

Connections Resource Guide

Seamless Transitions for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

**A Collaborative Initiative between the Ministry of Education
and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services**



*A Journey of a Thousand Miles
must begin with a single step. ~ Lao Tzu.*

*Each student is unique. All students can achieve.
Our commitment is to each student.*

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OVERVIEW

Connections for Students

Supporting Seamless Transitions from the Ontario Autism Program (OAP) to School

Connections for Students is a collaborative initiative between the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and Ministry of Education (MEDU). This initiative supports the smooth transition of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) from MCYS funded behavioural services delivered through regional OAP to publicly funded school boards in Ontario. Connections will improve on the current support for students with ASD transitioning from intensive behavioural services to Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) instructional methods within the classroom. The goal is for every student transitioning from OAP into and through school to have a seamless transition plan. Each transition plan will represent a prepared student, a prepared family, a prepared educator and a prepared environment. *Connections* will enhance and build on existing transition processes through the establishment of multidisciplinary teams and increased collaboration with parents, OAP providers and school boards/school teams.

Parents may consent to the *Connections* initiative, but are not obligated. It is important to note that if parents or guardians do give consent to initiate, the school is obligated to participate in *Connections*. All school boards are expected to be actively engaged in Connections by spring 2010. The Ministry does not provide funding to address the organization of meetings, therefore clarification of those involved in each meeting, will need to be determined at the beginning to avoid any misunderstandings of roles, responsibilities and expectations.

Connections is available to all children and youth moving from intensive behavioural services whether it be through our local service provider (Maltby Centre) or through a private provider.

Transition Team Members

Members that **must** be on the transition team;

- Principal or designate (chair)
- Maltby Centre School Support ASD Consultant (to be assigned by Maltby Centre upon initiation of Connections)
- Parent/Guardian
- Classroom Teacher
- Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board Behaviour Support Services - Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Coordinator and/or Behaviour Analyst

Additional Team members **may** be supplemented by:

- Learning Support Teacher(s) (LST)
- Educational Assistant(s) (EA)
- Professionals that may have information to support transition (i.e. Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists)

Getting Started: Transition Team Members			
✓	Participants	Name	Contact Information
	Principal and/or Vice-Principal		
	Parent/Guardian		
	Classroom Teacher		
	HPEDSB Behaviour Support Services		
	ASD SSP Consultant (Maltby Centre)		
	Educational Assistant		
	Learning Support Teacher (LST)		
	Other		

Transition Team Roles and Responsibilities




Participant	Role on Transition Team	Responsibilities
School Principal or Designate	Transition Team Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish and lead the multidisciplinary transition team ▪ Work with parent/guardian to identify any relevant professionals and community partners who should also be invited to participate on the team (for all or some meetings) ▪ Manage any issues arising with team members ▪ Ensure that copies of all transition information (communication logs and meeting templates) are sent home for parent/guardian records ▪ Facilitate the organization of the monthly meetings and provide a copy of all notes from the meetings ▪ Responsible for the development and implementation of the transition plan and IEP ▪ Ensure that a behaviour and safety plan is developed (if appropriate) and shared with all staff (not just staff on transition team)
Classroom Teacher	Transition Team Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide input into the development of the transition plan and IEP ▪ Implement components of the transition plan related to classroom instruction ▪ Provide feedback to the transition team on the student's progress and any issues arising during the transition ▪ Monitor student's progress at key transition points in order to provide appropriate supports
Parent or Guardian	Transition Team Member Advocate for their child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify any relevant professionals/community agencies involved with their child who should be invited to participate and provide input to the transition team ▪ Participate on the team and provide input to the development of both the transition plan and the IEP ▪ Provide feedback to the transition team on their child's progress and any issues arising through the transition
School Support Program ASD Consultant	Transition Team Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide support to transition teams ▪ Be a key resource and point of contact for school staff about the student's strengths and needs and for issues related to the child's transition from the OAP to school ▪ Provide in-class observations, modeling and coaching for teachers and educational assistants as needed ▪ Enhance educators' knowledge and skills in the principles of ABA as appropriate ▪ Work with OAP prior to discharge ▪ Observe student while receiving intensive behavioural services through OAP

