- Non-sedated 24-hour EEG, MRI

**GFCFSF Diet**
- Remove all gluten, casein and soy.

**Get a MAPS Doctor**
- Get a referral from other parents. Learn about billing insurance before you go.

**Advanced testing**
- glutathione, CDSA, TNFa, C-Reactive Protein, purine, porphryins, pterins, endocrine, autoimmune, ASO titers, Anti DNase antibodies, copper/zinc ratio, oxidative stress, methylation, metabolic diseases, myelin basic protein, viral titers, testosterone, ammonia, oxalates

**Co-morbid issues**
- PICA - mineral deficiency testing
  - Hearing sensitivity - bacterial and mineral levels, Berard AIT, noiseblocker headphones
  - Sleep - test for reflux, diet, check bacteria, give melatonin

**Repeat Testing**
- CDSA, IgG food, CMP, CBC, RBC. Have your reg doctor order these under insurance!
- MRI every 3 years for comparison.

**Heavy Metals**
- Test for lead, mercury, arsenic, cadmium, bismuth, nickel, tin, thallium
  - Test with blood, urine, urinary porphyrin
  - Treat with DMSA, EDTA, DMPS, GSH; oral, transdermal, IV.

**Toxins**
- Reduce exposure to arsenic, lead, cadmium, organophosphate pesticides, tobacco, fluoride, ammonia, BPA, chlorine, mercury.
- Check your water, personal care products, food and bedding.

**Recurring Yeast**
- Test with CDSA, behavioral, medical symptoms
  - Treat with low-sugar diet, probiotics, colostrum, medications (diflucan, nizoral, nystatin), GSE, caprylic acid, garlic, oregano oil

**Supplements**
- Multivitamins, minerals, zinc, antioxidants, D3, sulfation, B6, magnesium, EFA, amino acids, glutathione, B12, calcium, immune boosters, TMG/DMG, antifungals, probiotics, enzymes, GABA, melatonin

**Gastro**
- Test for lead, mercury, arsenic, cadmium, bismuth, nickel, tin, thallium
  - Test with blood, urine, urinary porphyrin
  - Treat with DMSA, EDTA, DMPS; oral, transdermal, IV.

**Symptoms**
- Undigested food, chronic or alternating diarrhea and/or constipation, posturing, bloated belly.

**Testing**
- Colonoscopy, endoscopy, pillcam, CDSA, Glutathione, CDSA, lipids, Amino Acids, IgG and IgE food and environmental allergies, OAT, Comprehensive Metabolic Panel, CBC, RBC, zinc, 25-Hydroxy Vit D, blood and urine Immune panel, hearing, celiac, thyroid panel

**Other**
- If you get pregnant again follow the safety guidelines – diet, no acetaminophen no vaccines, for you and the baby.
- Get your child’s gut in the BEST shape you can BEFORE puberty starts.

**What is it?**
- Regression is a normal part of the healing process. Some kids lose a skill while gaining other bigger skills. Keeping a journal will help find out what went wrong. More testing may be needed.

**Relaxation and Fitness**
- Exercise is crucial for ASD children.
  - Adapted Yoga, running/walking, gym exercise, sensory input, Tai Chi, and use the Nintendo Wii for coordination and muscle tone. Get them moving everyday!

**Functional Medicine**
- FM is personalized medicine that deals with primary prevention and underlying causes instead of symptoms for serious chronic disease.

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This document is a “sample” checklist to consider in planning intervention for a child affected by autism. Please note, the order and action items will vary by child.

This is only a sample. Please consult with your child’s development and medical team for what is appropriate for their individual needs.
Medical Track Tests and Treatments

