

Family Support Fact Sheet

Autism Delaware's Family Support Services engage individuals, families, groups and organizations with participants affected by autism. As a statewide organization, we serve people on the autism spectrum across the lifespan. We believe families should have readily accessible, current information about ASD (autism spectrum disorder). This includes symptoms and traits, information about treatments, latest research and available services. We offer the following core services:

1. Information and Referral

- Providing telephone and/or in person support to individual's families seeking knowledge, help with challenges and referrals for additional support.
- We provide families with access to autism-friendly resources including local medical, dental and mental health services, recreational and social opportunities, and how to access state agencies for support.
- Autism Delaware's family support staff provides direct, free support and information helping families understand that they are not alone in their journey with autism. Staff provides an understanding of the issues, advocates for services and supports and travels to meet families in need.
- Resource Guide- Updated yearly 80+ page document written to include a developmental guide, a list of providers and resources, and other relevant information.

2. Education and Support Forums

- Pre-designed opportunities for families to meet and connect with other families affected by ASD, in supportive face-to-face meetings and through an online support group.
 - Statewide parent led Coffee and Conversation Hours
 - Online parent support group
 - Speaker Series – Throughout the year, Autism Delaware provides and supports a variety of topics of interest to families and to community members. Most workshops are free but some require a minimal fee. All topics are based on family and stakeholder input. Recent topics have included: applying for Medicaid, ABA, biomedical interventions, floor time, transition issues, oral health care and state testing and curriculum access, just to name a few. We view these opportunities as ways of partnering with our community to address gaps.

3. Programs and Services

- Autism Delaware offers and supports programs designed for individuals and families affected by ASD. Programs are developed and staffed by professionals with autism knowledge and training. Current offerings include:
 - Summer Day Camp, Swim Program, Junior Golf Lessons, Lego Night, Teen/Tween Game Night,
 - Seasonal parties for the whole family,
 - Movie outings and roller skating private parties with accommodations
 - Special Olympics – We support athletes with ASD across the state, across the lifespan.
- We support integrated and non-integrated opportunities for socialization e.g. bowling, amusement parks etc.
- Special events at various community sites

4. Future planning may include:

- Continued partnership development with local, state and national organizations
- Expansion of services to include an increased ability to serve culturally diverse communities
- Specialized support groups such as family dynamics e.g. grand parenting, spousal relationships challenges, engaging fathers
- Adult recreational groups

Autism Delaware's Family Support Services are committed to being resourceful, engaging and advocates for families. We will stay current in our knowledge of systems and services, participating on various committees and attending ongoing training on a wide variety of topics affecting families with autism.

Parents that we work with really appreciate the support and often tell us we are a "wealth of information". Check out this quote:

"Thank you Heidi!!!:) Also - thank you from the bottom of my heart for all of the good work you do. My husband and I would have been lost without Autism Delaware. Not sure how often you or the others hear it but I'm incredibly thankful that there is an active, intelligent, community to turn to and participate in."

-Andrea (parent)

That's why we're here! Call us!

New Castle County – 302-224-6020
Kent & Sussex County – 302-644-3410

Autism Delaware Options Policy

All information provided or published by Autism Delaware is for informational purposes only. Reference to any treatment or therapy option or to any program, service or treatment provider is not an endorsement by Autism Delaware. You should investigate alternatives that may be more appropriate for a specific individual. Autism Delaware assumes no responsibility for the use made of any information published or provided by Autism Delaware.