

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

# Ages 13-17

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## Guide and What You Need to Know

Connecticut's Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder

7/7/2021

A quick reference checklist and guide for parents and/or caretakers of a child with Autism.

**Connecticut's Division of  
Autism Spectrum Disorder  
Services**



# Ages 13-17

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**NC/CC Revised 7/7/2021**

## Medical and Related Information

### Understand the Current Diagnostic Criteria for Autism Spectrum Disorder

The DSM-5 is now the standard reference that healthcare providers use to diagnose mental and behavioral conditions. Understand the current diagnostic criteria for ASD by visiting Autism Speaks website at <https://www.autismspeaks.org/dsm-5-criteria>

### Review “Connecticut’s Guidelines for a Clinical Diagnoses of Autism Spectrum Disorder”

Read into depth information related to Autism Spectrum Disorder, the diagnostic evaluation, evaluation results, early intervention and special education. Visit [https://uconnuicedd.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/1340/2015/06/CT\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Clinical\\_Dx\\_of\\_ASD.pdf](https://uconnuicedd.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/1340/2015/06/CT_Guidelines_for_Clinical_Dx_of_ASD.pdf)

### Learn about Evidenced-based Practices and Therapies

The EBP is an intervention and instructional practices or programs having scientific evidence that shows that they are effective. To know more please visit the Organization For Autism Research website at <https://researchautism.org/use-of-evidence-based-practices/>.

Select an evidence-based practice to access a module about the practice at <https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices>

### Explore Behavioral Supports if Necessary

People with Autism may display behaviors that are challenging to understand or manage. **Autism Speaks** offers *The Challenging Behaviors Tool Kit* which provides strategies and resources to address challenging behaviors and help support you during difficult times. To download a FREE toolkit, visit <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/challenging-behaviors-tool-kit>

### Schedule Regular Re-Evaluations and Medical Follow-up to Measure Progress and Identify Challenges

**Car Autism RoadMap**- Medical Diagnosis vs. Educational Eligibility for Special Services: Important Distinctions for Those with ASD <https://www.carautismroadmap.org/medical-diagnosis-vs-educational-eligibility-for-special-services-important-distinctions-for-those-with-asd/>

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**- Screening and Diagnosis <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/screening.html>

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**- Screening and Diagnosis for Healthcare Providers <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/hcp-screening.html>

## Develop a System to Organize Your Paperwork

Raising a child with Autism has its rewards and has its challenges. To assist parents with the overwhelming amount of paperwork your child may have, **Pathfinders for Autism** developed a template you can use to help organize all that paperwork <http://pathfindersforautism.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/A-Guide-to-Organizing-Your-Paperwork.pdf>

## Assistive Technology

### Learn about Assistive Technology Devices and Adaptations

Assistive technologies can be used to support and enhance communication for people with autism with or without speech impairments. **Autism Speaks** offers an **Assistive Technology for Communication Roadmap** to help individuals learn how to start using assistive technologies for communication <https://www.autismspeaks.org/worksheet/assistive-technology-communication-roadmap> or call the Autism Response Team at 1-888-288-4762.

**NEAT Marketplace** (New England Assistive Technology Center)- Provides information, assistive technology assessments, instruction and demonstration of the latest adaptive equipment [www.neatmarketplace.org](http://www.neatmarketplace.org)

**Assistive Technology Corner at State Education Resource Center (SERC)**- Displays of low, mid and high tech AT devices Contact them at 860-632-1485 x4 or [library@ct.serc.org](mailto:library@ct.serc.org)

**Connecticut Assistive Technology Guidelines**- Guidelines for considering, implementing, and evaluating assistive technologies from low- to high-tech [www.ct.gov/sde](http://www.ct.gov/sde) Link "Forms and Publications">Publications

**Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Connecting Young Kids (YAACK)**- Provides information and guidance to families and professionals, covering a wide range of topics dealing with AAC for children at various ages and stages of communicating abilities [http://www.childdevelopmentprograms.ca/resource\\_category/augmentative-and-alternative-communication/](http://www.childdevelopmentprograms.ca/resource_category/augmentative-and-alternative-communication/)

**Center on Technology and Disability**- Assists families and professionals in advocating, acquiring and implementing effective assistive and instructional technology practices, devices and services as well as offers an extensive library and an interactive learning center [www.ctdinstitute.org](http://www.ctdinstitute.org)

### Explore Financial Assistance for Assistive Technology

**Aid for Autistic Children & Families**- If you need help paying for autism related hospital bills, therapies, early intervention, adult late intervention or any obstructive debt resulting from decisions made in an effort to structure one's life routine around care for an autistic child or loved one. <http://www.aacfinc.org/contact.html>

**Autism Care Today-** Provides financial assistance for services that the person would otherwise not be able to afford. Areas of support include but are not limited to: ABA Therapy, Assistive Technology, Medical Testing & Treatments, Speech and Occupational Therapy, Safety Equipment, Summer and Social Programs, and Quality of Life Supports <http://www.act-today.org/our-funds/autism-care-today/>

**Autism Family Resource Grants-** One-time \$500 grants are awarded to families in financial need; household income may not exceed \$50,000 per year. All funds awarded are paid directly to the vendor or service provider to pay for therapy equipment, safety equipment or services. Email requests for an application along with name, address, phone number and email address to: [info@autismfamilyresources.org](mailto:info@autismfamilyresources.org)

**Jaden's Voice-** Provides funding to families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder. Our assistance supports a family's immediate expenses related to the well-being of the family member diagnosed with autism on a case-by-case basis. Examples include: effective treatments, assessments, adults who are actively looking for employment or need additional supports, graduate minority students specializing in autism in the areas of speech, behavior or occupational therapy, parent groups, etc. <http://jadensvoice.org/jadens-voice-cares-grant-program/>

**Medic Alert Foundation-** Autism Medical IDS & 24/7 wandering support services <https://www.medicalert.org/autism#importance-of-autism-wandering-support-services> or 1.800.432.5378

**National Autism Association-** Provide Communication devices to individuals with autism who are non-verbal or minimally verbal, and whose communication challenges put them at increased risk of injury or harm <http://nationalautismassociation.org/family-support/programs/naas-give-a-voice-program/>

**Organization for Autism Research-** provides a tool kit and assist with fundraising for services needed. 1-866-366-9710

**Pervis Jackson Jr Autism Foundation-** Pervis Jackson Jr Autism Foundation helps needy parents of children with disabilities to get respite or other support services. Grants can be used for Camp Sessions, Respite of Parent's Choice, Cleaning Help, Cooking Help, Spa Day, Urgent Bills, Other Parent Needs. [www.pjjraf.org](http://www.pjjraf.org)

## Education

### Understand your Child's IEP and your Role in the IEP Process

**Autism Society-** The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a written document that outlines a child's education. Learn about the goals of an IEP, the contents within an IEP, and what to know about the IEP meeting <http://www.autism-society.org/living-with-autism/academic-success/individualized-education-plan-iep/>