1. Autism Diagnosis (Autism, Asperger's, PDD)
2. Genetic testing - MTHFR, Fragile X, Rett Syndrome, Wilson's Disease, mitochondrial dysfunction/disease, PON1, Chiari 1, but ONLY if insurance covered, otherwise delay these.
3. Read this Beginner’s guide to Biomedical Treatment http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/beginner-biomedical-treatment-for-autism-spectrum-disorder/
4. Baseline testing – CDSA, IgG and IgE food and environmental allergies, Comprehensive Metabolic Panel, CBC, RBC, zinc, 25-Hydroxy Vitamin D, blood and urine Amino Acids, OAT, Immune panel, viral panel, hearing, lipids, celiac, thyroid panel.
   a. These tests are all standard and should be ordered by your regular pediatrician and insurance-covered, but don’t bill them under autism
   b. If you are unsuccessful with your pediatrician, you can have these tests run by a MAPS doctor
5. Neurological/Seizures – EEG, MRI
      i. If seizures found, medications (beware seizure meds as they affect folic acid metabolism).
      ii. Further testing with QEEG, MEG, PET, SPECT scan.
   b. MRI - to be repeated every 3 years for comparison.
6. Diet – GFCSF, SCD-CF, LOD, Feingold, BED...
7. Get a MAPS Doctor - get referrals from parents.
8. Advanced testing – glutathione, CDSA, TNFa, C-Reactive Protein, porphyryins, pterins, endocrine, purine, autoimmune, ASO titers, Anti DNAse antibodies, copper/zinc ratio, oxidative stress, methylation, metabolic, myelin basic protein, vaccine viral titers, testosterone, ammonia, oxalates.
   a. Methylation – B12, TMG/DMG, Folic/Folinic, Glutathione
b. Immune, virals - colostrum, oral immunoglobulin, IVIG, ACTOS, Low-dose naltrexone, Valtrex. Titres, strep, lyme disease

9. Vaccines - reactions, boosters, titers, exemptions, doctors, schools, alternative schedules

10. Anti-inflammatories - Ibuprofen; Celebrex; Actos; Curcumin; IVIG, Subq or oral IgG; HBOT; Bethanecol; GABA; Theanine; Iodine.

11. Gastro issues - maldisgestion, malabsorption, allergies, colitis, chron’s, autistic enterocolitis.
   a. Testing - colonoscopy, endoscopy, pillcam, CDSA
   b. Treatments - GI cleanout, sulfur-based gut meds, reflux meds, probiotics, Oxypowder, dietary change, antibacterials, antifungals, antibiotics, antiparasitic (Vermox), HBOT.
   c. http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/the-poop-page/

12. Supplements – Multivitamins, sulfation, B6, Magnesium, EFA, amino acids, glutathione, B12, minerals, antifungals, Probiotics, Enzymes. Be wary of B vitamins and DMG/TMG if child has yeast.

   a. Treat with low-sugar diet, probiotics, colostrums, medications (diflucan, nizoral, nystatin), GSE, caprylic acid, garlic, oregano oil
   b. http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/what-is-yeast-overgrowth/

14. Toxins – arsenic, cadmium, organophosphate pesticides, tobacco, fluoride, ammonia, BPA, lead, chlorine
   a. HBOT, sauna, GI cleanout for detox
   b. Taurine for chlorine

15. Heavy Metals – lead, mercury, arsenic, cadmium, bismuth, nickel, tin, thallium.
   b. Treatments – DMSA, EDTA, DMPS, GSH; oral, transdermal, IV.

16. Repeat testing – CDSA, IgG food, CMP, CBC, RBC.

17. Co-morbid disorders – PICA, hearing sensitivity, sleep issues
a. PICA – vitamin and mineral deficiency testing
b. Hearing sensitivity – bacterial and mineral levels, Berard AIT, noiseblocker headphones
b. Sleep – test for reflux, diet, check bacteria, give melatonin

18. Other – another pregnancy, puberty
   a. Follow safety guidelines for another pregnancy: diet, no acetaminophen or vaccines for both.
   b. Get the gut in shape BEFORE puberty!

19. When something isn’t right.
   a. http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/when-something-isnt-right/
   b. Know that treatment can mean “2-steps forward, 1-step back” sometimes.
   c. Regression is a normal part of the healing process. Some kids lose a skill while gaining other bigger skills.
      i. Keeping a journal will help find out what went wrong. More testing may be needed.

