



CONNECTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Parent information

Autism Services re: ***Connections for Students***

What is Connections for Students?

Connections for Students is a service that will provide student support to the education system specifically for children who are being discharged from intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) and will be attending a publicly funded school. The sole purpose of the service is to support the school as they develop an ABA-based education plan for your child. This service will not transfer your child's IBI to the school setting. *Connections for Students* is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and Ministry of Education.

Who provides this service?

Connections for Students is provided by a transition team comprised of the School Principal/designate, the AIP Senior Therapist, the school board Special Education Coordinator, the Autism Spectrum Disorder School Support Program (ASD SSP), the school's ABA Behaviour Counsellor and other school staff. The AIP Senior Therapist will initiate the service by requesting consent from the parent to share information with the ASD SSP and school staff. They will gather information about your child's strengths and needs and the current IBI programming goals from the Senior Therapist and will share this information with the "Connections" transition team.

What will be provided by this service?

Consultants from the ASD School Support Program will work with AIP Senior Therapists and educators at your child's school to develop a plan which will include teaching strategies based on the principles of applied behaviour analysis (ABA). This may result in possible changes to your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP). The "Connections team" will be led by the school principal or designate. The parent will be a key member of this team. The team will meet regularly both before and after your child's discharge from IBI.

ASD Consultants will attend the transition team meeting and may provide training and individual consultation to a teacher or other school staff or observe your child in their class. The ASD Consultants will also maintain communication with the staff in the Autism Intervention Program.

How long will this service be provided in my child's school?

The "Connections" service will be a part of your child's school transition for approximately six months before your child's IBI discharge date and will continue for approximately six months after your child's discharge from IBI, for a total of 12 months.



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Questions and Answers

Does this mean that a child's IBI program will transferred to the school?

No...the goal of Connections is to provide support to the development of an ABA-based education plan.

How does this service impact a child's discharge plan?

Discharge decisions will continue to be made with parent and by the Autism Intervention Program Clinical team. Information about a child's programming, strengths and needs will be shared with the ASD SSP Consultant and Transition team, who will then translate/share this information and assist the team to develop the child's education plan prior to the child's date of discharge from IBI.

Transition support services will continue to be available for families as their child is discharged from IBI. Transition support services will support the needs of the child in school and community settings.

What happens if the discharge date set is less than 6 months away?

Discharge dates will be set by the Autism Intervention Program service planning process. If that date is less than six months away every effort will be made to work efficiently with the time available and assist the school to develop the child's education plan and prepare for the child's full time participation in school.

Will school staff receive training in IBI?

No...The Autism Spectrum Disorder School Support Program and the Geneva Centre for Autism have provided school board staff with training and in-service regarding applied behaviour analysis. Additional training and consultation services continue to be available to schools from the ASD School Support Program.

If a child exhibits difficult behaviour at school, who will work with the school to address this?

Behavioural issues will be addressed through the multi-disciplinary assessment and the IEP, utilizing the successes realized in the IBI program. Once the child is in school full time, the ABA Behaviour Counsellor will be the primary resource to assist a child experiencing major behavioural difficulties. The School Principal/designate may request assistance of the ASD Consultant at any time during the transition.

What will an ABA-based education plan look like? Will a child's IBI goals be included in the plan?

ABA-based education will include clearly defined education goals for a child and ways of assessing, measuring and monitoring the attainment of these goals.

The ABA-based education plan is the responsibility of the school board and information about specific teaching strategies used in IBI will be helpful as will the goals of the IBI program. Decisions about how much of this information will be included in a child's education plan or Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be made by the Connections team. Again, the ASD Consultant and the Senior Therapist may be called upon for assistance during the transition process.