**Autism Speaks-** offers an IEP toolkit which has been put together by a team of lawyers at Goodwin Procter LLP offering a summary of an IEP, information of the process, and practical tips

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/individualized-education-program-iep-summary-process-and-practical-tips>

**Car Autism RoadMap** - Participating in evaluations of your child and developing an intervention plan are intimidating tasks for most parents. Many parents feel overwhelmed by the process and may feel that they do not have the knowledge and skills necessary to be a contributing member of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. Parents are experts on their children, however, and have much to contribute to the process, even if it seems foreign to them

<https://www.carautismroadmap.org/procedural-safeguards-for-families-of-preschool-and-school-age-students/>

## Learn about 504 Plans

**Car Autism RoadMap**- 504 Plans are governed by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. They are mainly used by students who do not qualify for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). To learn more about the basics of the 504 Plan, visit <https://www.carautismroadmap.org/504-basics/>

## Review Connecticut’s State Department of Education “A Parent Guide to Special Education in CT”

This publication, from the **CT State Department of Education**, provides a clear explanation of the laws, regulations and policies affecting special education programs and services [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Special-Education/Parents\\_Guide\\_SE.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Special-Education/Parents_Guide_SE.pdf)

## Learn about Assessments and Evaluations for Children with ASD

**Car Autism RoadMap**- the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that a full and individualized evaluation be conducted before your child can be provided special education and related services. In addition to initial eligibility evaluations, reevaluations occur on a regular basis throughout your child’s education to determine the need for continued and new services. It is important to understand your family’s rights during the evaluation process, what is considered during an evaluation, and what happens if you disagree with the results <https://www.carautismroadmap.org/school-age-special-education-evaluations/>

**Car Autism RoadMap**- An Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) is an evaluation done by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the public school or agency responsible for the education of your child. An IEE may evaluate any skills related to your child’s educational needs, such as behavior, social skills, or occupational therapy; it is not limited to academic skills. Learn about Independent Education Evaluations <https://www.carautismroadmap.org/independent-education-evaluations/>



## Complete Functional and Community-Based Assessments and Interest Inventories

**Autism Speaks** provides a *Community-Based Skills Assessment* guide to help you create a transition plan which focuses on the individual's strengths, needs, challenges and preferences. This tool is divided into three levels based on age with eight areas of functional life skills to be assessed

<http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/documents/finalcommunityassessment711141.pdf>

## Filing A Special Education Complaint

Any individual or organization may submit a complaint if they feel the Connecticut education agency (school) is not complying with requirements outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) [Connecticut State Department of Education - Bureau of Special Education](#)

## Prepare for the Move from Middle School to High School

**Raisingchildren.net.au**- provides information on planning, preparing and communicating the transition process from middle school to high school <https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/school-play-work/autism-spectrum-disorder-secondary-school/school-transitions-teens-with-asd#secondary-school-transition-needs-for-children-with-autism-spectrum-disorder-nav-title>

**Asperger/Autism Network (AANE)**- offers a video webinar providing tips to manage the transition to high school <https://www.aane.org/transition-high-school/>

**Autism Support Network**- visit the website to read information related to planning for school transitions and helping strategies <http://www.autismsupportnetwork.com/news/planning-school-transitions-autism-443452>

**MyFUTURE** provides a resource for high school students who want to be sure they are on the correct college career track beginning from Freshmen to Senior year. To view the College Planning Timeline, please visit <https://myfuture.com/college/college-planning-timeline/>

**The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Batter (ASVAB)** is a questionnaire and test designed to help students figure out possible career paths that they would enjoy and excel in. It is designed for all students who have an interest in obtaining employment upon graduating high school, joining the military or going to college. ASVAB is free and you can ask your counselor if the test is available at your school. For more information, visit <https://www.asvabprogram.com/>.

## Understand the Requirements/Criteria for Exiting with a Diploma vs. Certificate of Completion

The **State of Connecticut General Assembly** has legislation providing details about the requirements to obtain a high school diploma <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2015/fc/2015SB-01059-R000502-FC.htm>

The Anderson Community Schools special education division in Anderson Indiana has useful information which helps individuals understand what a certificate of completion is <https://sites.google.com/a/acsc.net/anderson-community-schools-special-education-services/parent-pages/what-is-a-certificate-of-completion>

For more information regarding high school diploma and certificate of completion requirements, contact your local school districts board of education.

## Develop an Individualized Transition Plan with Your Child's Educational Team

As part of your child's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), address necessary supports and accommodations in advance. Begin transition planning early in the year. Have current school personnel assess current environment, student's strengths and challenges, as well as necessary supports and accommodations

*SOURCE:* Autism Support Network Website- <http://www.autismsupportnetwork.com/news/planning-school-transitions-autism-443452>

The **DSS Autism website** has a document titled '*IDEA and Transition Planning Simplified*' which describes the Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) process and how it relates to IDEA [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DSS/Health-and-Home-Care/Autism-Spectrum-Disorder/ASD\\_IDEA\\_Simplified.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DSS/Health-and-Home-Care/Autism-Spectrum-Disorder/ASD_IDEA_Simplified.pdf?la=en)

## Develop Student Success Plans Yearly

In addition to any 504 Plans or IEP your child may have, beginning in grade six students should have a Student Success Plan (SSP). This is an individualized student driven plan that will be developed to address every student's needs and interests to help every student stay connected in school and to achieve postsecondary educational and career goals. To learn more, visit the **State of Connecticut Department of Education** website at <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/SSReform/SSP/Student-Success-Plan>

## Develop Positive Behavioral Intervention Plans as Appropriate

If your child exhibits behaviors that impede learning for themselves and others, you can incorporate a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) into your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP). For more information visit the **Car Autism Roadmap** website at <https://www.carautismroadmap.org/behavior-intervention-plan/>

Did you know any use of restraint is to be documented in the child’s educational record and, if needed, in the child’s school health record?

The **Connecticut State Department of Education** has published ‘*Understanding the Laws and Regulations Governing the use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools: July 2018*’, which provides an in-depth look at definitions, Connecticut statutes, and regulations schools follow when restraining or putting a child into seclusion. Visit [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Special-Education/Understanding the Laws and Regulations Governing the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Special-Education/Understanding%20the%20Laws%20and%20Regulations%20Governing%20the%20Use%20of%20Restraint%20and%20Seclusion%20in%20Schools.pdf)

*Inclusion Evolution* provides information on providing your child’s school with a “No Consent” letter for restraint and seclusion. As part of positive behavioral plan, you can request this letter be included in your child’s official records <https://www.inclusionrevolution.com/child-needs-no-consent-letter-restraint-seclusion/>

## Understand Your Child’s Educational Needs and Placement Options

The document that spells out your child’s needs and how these needs will be met is the Individualized Education program (IEP). To know more about the IEP, the IEP meeting, teacher/staff requirements, goals and objectives, visit the **Autism Society** website at <http://www.autism-society.org/living-with-autism/academic-success/individualized-education-plan-iep/>