20. Relaxation and Fitness - Yoga, exercise, sensory input, Tai Chi, Wii for coordination and muscle tone.

21. Functional medicine - FM is personalized medicine that deals with primary prevention and underlying causes instead of symptoms for serious chronic disease.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingested</th>
<th>WHAT TO AVOID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food</strong></td>
<td>Artificial colors, preservatives, pesticides, nitrates, sulfites, aspartame or other artificial sweeteners, MSG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No pesticides, aluminum, MSG, mercury, colors, nitrates, arsenic, preservatives</td>
<td>Fluoridated water, toothpaste, mouthwash; plastic bottles, plastic-lined bottles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water</strong></td>
<td>Brand names: Teflon, StainMaster, ScotchGuard, Silverstone, Anything &quot;nonstick&quot; or antibacterial (triclosan).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No fluoride, BPA, lead, rocketfuel, pH, PCB, PCPs, parasites, arsenic</td>
<td>Ingredients like: hydroquinone; ethylene dioxide; 1,4-dioxane; fluoride; formaldehyde; nitrosamines; PAHs; acrylamide; oxybenzone; aluminum, and ingredients that include the clauses &quot;PEG,&quot; &quot;xynol,&quot; &quot;oleth,&quot; and &quot;ceteareth&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Care</strong></td>
<td>Butyl acetate, Butylated hydroxytoluene, Cocamide DEA/ lauramide DEA, Diazolidinyl urea, Ethyl acetate, Formaldehyde, Parabens (methyl, ethyl, propyl and butyl), Coal tar, Oxybenzene (Benzophenone-3), Micronized Titanium Dioxide, Nano Titanium Dioxide, Nano Zinc Oxide, Petrolatum, Phthalates, Propylene glycol, Sodium laureth/ sodium laurel sulfate, Talc, Toluene, Triethanolamine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunscreen, makeup, lotion, medications, shampoo, soaps, antiperspirant</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Use</th>
<th>WHAT TO AVOID</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothes &amp; Bedding</strong></td>
<td>Avoid nonstick pans, don't cook in the microwave, avoid aluminum-lined (juice, milk sub, broth) boxes, avoid plastic-lined cans (they are white inside).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No fire retardants, GoreTex, light-up sneakers, foam mattresses</td>
<td>Chlorinated phenols found in toilet cleaners. Diethyleneglycol found in window cleaners. Phenols found in disinfectants. Nonylphenol ethoxylate found in laundry detergents and all-purpose cleaners. Formaldehyde found in spray and wick deodorizers. Petroleum solvents in floor cleaners. Perchloroethylene in spot remover. Butyl cellosolve, common in all-purpose, window and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paper Products</strong></td>
<td>PFC (Perfluorinated compounds) and PFOA (Perfluorooctanoic acid) in teflon, stain resistants, popcorn; Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) used in fire retardants, foam, plastic in TVs and computer monitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diapers, baby wipes, tampons, toilet paper, paper towels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household</th>
<th>WHAT TO AVOID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household Cleaners</strong></td>
<td>Avoid products with &quot;Warning&quot;, &quot;Caution&quot;, or &quot;Danger: labels (i.e., cleaning products and pesticides). These labels are there because one or more of the ingredients has the potential for causing serious harm or death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All-purpose cleaners, laundry detergent, dishwashing soap</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<td><strong>Cooking &amp; Storage</strong></td>
<td>Avoid nonstick pans, don't cook in the microwave, avoid aluminum-lined (juice, milk sub, broth) boxes, avoid plastic-lined cans (they are white inside).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Teflon, plastic or aluminum. Cook in cast iron or stainless steel. Store in glass.</td>
<td>Chlorinated phenols found in toilet cleaners. Diethyleneglycol found in window cleaners. Phenols found in disinfectants. Nonylphenol ethoxylate found in laundry detergents and all-purpose cleaners. Formaldehyde found in spray and wick deodorizers. Petroleum solvents in floor cleaners. Perchloroethylene in spot remover. Butyl cellosolve, common in all-purpose, window and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flooring</strong></td>
<td>PFC (Perfluorinated compounds) and PFOA (Perfluorooctanoic acid) in teflon, stain resistants, popcorn; Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) used in fire retardants, foam, plastic in TVs and computer monitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid Stainmaster and Scotchguard. Use baking soda and water to clean carpets.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Living in a Toxic World**