Transition Team Roles and Responsibilities		
Participant	Role on Transition Team	Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Communication Log and submit to transition team upon observation or working session with school team to ensure transparency and consistency among Members Develop a service plan with team input
Behaviour Support Services (HPEDSB)	Transition Team Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial contact with OAP regarding discharge date Send forms to school for parents to consent to initiation of Connections Facilitate enhanced collaboration between service providers and schools Observes student in intensive behavioural services Reviews the assessment tools from OAP (ABLLS, Progress Reviews, Psychological Assessment) Forward agenda to transition team for input at least one day prior to <i>Connections</i> meeting Provide support to transition teams Be a key resource and point of contact for school staff about the student's strengths and needs and for issues related to the child's increased time at school Provide in-class observations, modeling and coaching for teachers and educational assistants as needed Enhance educators' knowledge and skills in the principles of ABA as appropriate Provide and or/coordinate ASD training and resources at the school and board level Complete Communication Log and submit to transition team upon observation or working session with school team to ensure transparency and consistency among members Monitor and report on the implementation of Connections to the Ministry of Education
Additional Members	Potential Transition Team member (at all or some meetings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional information as appropriate to inform the transition plan and IEP

Connections Process Guideline		
Timeline	Action	Who is Involved
Approximately 6 months prior to discharge; student still in OAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Review occurs at OAP identifying potential transition OAP gets consent from parent to engage in <i>Connections</i> (please note that parents do not have to engage in <i>Connections</i>) 	OAP and Parents

Connections Process Guideline		
Timeline	Action	Who is Involved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent notified of transition plan; parents give consent to OAP to contact school board with information Maltby Centre notifies School Board of discharge 	
When discharge is confirmed with OAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School board contacts school to inform Principal Request forms are completed and sent to Maltby Centre If parents initiate <i>Connections</i>, Behaviour Support Services will provide information package to School Team 	OAP, Behaviour Support Services, School Team
6 months prior to discharge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with OAP and School team (if student is already attending school) Sharing of OAP assessments (ABLLS, Progress Reviews) with Behaviour Support Services SSP Consultant and OAP work closely to begin the transfer of information SSP Consultant observes student in INTENSIVE BEHAVIOURAL SERVICES 	OAP, SSP Consultant, Behaviour Support Services
3-4 months prior to discharge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School team may observe student in INTENSIVE BEHAVIOURAL SERVICES sessions Ensure IEP transition plan includes Connections Transition SSP Consultant visits school team Board staff identifies PD, resources, and additional considerations for successful transition 	Transition Team
2-3 months prior to school entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Connections</i> Team meets to formalize working transition plan Develop behaviour and/or safety plan (as needed) Specific PD and resources developed, delivered or in place SSP Consultant, Learning Support Coordinator and Behaviour Support Services consult with school team “fade out” plan (service hours reduction) in INTENSIVE BEHAVIOURAL SERVICES to prepare for full time school 	SSP Consultant, Behaviour Support Services, Learning Support Coordinator
1 month prior to school entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most recent ABLLS or VB-MAPPS is reviewed 	SSP Consultant and Behaviour Support Services support the team in understanding assessments used

Connections Process Guideline		
Timeline	Action	Who is Involved
INCREASED TIME AT SCHOOL		
6 months after entry to school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Connections</i> Team provides support as needed • Working transition plan is evaluated on a monthly basis • 6 calendar month Transition Team meetings • SSP Consultant, Behaviour Support Services, provide observation, coaching, modeling, consultation on the working transition plan 	Transition Team

<p style="text-align: center;">INTENSIVE BEHAVIOURAL SERVICES THROUGH THE OAP</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">TRANSITION TO SCHOOL</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">ONGOING SUPPORT IN THE SCHOOL SETTING</p> 
<p>OAP staff will support children’s transitions to school by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiating transition process with the school board • Identifying skills needed to support successful school entry • Develop profile of the child’s strengths and needs • Transfer responsive behavioural services for the transition and knowledge of the child from OAP staff to the ASD consultant once transition team is formed 	<p>Transition Team – initiated by OAP to develop and individualize a plan and provide support for 9-12 months</p> <p>Members include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Parent/guardian • SSP Consultant (Maltby Centre) • Teacher • Behaviour Support Services <p>Team may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LST • EA(s) • Other professionals (OT, SLP, PT) 	<p>Ongoing support Principal, parent/guardian, teacher will continue to work together.</p> <p>Principal must ensure that relevant board personnel and community personnel who have previously worked and/or are currently working with the student with ASD are invited to provide input.</p>

Glossary

ABA	Applied Behaviour Analysis
ABLLS	Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills
VB-MAPP	Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program
OAP	Ontario Autism Program
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
CS	Clinical Supervisor
DFO	Direct Funding Option
DSO	Direct Service Option
IEP	Individual Education Plan
ISP	Individual Service Plan
PPM 140	Policy and Program Memorandum 140 (Ministry of Education)
SSP	School Support Program (Maltby Centre)

References

- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 140 - Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Into Programs For Students With Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), May 17, 2007.
- Supporting Seamless Transitions from the Autism Intervention Program to School, February 17, 2009.
- Supporting Children and Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD): Provincial Implementation of the Connections for Students Model, March 29, 2010.