You can also review “**A Parent Guide to Special Education in CT**” which is a publication from the CT State Department of Education. It provides a clear explanation of the laws, regulations and policies affecting special education programs and services. Within the publication is information on IEP’s [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Special-Education/Parents\\_Guide\\_SE.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Special-Education/Parents_Guide_SE.pdf)

**Autism Society**- provides information related to the placement of your child by determining your child’s level of functioning, evaluations, re-evaluations, prospective teachers, service providers, and more. To learn more visit <http://www.autism-society.org/living-with-autism/academic-success/placement/>

**Indiana University Bloomington**- Indiana Resource Center for Autism provides a publication about children with autism and the differences with educational placement <https://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/Educating-Students-with-Autism-Are-There-Differences-in-Placement>

## Address Any Instances of Bullying Immediately

**Autism Society**- has an article discussing bullying prevention including ‘3 R’s for Bullying Prevention: Recognize, Respond and Report’ and ‘Healing from Bullying for the individual with Autism Spectrum Disorder’ <http://www.autism-society.org/living-with-autism/how-the-autism-society-can-help/safe-and-sound/bullying-prevention/>

**Raisingchildren.net**- provides information and strategies when dealing with bullying and your child is autistic <https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/behaviour/common-concerns/bullying-asd>

## Understand Matters of Discipline including Connecticut’s guidelines regarding suspension and expulsions

Did you know a suspension can only last for up to ten days? Did you know an expulsion can last up to one year? Learn more about suspensions and expulsions by visiting the websites below.

SOURCE: CTLawHelp.org website <https://ctlawhelp.org/en/school-expulsions-child-expelled>

**Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIP)**- may prevent instances where a school has to resort to suspending or expelling a student by having already created a behavior intervention plan. Refer to **pg. 9** of this guide

The **211 eLibrary** website offers literature on the topic of school expulsions

<https://uwc.211ct.org/school-expulsions-connecticut/>

**State of Connecticut Department of Education**- has created a guide book consisting of a compilation of school discipline-related laws and regulations

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/discipline-compendium/Connecticut%20School%20Discipline%20Laws%20and%20Regulations.pdf>

**State of Connecticut Department of Education**- Provides guidance and tips for supporting students who are expelled from school <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Discipline-in-Schools/How-To>

## Review your Child’s Rights Under IDEA

**Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center** – provides information related to the Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). You can also access the *IDEA Due Process Parents Guide* which provides details about filing a complaint and requesting a hearing related to your child’s special education needs <http://www.cpacinc.org/materials-publications/legal-rights/>

## Get involved in your local Special Education Parent Organizations (SEPTO)

Be part of your school districts Special Education Parent Teacher Organization (SEPTO). These organizations typically focus on the needs and issues encountered by special education students and parents/guardians. For more information, call your local school district.

## Explore Summer Time Options

The **State of Connecticut ConneCT Kids** website provides links to recreational activities, free places to visit, summer camps, indoor and outdoor fun for children with disabilities

<https://www.ct.gov/kids/cwp/view.asp?a=4072&q=478302#Visit>

## Explore Postsecondary Education Options

**“Navigating College -A Project of the Autistic Self Advocacy Network”**-A free downloadable guide offering a step-by-step look at college life for those with ASD <http://www.navigatingcollege.org/>

**Autism Speaks-** provides a postsecondary opportunities guide to help individuals with autism and their families explore different opportunities and learning environment after leaving high school <https://www.autismspeaks.org/postsecondary-education>

**Directory of Transition/Vocational Service Providers-** A program providing students with disabilities, ages 18-22 (in some cases younger), with opportunities to address their individual transition goals in an integrated, age-appropriate university environment. Programs may include functional academics, career assessment and evaluation, vocational training, job seeking/job keeping skills, social skills, transportation training, recreational and leisure skills, independent living skills, and social advocacy skills, just to name a few <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Special-Education/Secondary-Transition/Connecticut-Transition-Programs>

\*\*\*\*Due to a federal court decision--[A.R. v. Connecticut State Board of Education](#)—It has been determined that extended transition services are to be offered to individuals 18-22 years of age in Connecticut. The previous law which ended special education services to the year in which the student turns 21 was found to be in violation of IDEA.

## Develop a System to Organize Education Records

Having a child with special educational needs will generate loads of documents. Knowing what to save, throw away or make a priority is challenging. Visit the **Wrightslaw** website and find tips on how to organizing your child’s special education documents by visiting <https://www.wrightslaw.com/info/organize.file.htm>

## Life Skills

### Teach your Child Proper Hygiene

**Ambitious About Autism-** Article providing information related to hygiene and things to consider when its regarding an individual with autism <https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/understanding-autism/health/hygiene>

**Raisingchildren.net.au.** Website provides information related to puberty, hygiene and ideas to make hygiene more manageable <https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/health-daily-care/daily-care/personal-hygiene-teens-with-asd>

### Teach your Child Money Management Skills

**Autism Awareness Centre Inc.-** provides an article about money management titled ‘*How to Teach Money Management for Independent Living with Autism*’ <https://autismawarenesscentre.com/how-to-teach-money-management-for-independant-living-with-autism/>

**The Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation in conjunction with Widener University** created a guide related to money management titled “*Cents and Sensibility: A guide to money management for people with disabilities*” <https://fliconline.org/documents/patffinancialeducationbooklet-final.pdf>

## Teach your Child how to do Simple Household Chores

**Autism Awareness Centre Inc.**- provides 7 household chores your child with ASD can do  
<https://autismawarenesscentre.com/household-chores-share-special-needs-child-grandchild/>

**Autism Awareness Centre Inc.**- provides tips on how to teach better behavior through the use of chores  
<https://www.steppingstonesca.com/single-post/2016/08/10/How-to-teach-better-behavior-through-chores>

## Employment

### Develop Skills that Could Lead to Future Employment

The **State of Connecticut Department of Rehabilitation Services** has the Connect-Ability program and offers information, tools and technical assistance to job seekers as well as e-learning modules on skills related to accessing employment [www.ct.gov/connect-ability](http://www.ct.gov/connect-ability) or call 1-866-844-1903

**Autism Speaks** provides an employment tool kit to help with researching, finding and keeping employment <https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/Employment%20Tool%20Kit.pdf>

### Teach your Child the “Soft Skills” needed for Employment (i.e. being on time, dressing appropriately, taking directions)

**Monster** provides information about soft skills to help an individual’s career  
<https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/soft-skills-you-need>

**Careerbuilder** provides helpful tips about what to wear to an interview  
<https://www.careerbuilder.com/advice/what-to-wear-for-different-job-interviews-based-on-the-company>

**Autism Spectrum Australia** website has a list of skills for the workplace thought to be important and tips on how to improve these skills <http://www.autismlaunchpad.org.au/work/workplace-skills/>

### Make Sure your Child has a Resume that includes a list of Skills and Competencies

**Organization for Autism Research**- provides tips on writing a resume in an article titled ‘Writing a Resume- Where to Begin?’ Also provides samples of a resume and a link to view a step-by-step breakdown of a resume <https://researchautism.org/writing-a-resume-where-to-begin/>

