



# **What to do while you are waiting for a possible ASD diagnosis?**

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# Introduction:

- ▶ Waiting for an evaluation by a Developmental Pediatrician or other Developmental specialist is a long process.
- ▶ It can take months to get an appointment for a diagnosis.
- ▶ There are many local resources and services that may help your child no matter what the eventual diagnosis will be.
- ▶ It is often frustrating to have long periods of time on waiting lists to get your kids the help they need.
- ▶ Here are some productive things to do while you wait to get a diagnosis.



# Assess need for Speech Therapy Services

- ▶ **How is your child's speech? Do they need speech therapy?**
  - ▶ Is their speech delayed?
  - ▶ Do they have difficulty with pragmatic (practical) speech?
  - ▶ Do they have restricted diets and eating problems?
- ▶ **If the answer is yes to any of these questions, then:**
  - ▶ If your child is not yet in kindergarten, they could be eligible for:
    - ▶ Early Intervention (EI) services (birth - 3 years)
    - ▶ Or Intermediate unit (IU) (>3 y/o) services
    - ▶ These services are self-referred do not need script
    - ▶ Can call for services as a parent
    - ▶ Usually come to your house or daycare
- ▶ **Is private speech feasible with insurance or Medical Assistance (MA)?**
  - ▶ Requires a script from your pediatrician
  - ▶ Usually involves copays and meeting deductibles (if not MA)
  - ▶ You have to transport your child to appointments.



# Speech Therapy Resources:

## ➤ Books

- The Conversation Train: Visual approach to conversation for children on the Autism Spectrum: Joel Shaul
- The Green Zone Conversation book: Finding common ground in conversation for children on the Autism Spectrum: Joel Shaul
- Our Brains are like Computers: Joel Shaul

## ➤ Apps

- Speech Therapy Pro (App for dysfluency)
- Alligator apps: first words (helpful for imitating language)

Disclaimer: This is a list compiled for your perusal. Autism Society LV does not approve or disapprove any of the programs.



# Assess Need for Occupational Therapy

- ▶ **Does your child have:**
  - ▶ Sensory difficulties (sound sensitivity, touch sensitivity, etc.)
  - ▶ Fine motor difficulties?
  - ▶ Self help skills (not age appropriate)
  - ▶ Play skills (not age appropriate)
- ▶ **If the answer is yes to any of these questions, then:**
  - ▶ Is your child not yet in kindergarten they may be eligible for:
    - ▶ Early Intervention (EI) services (birth - 3 years)
    - ▶ Or Intermediate unit (IU) (>3 y/o) services
    - ▶ These services are self-referred do not need script
    - ▶ Can call for services as a parent
    - ▶ Usually come to your house or daycare
- ▶ **Is private OT feasible with insurance or Medical Assistance (MA)?**
  - ▶ Requires a script from your pediatrician
  - ▶ Usually involves copays and meeting deductibles (if not MA)
  - ▶ You have to transport your child to appointments.



# Occupational Therapy Resources:

## ➤ Books

- Sensational kids: Lucy Jane Miller
- Floortime Strategies: Andres Davis, Lahela Isaacson, Michelle Harwell
- Engaging Autism : Stanley Greenspan Serena Wiedner
- The Out-of-Sync Child has Fun: Activities for Kids with Sensory Integration Dysfunction : Carol Kranowitz

## ➤ Apps

- Dexteria and Dexteria Junior
- First & Then
- Calm Counter

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# Occupational Therapy Resources

- ▶ Websites
  - ▶ [Spdfoundation.net](http://Spdfoundation.net)
  - ▶ [Theotmoma.blogspot.com](http://Theotmoma.blogspot.com)
  - ▶ [Theinspiredtreehouse.com](http://Theinspiredtreehouse.com)

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# How are your child's social skills? Are they age appropriate?

- ▶ Explore social skills playgroups in the area
- ▶ Most do not need a diagnosis
- ▶ Usually not expensive and often billed to insurance
  - ▶ ARCH of Lehigh Valley
  - ▶ Glen Koch and Associates
  - ▶ Kidspeace
- ▶ Explore playdates with friends/neighbors/classmates
- ▶ Extracurricular activities to build social skills
  - ▶ Karate (either special needs classes or autism friendly classes)
  - ▶ Noncompetitive recreational sports
  - ▶ Bounce U
  - ▶ Live, Learn and Play (South Mall)
  - ▶ Lehigh Valley Zoo
  - ▶ DaVinci Science Center

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# Social Skills Resources For Young Children

## ➤ Books:

- Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child: Ellen McGinnis
- Skillstreaming in Early Childhood: Ellen McGinnis

## ➤ Apps:

- Look in my eyes Steam Train
- SSB MSD Full

## ➤ Websites:

- [Autism.org.uk](http://Autism.org.uk)
- [Do2learn.com](http://Do2learn.com)

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# Take Care of Yourself!

- ▶ **Call on your support system** to help you take a regular break every week, even if short
- ▶ **If your current support system does not understand, seek out local support groups and other parents** (often find new friends in waiting rooms while child is in therapy sessions)
- ▶ **Ask for a babysitter who has experience in dealing with special needs kids** who can relieve you at least once a week
- ▶ **Working as an advocate for your child, is emotionally and physically overwhelming!**
- ▶ **You will burn out if you don't take care of yourself**
  - ▶ Remember, it's a marathon, not a sprint
  - ▶ Some inspirational books to help:
    - ▶ Chicken soup for the soul: Raising kids on the Spectrum: 101 Inspirational stories