

# CHOOSING INTERVENTIONS FOR YOUR PRESCHOOLER WITH AUTISM

## 1 GET A CLEAR PICTURE

**Monitoring and evaluation** by your child's doctor, psychologist or therapist can help you understand your child's changing needs across time.



### SOME CO-OCCURRING CONDITIONS:

Developmental needs (e.g. language delay, **intellectual disability**)

Emotional and behaviour needs (e.g. anxiety, **ADHD**)

Specific learning difficulties (e.g. **dyslexia**)

Medical or genetic conditions (e.g. epilepsy, Fragile X)

Autism can be reliably diagnosed at 2-3 years old, but conditions indicated in **blue** are more reliably diagnosed at 5-7 years old.

## 2 IDENTIFY THE RIGHT FIT

Interventions that teach your child **new behaviours** and **skills** enable the best outcomes. These interventions can be...



### COMPREHENSIVE

OR

### FOCUSED



- Address multiple developmental areas
- Few times weekly & longer term
- e.g. early intervention programmes

*Many attend short-term therapy at hospitals, while waiting to enroll in an early intervention programme.*

- Address single skill or goal
- Shorter term or until goal is met
- Occur within a therapy package of a few sessions or as part of comprehensive intervention
- e.g. positive behaviour support, visual aids

### INTERVENTIONS SHOULD:

- ✓ Follow a developmental sequence to teach skills
- ✓ Maximise strengths & work on difficulties
- ✓ Help child better engage in daily activities
- ✓ Work on goals your family finds important



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## 3 FOLLOW THE SCIENCE

Interventions should be **supported by science**.  
Avoid overly expensive or invasive treatment, that can be **harmful** to your child's physical or mental health.



### SAFE & EFFECTIVE

- Supported by scientific evidence (e.g. peer-reviewed research)
- Has clear procedures & measurable outcomes



### UNRELIABLE

- Based on testimonies by a select few
- Claims to 'cure' or 'fix' autism

**CHECK WITH  
YOUR DOCTOR!**

## 4 DOING RIGHT BY YOUR CHILD

Children learn best in **positive** and **nurturing** environments.

### HELPFUL TREATMENTS

vs.

### UNHELPFUL TREATMENTS

Develop your child's unique strengths

vs.

Treat autism as a problem

Teach skills to help your child adapt

vs.

Force your child to be 'normal'

Affirm your child for 'wins', big or small

vs.

Use shame/ fear to control your child's behaviour

Children may be **anxious** when joining a new intervention programme. A helpful therapist will support your child's emotions & **help them adjust gradually**.



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## 5 PLAN FOR THE LONG RUN

Caring for a child with autism is a **marathon**, not a sprint. Consider the costs of interventions & subsidies.



**SUSTAINED CARE**



**QUICK FIXES**

### COMMUNITY PROVIDERS...

- such as the Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC) are government-subsidised
- adhere to a standard framework to ensure quality of care.

### PRIVATE PROVIDERS...

- may provide more options such as full day programmes or integrated preschool
- are usually more costly

## 6 FIND A TEAM YOU TRUST

Teachers, doctors, psychologists, therapists and nurses are your **partners** during this journey to support your child.

### SIGNS OF A GOOD TEAM



**Licensed** and **knowledgeable** about autism



**Clear roles** across professions



**Involves & communicates** with parents & other therapists



**Reviews** your child's progress **regularly**

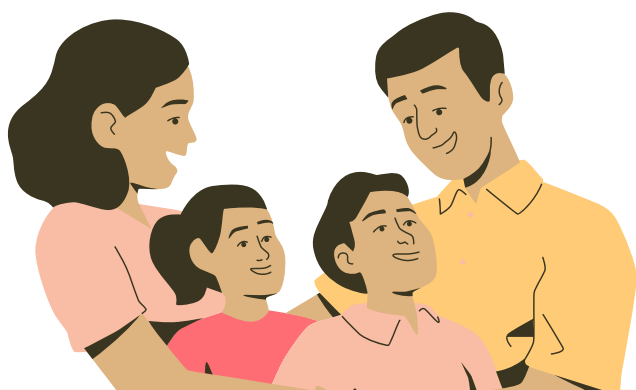
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## 7

## PUT TIME ON YOUR SIDE

**Make time** to be involved in your child's intervention by **attending** caregiver trainings.

Change takes time,  
and interventions work best when **caregivers practise skills in the home and community** with their children.



**Ensure your child gets sufficient sleep, leisure, and family time in addition to practising skills!**

## USEFUL RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

**SGenable: Early Intervention Programme for Infants & Children (EIPIIC)**



**Raisingchildren.net.au: Main types of therapies and supports for children with autism**

**Caregivers Training Grant information**