**Careerbuilder** provides an Article titled 'Effective strategies for job seekers with autism'. Article provides tips on including skills within the resume that match the company goals and shows how your skills will benefit the company <https://www.careerbuilder.com/advice/effective-strategies-for-job-seekers-with-autism>

**Autism Speaks** has a downloadable 'Employment Toolkit' that provides employment information for individuals with ASD including information on completing resumes, cover letters and applications <https://www.autismspeaks.org/employment>

## Explore Employment Services and Opportunities

**Autism Speaks** provides an Employment tool kit for job seekers with autism. Provided within the packet are topics ranging from self-advocacy to your employment rights or job interviewing techniques to creating your cover letter <https://www.autismspeaks.org/job-seekers-autism>

**TheSpectrumCareers.com** A tool for job seekers with Autism and the business community <https://www.thespectrumcareers.com/>

**Job Accommodation Network (JAN)** offers free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues <https://askjan.org/>

**State of Connecticut Department of Rehabilitation Services Connect-Ability** program is a statewide initiative connecting Connecticut employers with people with disabilities. Also available on the website are free online e-learning trainings for job seekers with disabilities. Trainings include financial literacy, soft skills training and employment readiness. Call 203-578-4550 or <http://www.ct.gov/connect-ability/site/default.asp>

## Explore Volunteer Opportunities

**United Way of Connecticut 2-1-1 Infoline** has an extensive database which lists agencies offering volunteer opportunities throughout the state 2-1-1 (1-800-203-1234) or [www.211ct.org](http://www.211ct.org)

Although the following article explains why teens may benefit from volunteering by gaining work readiness skills, the experience one gains from volunteering can be applied across the lifespan. Read the following article from the **Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital** website at <https://www.hopkinsallchildrens.org/ACH-News/General-News/Volunteering-Helps-Teens-with-Autism-Spectrum-Diso>

## Safety

### Help your Child Learn about Appropriate Social Skills

**Raisingchildren.net.au** provides a 'Teens: Communicating & Relationships' section on the website which allows you to explore topics relevant to ages 12-18 years of age. These social skills topics include

communicating, family relationships, friends and peers, romantic relationships, coping with trauma, and bilingualism & multilingualism <https://raisingchildren.net.au/teens/communicating-relationships>

**Psychology Today** provides an article titled *'Helping Your Child with Autism Improve Social Skills'* to provide parents with skills needs to help their children develop social skills  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/socioemotional-success/201706/helping-your-child-autism-improve-social-skills>

## Address Community and Relationship Safety

Individuals with autism will engage in many community activities and interact with people like many other individuals without autism. There may be safety concerns related to walking to school, attending fairs, relationships with peers, abuse, swimming at a local pool, and more. Safety will always be a concern for individuals with autism. Below you will find some resources discussing some of the many types of safety concerns.

**Autism Speaks** provides helpful and informative literature about maintaining safety for individuals within the community, safety within relationships, and safety from different abuses.  
<https://www.autismspeaks.org/autism-safety-project>

Consider an **Autism Identification Card** that can be placed in your wallet and presented to law enforcement and First Responders during an emergency situation  
<https://www.aane.org/resources/wallet-card/>

## Social and Relationships

### Help your Child Learn about Appropriate Social Skills

**Raisingchildren.net.au** provides a 'Teens: Communicating & Relationships' section on the website which allows you to explore topics relevant to ages 12-18 years of age. These social skills topics include communicating, family relationships, friends and peers, romantic relationships, coping with trauma, and bilingualism & multilingualism <https://raisingchildren.net.au/teens/communicating-relationships>

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<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/socioemotional-success/201706/helping-your-child-autism-improve-social-skills>

### Teach your Child about his/her Body and Sexuality as Age Appropriate

Learn about what to expect during teenage development in areas ranging from personal identity, social & emotional changes, puberty, sexuality, hygiene, and more at **Raisingchildren.net.au**  
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/teens/development>



The **Sexuality Resource Center for Parents** provides an article titled “*Autism Spectrum Disorders and Sexuality*” which provides information on sexuality among individuals with autism and strategies to discussing topics such as hygiene, sex, romantic relationships, puberty, private behaviors, and more [http://www.srcp.org/for\\_some\\_parents/developmental\\_disabilities/activities\\_to\\_use\\_with\\_your\\_child/autismDD.html](http://www.srcp.org/for_some_parents/developmental_disabilities/activities_to_use_with_your_child/autismDD.html)

The **Jacob Wetterling Resource Center** also provides a guide for age appropriate conversation starters to teach your children about “bad touch” <http://www.gundersenhealth.org/ncptc/jacob-wetterling-resource-center/keep-kids-safe/personal-safety/age-appropriate-conversations/>

## Engage in Recreational and Leisure Activities that your Child and Family Enjoy

Leisure activities are an important part of life for everyone. Finding fun and enjoyable activities for an autistic child may be more challenging due to difficulties in behavior, social interaction and communication. Visit **Autism Awareness Centre Inc.** and read “Developing Leisure Activities for Individuals with ASD” to learn about leisure activities <https://autismawarenesscentre.com/developing-leisure-activities-for-individuals-with-asd/>

**Autism Speaks** provides information about the benefits of recreation and provides answers to frequently asked questions. Visit <https://www.autismspeaks.org/recreation-0>

The **Connecticut Still Revolutionary** website provides a listing of statewide activities held each week for individuals and families of all ages [http://www.ctvisit.com/?utm\\_source=Google&utm\\_medium=Paid\\_Search&utm\\_content=Winter2019&utm\\_campaign=Brand&gclid=EAlaIqobChMlyYfm-bal4AIVDK\\_ICh2irwqwEAAYASAAEgJjifD\\_BwE](http://www.ctvisit.com/?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=Paid_Search&utm_content=Winter2019&utm_campaign=Brand&gclid=EAlaIqobChMlyYfm-bal4AIVDK_ICh2irwqwEAAYASAAEgJjifD_BwE)



## Funding, Services and Legal Information

### Apply to the Department of Social Services Division of Autism Spectrum Services

Visit [www.ct.gov/dds](http://www.ct.gov/dds) (Eligibility is still determined through the Department of Developmental Services).

- Left hand side select ‘Divisions’> DSS Autism Spectrum Services (This is at DSS)> Eligibility> scroll down and select ‘Please Follow this link for eligibility application’  
Or
- From the DDS homepage [www.ct.gov/dds](http://www.ct.gov/dds)- Left hand side select ‘Families’> select the



‘Early Childhood’ icon  > select the DDS Eligibility box  > then select **Application for Someone with Autism and NO Intellectual Disability over the age of 3**> select ‘Autism Eligibility > Application

## Understand What it Means to move from Entitlement to Eligibility

According to The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), once your child either earns a high school diploma or a Certificate of Program Completion, this means that public education is now complete. Your child has transitioned from the stage of Entitlement to the stage of Eligibility.

