



## PREPARING FOR YOUR AUTISM ASSESSMENT

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### **Who Comes To The Assessment?**

Parents know their children best so at least one parent or guardian must be at the assessment to provide information as well as to support his or her child. Another family member or care-giver may join you for support. Please do not bring other children to the appointment.

### **What Happens During An Assessment?**

The first appointment can take up to 3 hours. You'll meet your case manager and primary doctor, who may be a pediatrician, psychiatrist or psychologist.

There are two parts to the first appointment:

1. A detailed parent interview where your primary doctor will ask you about your child. This interview will take an hour or more. During the interview your child will be taken care of by our qualified childcare worker in our play area.
2. A standardized play and observation session; you'll observe your child and your primary doctor go through a number of play scenarios.

You may have the interview OR the play session first – this is decided at your first appointment by your primary doctor. If the primary doctor is a pediatrician, your child may have a physical exam at the end of the appointment. No medical investigations will be done at this time.

Your primary doctor will then decide if your child needs additional assessments which may include: psychology, speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychiatry and/or medical evaluation. Sometimes additional appointments may be booked at one of our partner clinics in the community. If these assessments have already been done in the community, we'll integrate those results into our overall evaluation. Once all assessments are finished, your child's team will meet to discuss the results.

### **When Do I Hear About The Results?**

After our team meets, we'll book a family conference with you to talk about the results and how to access services. You may invite others to attend your family conference (e.g. your child's Infant Development Program worker). This is your meeting so please do not bring your child to the family conference.

### **When Will I get My Written Report?**

If your child has a positive diagnosis for autism, you'll be given a form at the family conference so you can get help immediately. You and your referring doctor will receive a formal report in the mail (this could take up to 6 weeks).

For a more detailed description of the autism diagnostic process please refer to chapter 1 of the Parent Manual – Living and Working with Children with Autism Spectrum disorder in BC. This manual can be located at <http://www.actcommunity.net/AI/Manual.htm>