1. **Toxins** - MSG, aspartame, nitrates, colors, preservatives, arsenic, fluoride, acetaminophen, aluminum, chlorine, molds, Teflon, aspartame, HFCS, pesticides, phenols/salicylates, lead, mercury, cadmium, BPA, water.
   b. [http://www.foodnews.org/](http://www.foodnews.org/)
2. **Go Organic** - Not all “organic” is created equal.
   a. “100% organic” - single ingredient such as a fruit, vegetable, meat, milk and cheese (excludes water and salt).
   b. “Organic” - multiple ingredient foods which are 95 to 100% organic.
   c. “Made with organic ingredients” - 70% of the ingredients are organic. Can appear on the front of package, naming the specific ingredients.
   d. “Contains organic ingredients” - contains less than 70% organic ingredients.
   e. ‘9 is fine’. On the produce PLU code, if the first number is a 9, it’s organic.
   f. [http://www.organic.org/home/faq](http://www.organic.org/home/faq)
3. **Pots and Pans**
   a. stainless-steel, cast-iron and enameled cast-iron cookware are best
   b. no Teflon or aluminum
      i. [http://www.ewg.org/node/21787](http://www.ewg.org/node/21787)
4. **Household Cleaners and paper products**
   a. All-purpose cleaners, laundry detergent, dishwashing soap, diapers, baby wipes, tampons, recycled toilet paper, tissues, and paper towels
      i. Seventh Generation and Ecover available nationally
      ii. No legal mandate for labeling or safety
      iii. Use HEPA air filters
   b. Prescriptions and Over the counter meds
5. **Personal Hygiene and medications**
   a. Shampoo, conditioner, lotion, deodorant, toothpaste, soaps, bubble bath, sunscreen, make up
      i. For sunscreen, look for zinc oxide or titanium dioxide, and avoid oxybenzone and
sunscreens with fragrance. Choose SPF 30 and higher that block UVA and UVB.

ii. Avoid aluminum in food packaging like juice or broth many body lotions and creams, most cosmetics, shampoos and conditioners, soaps, suntan lotions, lip balm.

6. Water
   a. Plastic water bottles contain BPA and other toxins. Use unlined stainless bottles like Klean Kanteen.
   b. Have your home water tested – check your county’s Cooperative Extension office for testing. Install Reverse Osmosis and any other needed filters, either for the whole house or just for the faucet you drink out of.

7. Packaging
   a. Plastics like food bags, plastic wrap, Tupperware should be avoided. Store food in glass.

8. Household items containing PFCs
   a. Non-stick pans, carpeting, furniture, cosmetics, household cleaners, clothing, and packaged food containers can all contain PFCs, many of which break down into PFOA in the environment or in the human body. The brand names are well-known: Teflon, Stainmaster, Scotchgard, SilverStone, and others.
   b. Mattresses with foam and fire-retardants give off toxic gasses.
The IEP Process

Child enters school system via ChildFind, EI, RC, parent referral or regular enrollment

Child referred to Special Education department for evaluations in ALL areas of suspected delay.

Parent must receive evaluation reports prior to IEP meeting

IEP Meeting Never go alone, always tape record, never sign IEP at first meeting.

Discuss evaluations
Discuss your child’s current educational levels

Discuss what accommodations your child will need to fully participate in the placement and services agreed to. Put it in writing!

Services offers
Based on goals, document level, frequency, setting, and duration of each service.

Placement Offer
Goals before placement. Placements are to be individualized to your child’s needs, NOT their available programs

Create measurable goals
Write only goals that are able to be measured, never vague. Who measures, how and when?

Discuss the developmentally appropriate steps to get your child from where he is to where he should be compared to his peers.

Communication
Discuss and document parent-staff communication in detail. Frequency, data. Don’t settle for “a good day”.


Goals drive placement and services. Make sure there is at least one for every area of need.

Don’t agree with placement or services offers?

Don’t sign IEP!

Hire a lawyer or advocate

Some schools will buckle when you threaten to file due process, some won’t. Be prepared to go the distance.

Follow Through
Have quarterly reviews of your child’s progress on the IEP goals. If not meeting benchmarks, call a new meeting.

Consider private placement options

File Due Process

Educational
Finance

Early Intervention
(Part B)
Ages 0-3

Does not require a diagnosis, just delay.
Will bill private health insurance and pick up any remaining fees.
Covers OT, PT, ST and behavioral/developmental interventions.

Private Health Insurance

Read the TACA Insurance booklet for complete details.
For evaluations and treatments that would be considered Standard of Care by the American Academy of Pediatrics, use the 299.00 ICD-9 Diagnostic Code.
For evaluations and treatments that are biomedical in nature, use the diagnostic code related to the specific medical condition.

School District
(Part C)
Ages 3-22

Funding through Dept of Ed.
Free to families.
Pays for all educational therapies, interventions and related services that are written into IEP.

Regional Centers
CA only

Each RC can determine what services they fund.
Generally, the RCs fund ABA, respite, diapers, and day care subsidy. Children with a “substantial” developmental disability qualify for RC services.
July 2009 cuts mean no “non-medical” therapies or educational services.