**Pathfinders for Autism** website contains information related to Entitlement vs. Eligibility

<https://pathfindersforautism.org/articles/maryland-services/the-dilemma-of-entitlement-vs-eligibility/>

## Determine if Your Child is Eligible for Social Security Benefits

Cash payments for low income older adults, ages 65+, or for people with a physical or mental impairment expected to last at least 1 year or to result in death, are made to assure an income. Low birth weight infants weighing less than 1200 grams (2 pounds 10 ounces) at birth may be eligible for presumptive disability payments. Up to 6 months of PD payments may be made to an infant who is age 6 months or younger at the time of the PD finding and whose birth certificate or other evidence indicates a birth weight of less than 1200 grams. Call 1-877-405-4874 or visit [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

*SOURCE:* UWC 211 Website

## Apply for Social Security Benefits by the age of 18

You can apply online at <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/>. Once you finish the online process, a Social Security representative will contact you for any additional information needed for the applications.

You can also schedule an appointment with a local Social Security office to file an application. Call **1-800-772-1213** (TTY **1-800-325-0778**) from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday or [contact your local Social Security office](#).

Social Security does not yet have an online application for Children's benefits. Visit [Apply For Disability Benefits – Child \(Under Age 18\)](#) to apply for your child.

You can complete the online [Child Disability Report](#) if you are ready to apply now.

*SOURCE:* Social Security Administration Website

## Explore Insurance Coverage for Autism Services

**Autism Speaks** Initiative provides answers to frequently asked questions about the Autism Insurance Reform Law and what you need to know [http://advocacy.autismspeaks.org/atf/cf/%7B2A179B73-96E2-44C3-8816-1B1C0BE5334B%7D/Connecticut\\_FAQs.pdf](http://advocacy.autismspeaks.org/atf/cf/%7B2A179B73-96E2-44C3-8816-1B1C0BE5334B%7D/Connecticut_FAQs.pdf)

**Beacon Health Options** (1-877-552-8247) offers clinical mental health and substance use disorder management, a comprehensive employee assistance program, work/life support, specialty programs for autism and depression, and insightful analytics to improve the delivery of care. Beacon manages the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) benefits for Medicaid beneficiaries who have Husky A, C, and D and are under age 21. A feature of the program provides access to a Beacon Peer Specialist and Care Coordinators to assist with explaining benefits covered under Medicaid, helping families navigate the health care system, and coordinating non-traditional services

<https://www.beaconhealthoptions.com/who-we-are/>

## Direct Questions Regarding ASD Insurance Issues to the Office of the Healthcare Advocate

**Office of the Healthcare Advocate** (1-866-466-4446) Provides assistance with selecting health insurance coverage. Agency will answer questions about health insurance issues, including, but not limited to, enrollment/eligibility issues, clarification of plan benefits, plan benefit limitations, and out-of-network services [www.ct.gov/oha](http://www.ct.gov/oha)

## Explore the Legal Implications of Reaching Age 18 (Conservatorship)

The age at which an individual is considered legally an adult, or “age of majority”, in most states is 18.

*SOURCE:* CGS Sec. 1-1d [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_001.htm#sec\\_1-1d](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_001.htm#sec_1-1d)

This means individuals in the State of Connecticut are old enough to be considered legally capable of making personal and financial decisions. Individuals with autism, however, may be unable to direct his or her own personal affairs and/or financial decisions, therefore, matters related to their safety, health, and finances are of concern.

A **conservator** is a person appointed by the probate court to oversee the financial or personal affairs of an adult determined to be incapable of managing his or her own affairs or unable to care for himself or herself. There are two basic types of conservatorships:

- A **conservator of the person** is appointed to supervise the personal affairs of an individual who is found by the court to be unable, even with appropriate assistance, to meet essential requirements for personal needs. These needs may include, but are not limited to, the need for food, clothing, shelter, health care, and safety.
- A **conservator of the estate** is appointed to supervise the financial affairs of an individual who is found by the court to be incapable of doing so himself to the extent that property will be wasted unless adequate property management is provided. This may include, but is not limited to, actions to obtain and manage assets, income and public assistance benefits.
- A person may be in need of one or both types of conservators. Two separate individuals may perform these two roles, or one person may serve in both capacities. A conservator of the estate or

person may be an individual, a legally authorized municipal or state official, or a private or nonprofit corporation. However, hospitals and nursing homes cannot be appointed conservators of either the person or the estate, and banks cannot be appointed conservators of the person.

SOURCE: UWC 211 eLibrary <https://uwc.211ct.org/conservator-of-estate-conservator-of-person/>

To become a conservator, please visit the **Connecticut Probate Courts** website at <http://www.ctprobate.gov/Pages/Conservatorships.aspx>

## Learn about Life Planning Tools

**ABLE National Resource Center- Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) account** - ABLE Accounts, which are tax-advantaged savings accounts for individuals with disabilities and their families, were created as a result of the passage of the Stephen Beck Jr., Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014 or better known as the ABLE Act. The beneficiary of the account is the account owner, and income earned by the accounts will not be taxed. Contributions to the account, which can be made by any person (the account beneficiary, family and friends), must be made using post-taxed dollars and will not be tax deductible for purposes of federal taxes, however some states may allow for state income tax deductions for contribution made to an ABLE account <http://www.ablenrc.org/about/what-are-able-accounts>

**Special Needs Trust (SNT's)** are well-established savings tools that also protect eligibility for public programs <https://www.specialneedsalliance.org/able-accounts-and-snts-how-to-choose/>

**Explore Tax Deductions and Exemptions for Children with Special Needs- Autism Support Network** provides information regarding tax planning for parents with children with autism <http://www.autismsupportnetwork.com/news/tax-planning-parents-children-autism-221234>

**Talk About Curing Autism (TACA)**- provides information regarding tax advantages and deductions for parents of children with special needs <https://tacanow.org/family-resources/tax-strategies-for-parents-of-kids-with-special-needs/>

## Develop a System to Organize Financial and Legal Records

**Pathfinders for Autism**- offers a guide to organizing your paperwork <http://pathfindersforautism.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/A-Guide-to-Organizing-Your-Paperwork.pdf>

**Wrightslaw**- You need a simple, foolproof document management system. In this article, you will learn how to organize your child's file. After you organize the information about your child into a file, you will have a clearer understanding of your child's disability and needs <https://www.wrightslaw.com/info/organize.file.htm>

## Support

### Network with Others at Support Groups

**Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN)** - Parent-to-parent organization offering support groups, training, email list serve, information and advocacy [www.ctfsn.org](http://www.ctfsn.org)

**Autism Services and Resources Connecticut (ASRC)**- Provides advocacy and support groups, recreational and social opportunities, trainings, newsletter, and information [www.ct-asrc.org](http://www.ct-asrc.org)

For a more comprehensive listing of information related to *Support Groups*, please contact the DSS Autism Unit and speak with an Autism Support and Resource Specialist by calling Nathaniel Calixto, 860-424-5677, or Cathleen Calaway, 860-424-5567 or visit the DSS Autism website <https://portal.ct.gov/DSS/Health-And-Home-Care/Autism-Spectrum-Disorder---ASD/Autism-Spectrum-Disorder---ASD>

### Investigate Support Groups for Your Child

Support for your child may come in different forms, whether its life skills coaching or social skills groups. Please visit the Department of Social Services Autism Division website to obtain a listing of **State of Connecticut - DSS Approved Autism Providers** [https://www.211ct.org/search?term=autism&page=4&location=Connecticut&service\\_area=connecticut](https://www.211ct.org/search?term=autism&page=4&location=Connecticut&service_area=connecticut)

You can also contact the following agencies to see if there is a support group for your child is your area:

Support Networks for Youth and Peers				
Organization	Service Description	Address	Contact number	Website
<b>Autism Families Connecticut</b>	Friday Night Teen Socials: A monthly program where teens ages 13 to 19 with autism can hang out, sing, dance, and play games. Programs include a variety of social activities including music, dancing, karaoke, games, refreshments, and most importantly, friendships. This program is FREE.	600 North Mountain Road, Newington, CT 06111	860-474-3444	<a href="http://www.autismfamiliesct.org/programs/friday-night-teen-socials/">http://www.autismfamiliesct.org/programs/friday-night-teen-socials/</a>
<b>Autism Families of Connecticut</b>	Offers a variety of social and recreational activities for both youth with ASD and their families. The goals include creating a social environment, promoting social skills, listening and communicating.	600 North Mountain Road, Newington, CT 06111	860-474-3444	<a href="http://www.autismfamiliesct.org/programs/">http://www.autismfamiliesct.org/programs/</a>
<b>Autism Services &amp; Resources Connecticut (ASRC)</b>	Support groups for adults and teens with Autism Spectrum Disorders meets monthly (in Wallingford and Middletown)	101 North Plans Industrial Rd, Wallingford, CT	203-265-7717	<a href="http://www.ct-asrc.org">www.ct-asrc.org</a>

		06492		
<b>Autism Speaks</b>	Grief and Bereavement Resources- Resources to help support you or your child while experiencing grief	varies	1-888-288-4762	<a href="https://www.autismspeaks.org/grief-and-bereavement-resources">https://www.autismspeaks.org/grief-and-bereavement-resources</a>
<b>Best Buddies CT</b>	BESTBUDDIES® one-to-one friendship programs helps people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), build socialization opportunities through school and community friendship programs. Use the reference map to find a friendship program near you.	100 Southeast Second St, Suite 2200, Miami, FL 33131		<a href="https://www.bestbuddies.org/connecticut/friendship-map/">https://www.bestbuddies.org/connecticut/friendship-map/</a>
<b>Best Buddies CT</b>	e-Buddies promotes social inclusion online for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities	100 Southeast Second St, Suite 2200, Miami, FL 33131	1-305-374-2233	<a href="https://www.bestbuddies.org/what-we-do/ebuddies/">https://www.bestbuddies.org/what-we-do/ebuddies/</a>
<b>Beyond My Battle</b>	Online support group and educational resources for those individuals with serious illness, rare disease, and disabilities. Support is also available for caregivers.	112 W Circular St, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866	(518) 328-4939	<a href="http://www.beyondmybattle.org">www.beyondmybattle.org</a>
<b>Center for Disability Rights</b>	Cross-disability support group offers speakers, group discussions, raps and other social activities for people regardless of age or type of disability. Meeting times vary monthly, call for dates and time. Occasionally the group has outings or field trips to Disability Expos or other cultural events.	369 Highland Street, West Haven, CT 06516	203-934-7077	<a href="http://cdr-ct.org/">http://cdr-ct.org/</a>
<b>Challenge to Victory</b>	Contact facilitator for more information. Every 2nd Thursday of the month.	30 Grand Avenue, New Haven, CT	Che Elyse Okwu, 203-627-8734 & Calia Gaddis, 203-676-2349	New Haven Collaborative and Connecticut
<b>Circle of Friends</b>	Network of friends for children and teens with special needs. Social activities occur in both one on one and in group settings. For a schedule of the Sunday Circle/Teen Scene Events or Adult Socials and for more information on all of our programs	40 King Street, Norwalk, CT 06851	203-866-0534; circlefriendsct@gmail.com	<a href="https://www.circleoffriendsct.org/">https://www.circleoffriendsct.org/</a>
<b>Community Centers, Inc.</b>	Support groups for young people and adults with developmental disabilities offer peer support, counseling and socialization.	61 Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, CT 06830	203-869-1276	<a href="http://ccigreenwich.org/special-needs-groups/">http://ccigreenwich.org/special-needs-groups/</a>

<b>CT Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board</b>	Is an initiative within the CT Secondary Transition Community of Practice, a Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board was created to provide a place for students and youth with disabilities ages 14 to 26 to have their voices heard by the people who plan for students and provide them support.	n/a	Beth Reel, CT Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), 860-739-3089 or breel@cpacinc.org	<a href="https://www.cttransition.org/">https://www.cttransition.org/</a>
<b>Empower Hour Girls Program</b>	We address bullying, teen violence, self-esteem, physical fitness, public speaking and healthy eating. Thursday from 5-6:30 p.m. & 2nd Saturday of each month from 12-4 p.m. CRT (Thursday) & Parker Memorial Community Center (Saturday)	n/a	Contact Tanya Gordon at empowerhourgirls@gmail.com	Hartford/ West Hartford and Connecticut
<b>Destiny Outreach</b>	This is a group for parents who want to network and make effective changes within their community. 1st & 3rd Tuesday of every month from 4-6 p.m. East Hartford Cultural Center, East Hartford, CT	50 Chapman Place, East Hartford, CT 06108	Cathy Flippen, 860-726-3646	n/a
<b>Independence Unlimited</b>	Independence Unlimited Youth Transitions Project increases the participation of youth with disabilities and their parents in the process of planning for their transition into adulthood. This includes self advocacy, skills training, service linkage and outreach.	151 New Park Ave., North Annex suite D, Hartford, CT 06106	860-523-5021	<a href="https://www.independenceunlimited.org/index.php/our-programs/youth-transitions">https://www.independenceunlimited.org/index.php/our-programs/youth-transitions</a>
<b>Institute of Living</b>	Offers various support groups such as substance abuse education, Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender support, Autism Spectrum support, Mental Illness support, support services, and resources. Support programs are provided for those in need, their family members, and caregivers. Visit the website below for a complete list of support group locations, times and contact information.	200 Retreat Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106	860-545-7665	Hartford
<b>Junior Next Steps</b>	A group for children with special needs, bullied will receive peer support and engage in social activities. Every other Thursday from 3-4:30 p.m. JFK Middle School, Southington, CT		Carrie Foligno & Desiree Daigle, 860-302-6543	Greater Bristol/Farmington Valley and Connecticut