Medicaid
Medicaid will pay for medically necessary treatments like doctors, dentists, vision, prescriptions, lab tests, OT, Speech, Behavioral, PT, diapers but is income dependant.
Waiver programs WAIVE the parent’s income so that the disabled child qualifies.

Federal Programs
SSDI
Food Stamps/SNAP

You must qualify for these programs on income and disability. If you do qualify, you can get up to $674 cash per month for SSDI and up to $585 a month (for a family of 4) of Food Stamps.

Other State Funding

Most every state has another program for children with disabilities. Google search “developmental disabilities funding” and the name of your state.

Budget Tips

There are many ways to save money on your journey. Read all of our “Autism on a Budget” series articles and save where you can, so that when you must pay out of pocket, you can afford it.

Grants and Scholarships

There are more than 25 national grants, and many more local grant programs available for children with ASD for various funding.
Google search for “autism scholarship” or “autism grant” and your state.

Tax Deductions

All medical appointment travel and costs, all disability-related reading materials, all therapists and therapy equipment, special diet foods, and much more, can be deducted on your taxes. Keep all your receipts!

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**Finance**

1. Who Pays for What?

2. Early Intervention - birth to age 3, full funding after billing your private health insurance.

3. Private Health Insurance - never bill tests or treatments under ‘299. Autism’. Bill under the symptoms being treated.
   a. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/health-insurance-coverage-on-a-budget/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/health-insurance-coverage-on-a-budget/)

4. School District - ages 3-22, educational only, must be written into IEP to get funding.

5. SSDI, Food Stamps/SNAP – You must qualify for these programs on income and disability. If you do qualify, you can get up to $674 cash per month from SSDI and up to $585 a month (for a family of 4) of Food Stamps.
   a. [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) 800-772-1213

   a. [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidStWaivProgDemoPGI/MWDL/list.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidStWaivProgDemoPGI/MWDL/list.asp)

7. Other state programs
   a. Most every state has another program for children with disabilities. Google search “developmental disabilities funding” and the name of your state.

8. Tax deductions - all medical appointment travel and costs, all disability-related reading materials, all therapists and therapy equipment, special diet foods, and much more, can be deducted on your taxes. Keep all your receipts!

9. Grants and Scholarships

9. Additional Links:
   b. Diagnostic Codes: [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/billing-codes-that-work/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/billing-codes-that-work/)
### Home Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marriage</th>
<th>Siblings</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Extended Family</th>
<th>Getting Organized</th>
<th>Divorce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moms to Dads: Get involved, Stay involved. Acknowledge her work, Listen.</td>
<td>Siblings should not be raised to be caregivers.</td>
<td>Physical safety, locks, fences</td>
<td>Prep them for proper expectations, how to relate</td>
<td>Use a journal to track progress</td>
<td>Build a Special Needs Trust and wills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Dads: Define roles, make a plan, realize men act and react differently</td>
<td>Don’t expend all resources on ASD kid, leaving nothing for siblings.</td>
<td>Durable, easy to clean furniture and décor.</td>
<td>Holidays, travel and gatherings</td>
<td>Gifts to go into Special Needs Trust</td>
<td>Plan for the worst, hope for the best. Put it all in writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ego parenting. Lead, follow or get out of the way. Make time away from autism.</td>
<td>Use non-toxic cleaners and furnishings</td>
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<td>Get and scan all documents before they are destroyed</td>
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<td>Get one credit card just for autism related purchases to help track and for taxes</td>
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<td>Decide who decides - educational and medical</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Home Life

1. Marriage – Keeping it together!
   a. Moms to Dads: Dads need to be involved, stay involved. Let her vent. Acknowledge her work.
   b. For Dads: Define roles. Make a 2-year plan. Realize men and women deal with things differently.
   c. For both: Give each other time away from autism, teamwork, split the effort, talk and listen. No ego parenting.

2. Siblings – don’t forget the other kids
   a. Make special time just for them.
   b. Don’t expend all resources on ASD child.
   c. Don’t raise siblings to be responsible for ASD kid.

3. Home environment – Decorating for autism
   a. Safety - Install double-sided deadbolts, window locks and alarms, fence the yard, triple-secure the pool.
   b. In the home - check for mold, replace toxic cleaners, carpets, bedding, pots and bottles.
   c. Decorating - replace fragile items with durable furniture and window coverings. Use nontoxic paint.