<b>KHAIR</b>	KHAIR (pronounced "care") serves at-risk youth by offering one-on-one mentoring relationships and a range of workshops designed to teach important life skills and bolster self-confidence	11 Fairfield Blvd. Wallingfo rd, CT 06492	Tressa Spears Jackson, 203-949-4101 or Elvin Melendez, 203-949- 4080 or 203-949-4023 or email khairinfo@chnct.org	<a href="https://www.wekhair.org/">https://www.wekhair.org/</a>
<b>Kyzhon Experience</b>	Understanding life through the life of a child. Wednesdays, 5:30-7:00 p.m. Raphola Community Center, Bridgeport, CT		Maguena Adetona & Reuel Parks, 203-521- 7953	Greater Bridgeport and Connecticut
<b>LARC</b>	Torrington Area Families for Autism (TAFA) offers an Autism Support Group for parents which focuses on Autism advocacy, Awareness and Support. The group also offers activities, social outings and integrated playgroups for children. Support groups meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings are held at LARC (314 Main Street, Torrington). Children are welcomed.	314 Main Street, Torrington, CT 06790	860-482-9364	<a href="https://www.litchfieldarc.org/autism-support.html">https://www.litchfieldarc.org/autism-support.html</a>
<b>NCCC Recreational Activity Group</b>	This group is designed to help children benefit from prosocial activities. Times and places vary. NCCC serves the towns of Bloomfield, East Granby, East Windsor, Enfield, Granby, Somers, Stafford Springs, Suffield, Windsor, Windsor Locks.	Locations vary	Contact Doriana Vicedomini at dmv35@aol.com or Diane Reynolds at sbdreynolds@cox.net	<a href="http://www.wrapct.org/Collaborative.aspx?CollaborativeNbr=33">http://www.wrapct.org/Collaborative.aspx?CollaborativeNbr=33</a>
<b>Northcentral Community Collaborativ e</b>	Support group for children ages 9 through 13 who have siblings with behavioral, social, communication or mental health challenges. Group usually meets on the second Tuesday of the month at the Group meets for a light dinner at 6pm and then split into three groups (parent support, sibling group and child care group) at 6:30pm.	Suffield High School, Room 221, 1060 Shelton Street in West Suffield	504-259-4327 or 860- 668-5228	<a href="http://www.wrapct.org/Collaborative.aspx?CollaborativeNbr=33">http://www.wrapct.org/Collaborative.aspx?CollaborativeNbr=33</a>



<p><b>Organization for Autism Research</b></p>	<p>Offers guides designed for parents and young children/teenagers of siblings with autism. The resources aim to provide support to both parents and siblings, answer autism-related questions or concerns, and tips to help facilitate these relationships.</p>	<p>2000 N. 14th Street, Suite 300 Arlington, VA 22201</p>	<p>(866) 366-9710</p>	<p><a href="https://researchautism.org/how-we-help/families/sibling-support/?utm_source=OARacle+Newsletter+Subscribers&amp;utm_campaign=d84344ba39-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_02_18_03_42&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_term=0_132914a232-d84344ba39-171428105">https://researchautism.org/how-we-help/families/sibling-support/?utm_source=OARacle+Newsletter+Subscribers&amp;utm_campaign=d84344ba39-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_02_18_03_42&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_term=0_132914a232-d84344ba39-171428105</a></p>
<p><b>Organization for Autism Research</b></p>	<p>The Kit for Kids is designed to teach elementary and middle school students about their peers with autism.</p>	<p>2000 N. 14th Street, Suite 300 Arlington, VA 22201</p>	<p>(866) 366-9710</p>	<p><a href="https://researchautism.org/resources/kit-for-kids/?utm_source=OARacle+Newsletter+Subscribers&amp;utm_campaign=dbbaf8fc8c-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_03_26_04_24&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_term=0_132914a232-dbbaf8fc8c-171428105">https://researchautism.org/resources/kit-for-kids/?utm_source=OARacle+Newsletter+Subscribers&amp;utm_campaign=dbbaf8fc8c-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_03_26_04_24&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_term=0_132914a232-dbbaf8fc8c-171428105</a></p>
<p><b>Path Parent-to-Parent Family Voices</b></p>	<p>Open to youth 13-26 years of age. CT KASA participants learn how to advocate for themselves and take control over their own lives. CT KASA helps this happen by teaching young people about their rights and how to change the systems that affect their lives. CT KASA meets monthly every 3rd Saturday of the month. Meetings are from 11am-2pm.</p>	<p>The Exchange Building #4 270 Farmington Avenue, Suite 181 Farmington, CT 06030</p>	<p>1-800-399-7284 or 1-203-234-9554</p>	<p><a href="http://pathct.org/programs/kasa-kids-as-self-advocates/">http://pathct.org/programs/kasa-kids-as-self-advocates/</a></p>
<p><b>SEMSHOC YEG</b></p>	<p>Provides a safe place for youth with identified behavioral health challenges to come together for support. First Thursday of every month from 4-6 p.m.</p>	<p>OPP, 309 Otrobando Avenue, Norwich, CT 06360</p>	<p>Trisha Jarrrett, Sherrie Parenteau (staff), Hanna Scanlon, Jasmine Rich (youth), 860-222-3257 or 860-761-7388</p>	<p>Norwich and Connecticut</p>
<p><b>The Arc Autism Now</b></p>	<p>Information Specialist are available to help individuals on the spectrum and their families by providing education, resources and support.</p>	<p>1825 K Street NW, Suite 1200 Washington, DC 20006</p>	<p>1-855-828-8476</p>	<p><a href="https://autismnow.org/what-we-do/call-center/">https://autismnow.org/what-we-do/call-center/</a></p>

<b>Town of Manchester</b>	Sibshop provides support and fun for children who have a brother or sister with special needs. Group meets monthly on the second Friday of each month.	63 Linden Street, Manchester, CT 06040	860-647-5213, contact Beth Mix	<a href="http://ysb1.townofmanchester.org/NewYSB/assets/File/Programs%20at%20a%20Glance(2).pdf">http://ysb1.townofmanchester.org/NewYSB/assets/File/Programs%20at%20a%20Glance(2).pdf</a>
<b>United Services-Center for Autism</b>	SibSupport group helps youth understand their siblings behaviors and autism, teach coping skills, and allow siblings a chance to share emotions and concerns. Participation is free to siblings of children who are clients at the center.	Dayville-1007 North Main Street, Dayville, CT 06241; Wauregan- 303 Putnam Road PB Box 378, Wauregan, CT 06387; Mansfield- 140 North Frontage Road, Mansfield Center, CT 06250	Dayville office 860-774-2020; Wauregan office 860-564-6100; Mansfield office 860-456-2261	<a href="http://www.unitedservicesct.org/">http://www.unitedservicesct.org/</a>
<b>West Haven Adolescent Support Group</b>	Groups for youth ages 13 to 18 meets monthly to learn coping skills to deal with one's own disabilities and/or that of others. This creates an opportunity for peer support and new friendships. Membership is free but does require a short interview.	City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT 06516	Violawaldo412@att.net or Bob Morton -203-937-3633	<a href="http://www.mywhinc.org/index.htm">http://www.mywhinc.org/index.htm</a>
<b>Wrongplanet.net</b>	An online community for people with Autism and Asperger syndrome	N/A	N/A	<a href="https://wrongplanet.net/">https://wrongplanet.net/</a>
<b>Youth Enrichment Program and Social Skills Support Group</b>	Offers a variety of positive youth development programs for clients of the agency and their siblings. The support is tailored to individual/family needs.	Guilford Youth & Family Services; 36 Graves Avenue, Guilford, CT 06437	203-453-8047	<a href="http://www.guilfordyouthandfamilyservices.org/">http://www.guilfordyouthandfamilyservices.org/</a>

## Identify your Support System

**Autism Speaks** – Offers tips and guidance to parents and caregivers related to identifying and/or creating a support system after a child has been diagnosed with Autism

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/autism-and-your-family>

**Stepping Stones**- Webpage has an article providing information on the importance of having a support system and some tips on how to develop one <https://www.stepsstonesca.com/single-post/2016/11/20/Building-a-support-network-when-dealing-with-ASD>

## Take Care of Yourself, your Spouse and your other Children

**Synapse-** website offers self-care tips to parents of parents with an autistic child <http://www.autism-help.org/family-autism-self-care-strategies.htm>

**Autism Resources and Community (ARC)-** website offers parents an article on self-care <http://blog.stageslearning.com/blog/autism-parents-self-care>

## Transportation

### Explore Transportation Options including Public Transportation, Mobility, and Divers License

**The Kennedy Center** has a travel guide titled '*A Chance to Ride: Introducing Young Adults with Autism to Independent Travel*'. This guide provides information on introducing travel to individuals with autism, tips for family members to become involved in the process, information regarding communicating in the community, signs and traffic symbols, pedestrian safety, awareness of surroundings, and more. **The Kennedy Center** also provides a listing of national, federal, and local transportation agencies you and your child may be able to access <https://www.thekennedycenterinc.org/what-we-do/programs-services/mobility-services/publications-resources.html>

**CTrides** is a free program that helps commuters find the best way to get to work or school. We provide resources for choice commuting options throughout Connecticut, including bus, rail, carpools, vanpools, biking, walking, and teleworking <https://ctrides.com/>

**TIP:** Find a driving school that specializes in providing a comprehensive driver program for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

**The State of Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles-** for more information on obtaining a learner's permit and to take the test for the driver's license. You can also access the locations where learner's permit testing sites are located and download practice test questions for the learner's permit via app (android, iPhone, iPad)

### Help your Child Obtain a Connecticut Non-Driver Identification Card through the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles

**The State of Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles** provides information regarding the eligibility criteria, what to bring , and locations to apply for a non-driver identification card <https://www.ct.gov/dmv/cwp/view.asp?a=805&q=490078>

## Advocacy

### Learn how to Advocate for your Child

**Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN)** - Parent-to-parent organization offering support groups, training, email list serve, information and advocacy [www.ctfsn.org](http://www.ctfsn.org)

**Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC)** - Provides information and support to families of children with disabilities from birth to 26 years [www.cpacinc.org](http://www.cpacinc.org)

**Autism Services and Resources Connecticut (ASRC)**- Provides advocacy and support groups, recreational and social opportunities, trainings, newsletter, and information [www.ct-asrc.org](http://www.ct-asrc.org)

**Office of the Healthcare Advocate (OHA)** - Provides free advocacy and assistance to resolve healthcare and insurance issues 1-866-466-4446 [www.ct.gov/oha](http://www.ct.gov/oha)

**Family Advocacy Program (FAVOR)**- Offers training, technical assistance and, support to parents and caregivers [www.favor-ct.org](http://www.favor-ct.org)

**Center for Children’s Advocacy** [www.kidscounsel.org](http://www.kidscounsel.org)

**CT Families for Effective Autism Treatment (CT FEAT)** - Provides information, training, support and networking. It has a “Parents Only” internet discussion list. [www.ctfeat.org](http://www.ctfeat.org)

**Autism Families CONNECTicut** - An organization formed by a group of parents and family members that provides recreational, cultural and social activities for children with ASD. [www.autismfamiliesct.org](http://www.autismfamiliesct.org)

**PATH Parent to Parent and Family Voices of CT**- A network of families providing informational and emotional support to others who have a child with developmental or health related needs. [www.pathct.org](http://www.pathct.org)

**Wrightslaw**- Provides advocacy, legal information, support [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com)

**Your Special Education Rights**- Video based resource for parents to provide them with the knowledge to advocate for their child’s education [www.yourspecialeducationrights.com](http://www.yourspecialeducationrights.com)

**CT Network for Legal Aid (Special Education)** - Free legal help for people with low income <http://ctlawhelp.org/special-education-in-connecticut>

**Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut**- Advocacy, legal representation, advice, and information for all education related issues for people with low income [www.slscct.org](http://www.slscct.org)

**Connecticut Legal Services**- Provides legal representation for people with low income. Priority area include: divorce, child support and other aspects of family law, housing subsidies, all aspects of public benefits ( SNAP, Medicaid, SSI etc.), special educations, employment related issues [www.connlegalservices.org](http://www.connlegalservices.org)

## Help Your Child Learn Self-Advocacy Skills

Teaching your children social skills is crucial given an autistic child's limitation with certain social skills. As part of the social skills lesson, teach your child to self-advocate.

**Organization for Autism Research-** Too often, young people with disabilities have things done for them that their typical peers do themselves, which they could do as well. These well-intended supports can get in the way of their ability to advocate for themselves. In this week's blog, an autism specialist, Deborah Hammer, describes the steps you can take to help children learn to self-advocate. This post originally appeared in the [July 2015 edition](#) of the OARacle newsletter <https://researchautism.org/help-children-learn-how-to-self-advocate/>

## Have an Understanding of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The **United Way of Connecticut 2-1-1 eLibrary** webpage has information regarding the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) <https://uwc.211ct.org/ada-the-americans-with-disabilities-act/>

**United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division** website offers information and technical assistance on the American with Disabilities Act <https://www.ada.gov/>

## Additional Resources

For a more comprehensive listing of information related to Autism Spectrum Disorder, please contact the DSS Autism Unit and speak with an Autism Support and Resource Specialist:

Nathaniel Calixto  
Autism Support and Resource Specialist  
[Nathaniel.Calixto@ct.gov](mailto:Nathaniel.Calixto@ct.gov)  
Tel: 860-424-5677  
Fax: 860-920-3170

Cathleen Calway  
Autism Support and Resource Specialist  
[cathleen.calway@ct.gov](mailto:cathleen.calway@ct.gov)  
Tel: 860-424-5567  
Fax: 860-920-3170

\*\*\*Please note: The contents of this document are provided solely for informational purposes. It is meant to give individuals with ASD and their families a choice regarding services and supports. The DSS Autism Division does not specifically recommend or endorse any individual provider or practitioner.