4. Extended family
   a. Prepare them for proper expectations and how to interact with your child.
   b. Holidays, travel and special events may need to be adjusted to suit your child.
   c. All monetary gifts should go to a Special Needs Trust for your ASD child.

5. Getting organized, tracking child’s progress
   a. Use a journal to track your child’s progress and new treatments.
   b. Scan all documents and burn to CD when starting new practitioner
      i. Get an auto-document feeder attachment for your scanner
      ii. Get copies of all past doctor and therapist visits before they are destroyed
   c. Get one credit card just for autism-related purchases to help track spending and easy tax submittal.

6. Divorce – if all else fails.
   a. Build a Special Needs Trust and wills for both parents. Funnel all insurance into it.
   b. Hope for the best, plan for the worst. Get it all in writing.
   c. Decide who decides
      i. Educational and Medical decision making is key. Get it in writing.
   d. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/divorce-advice-for-special-needs-families/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/divorce-advice-for-special-needs-families/)
Teens and Adults

1. Transition IEPs
   a. By age 16 (14 in some states), all children with an IEP must have a Transition IEP to address skills, jobs, college and their future life plans.

2. Adolescents require different tests than younger children.

3. The GFCFSF Diet and Biomedical treatments work regardless of age but starting them with a teen can present different challenges.

4. Keep your child active and engaged with extracurricular activities.

5. Social Skills and Life Skills must be taught to teens with ASD.
   c. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/developing-lifeskills-how-to-teach-a-skill/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/developing-lifeskills-how-to-teach-a-skill/)
   e. Volunteering and Chores are a great way to teach skills.
   f. Safety is also a key skill that must be addressed with teens.

6. Puberty can bring many changes to a child and family. Anxiety, hormonal and body changes, aggression, self-esteem, self-advocacy, sexuality and seizures are all common issues in puberty.

7. College and Employment
   a. There are many college programs available for kids with ASD allowing for appropriate accommodations
      ii. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/get-your-asd-kid-into-college/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/get-your-asd-kid-into-college/)
      iii. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/college-programs-funding/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/college-programs-funding/)
   b. Vocational Rehabilitation is a national program to help test, train and pay for college and supported employment.
      i. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/vocational-rehabilitation/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/vocational-rehabilitation/)

8. Other
   a. Siblings cannot be forgotten and can be very beneficial in teen years.
   b. Driving evaluations and lessons can make or break this step in independence.
   c. There are many books on and for Teens & Adults with ASD.
1. Guardianship and Conservatorships
   a. A general guardianship or conservatorship gives someone power to make decisions about medical care, finances, living situations and more. Some states allow for a “limited” guardian or conservator of a person with ASD.
   b. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/preparing-for-adulthood/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/preparing-for-adulthood/)

2. Government Programs
   a. All men must apply for the draft, regardless of ASD at age 18.
      i. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/government-resources-obligations-selective-service-registration/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/government-resources-obligations-selective-service-registration/)
   b. SSI and Medicaid are national programs to cover medical care and financial help.

3. Legal Planning & Special Needs Trusts
   a. Wills, Powers of Attorney, Special Needs Trusts and ABLE Accounts all require a lawyer but are necessary for many adults with ASD.
      i. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/legal-planning-special-needs-trusts/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/legal-planning-special-needs-trusts/)
   b. Disability Rights is a national org providing free/low-cost legal help.
      i. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/resources-for-legal-assistance/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/resources-for-legal-assistance/)

4. College Programs and Funding
   a. There are companies who can assist you in finding grants, scholarships and appropriate placements in schools, as well as offering ongoing tutoring and mentoring services throughout the school year.
      i. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/college-programs-funding/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/college-programs-funding/)
      iii. [http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/get-your-asd-kid-into-college/](http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/get-your-asd-kid-into-college/)
5. Housing
   a. There are companies who can assist you in finding grants, scholarships and appropriate placements in schools, as well as offering ongoing tutoring and mentoring services throughout the school year.
      i. http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/housing/

6. Other
   a. Fully dependent ASD adults can stay on a parent’s private health insurance indefinitely.
   b. Vocational Rehabilitation can pay for job training, job matching, assistive tech, college or certificate programs, independent living training and more
      i. http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/vocational-rehabilitation/
   c. Website Links for Adults & Teens
      i. http://www.tacanow.org/family-resources/autism-web-links/#anchor_adults_teens
   d. There are many books on and for Teens & Adults with ASD.