

A guide to
selecting
intervention
providers
for your
child



Young children with autism require a multidisciplinary approach to intervention....

At ARC(S) we understand that no two children with autism or their families will have the same intervention needs.

Children with autism require a positive and comprehensive intervention program aimed at addressing several different areas of development.

Intervention will routinely focus on 'growing skills' in the areas of social interaction, communication, thinking, self-help and independence

Which Practitioner is best?

When selecting approaches to use to teach children with autism, we believe that the methods must match the student's assessed needs – which may change over time.

Different needs will require different intervention approaches. As such it would not be appropriate for ARC(S) to recommend any one

particular practice or therapist over another.

According to Professor Rita Jordan, (2001), a multidisciplinary service approach is best.

Key members of the team would routinely include a speech - language therapist, an occupational therapist, an educational psychologist, and an autism-trained teacher.

What to look for in an Intervention Practitioner

In our experience, professionals who work well together in the area of autism share the following intervention approach. They:

- Have a clear understanding of the needs of child with autism and can express a positive intervention philosophy
- Actively include and teach parents and families i.e. carers invited into sessions, collaborative goal setting, training

opportunities, regular verbal & written communication

- Are prepared to work closely with other professionals to resolve problems and come up with solutions
- Incorporate a structured and visually supported approach to teaching
- Provide teaching instruction that involves a variety of social opportunities i.e. 1:1, small group, classroom
- Use evidence-based intervention approaches ([hyperlink to Articles->Research on Approaches, Therapies & Interventions on ARC website](#))
- Regularly track and report on progress

[Learn more about the roles of each team member..](#)

Our Mission

To help individuals with an autism spectrum disorder maximize their potential in life through advocacy and provision of direct services in education, employment and empowering of family caregivers / professionals.

Speech -language therapist

A speech-language therapist will routinely:

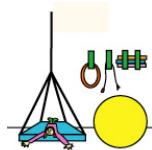


- Assess and describe the level of a child's communication skills in the areas of understanding (receptive), speaking (expression) and use of these skills in everyday life (functional communication)
- Explain to caregivers the nature of the communication difficulty and how this varies from normal development (accompanied by a written report)
- Develop an intervention program to increase a child's communication effectiveness through creating a combination of: structure & routine; visual supports; environmental management; social interaction opportunities with peers
- Educate caregivers and other members of the team about communication intervention approaches in autism such as the Picture Communication System (PECS); Hanen More Than Words Program; Floortime; Play Therapy, Oral Motor speech therapy; language therapy, Communication boards
- Participate in multidisciplinary case meetings where possible

For further information in speech-language therapy providers in Singapore, you may contact the Speech Language & Hearing Association(Singapore) <http://www.shas.org.sg>

Occupational Therapist

An occupational therapist will routinely:



- Assess and describe the level of a child's sensory, motor coordination, tool use for play, daily living, and pre-academic activities
- Explain to caregivers the nature of sensory processing and motor performance difficulties and how these relate to developmental challenges in play, school performance, and the development of independence in daily living skills
- Develop an intervention program to treat motor and sensory processing issues (low sensory registration, sensory seeking, sensory sensitive, sensory avoiding, sensory modulation and arousal issues) through sensory integration therapy (SIOT)
- Develop an intervention program to increase a child's learning effectiveness through creating a combination of: structure & routine; visual supports; environmental management; social interaction opportunities with peers
- Educate caregivers and other members of the team about occupational therapy intervention approaches in autism such as Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy (SIOT); Floortime; Brushing; general skill building in play; fine motor coordination/ writing, and activities of daily living such as dressing, toileting etc.
- Participate in multidisciplinary case meetings where possible

For further information occupational therapy providers in Singapore, you may contact the Singapore Association of Occupational Therapists <http://www.saot.org.sg>

For more information on autism and the services provided by Autism Resource Centre, don't forget to check our websites:

<http://www.autism.org.sg>, <http://www.wecaneip.com>, <http://www.pathlight.org.sg>

Educational Psychologist

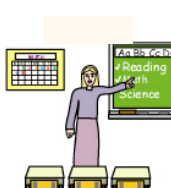


An educational psychologist will routinely:

- Provide early screening, referral and diagnostic assessment services (with accompanying report)
- Provide an overview of the child's autism learning profile (learning strengths, challenges & needs)
- Provide assessment and advice on a educational placement
- Provide Individual Education Planning (IEP) for children with autism and their families
- Coordinate efforts between parents and other team members to determine which interventions are likely to be most effective in meeting the assessed needs of the child
- Work with the multi-disciplinary team to be more prepared, willing, and able to provide appropriate level services to the child with autism
- Review appropriate treatments for child with autism as their needs change over time

For further information regarding providers in Singapore, you may contact the Singapore Psychological Society <http://singaporepsychologicalsociety.org>

Autism Teacher



A teacher in autism will routinely:

- Be formally trained in autism teaching approaches i.e PECS, Floortime, Teacch (Structured teaching)
- Work with other members of the team to set priority goals for learning
- Teach agreed goals and objectives on the Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Provide a written lesson plan for each lesson /session
- Routinely use teaching that incorporates structure & routine; visual supports; environmental management; social interaction opportunities with peers
- Train caregivers to work with the child at home (to reduce 1:1 person/ prompt dependency)
- Report on progress in verbal / written form on a weekly basis

In Singapore it is common practice for teachers to provide 'home training'. We recommend that the home learning programmes be coordinated and updated by an educational psychologist or school intervention team.

This will ensure that what is being taught is at the child's developmental level. When teaching steps are matched closely to the child's ability, there will be more success in understanding, doing and applying outside of the structured 1:1 sessions

Advice to Parents..

Remember you know your child best

- Practitioners are employed to support your child's autism learning and not take over the process
- It is very important that you know what each practitioner is working on so you can reinforce these skills at home.
- As a family it is important to discuss:
 - What skills will be practiced at home?
 - Who will be responsible for practicing these skills?
 - Who will give feedback to teachers / therapists?

Try and link intervention to your child's assessed needs

- the number and variety of services that your child requires can seem confusing, overwhelming and costly
- where possible, discuss priorities for intervention with your educational psychologist
- intervention that links directly to your child's individual needs is likely to be much more beneficial than doing lots of different programs because someone has made the claim that it helped their child
- each child with autism has different learning needs. What may benefit one child may not necessarily benefit another child to the same degree

When you attend intervention sessions..

- The best way to understand what is happening is to ask your provider questions i.e.
 - What goal are you working on?
 - Why are you working on this goal?
 - What can I do at home to practice? *(it is important that you practice the skill with the provider to make sure you know how to teach it correctly)*
 - How will I know if my child is making progress on this skill?

Whenever you feel unsure about your child's progress..

- talk it over with the provider. Be frank and provide examples of your concerns
- remember that progress in autism takes time, and can seem slower because of the need to learn to apply the same skill with different people, in different contexts
- be actively involved in your child's program so you can better understand your child's learning style

Family carers are within their rights to ask a provider to..

- share his/her professional qualifications and autism-related training/ experience
- explain assessment findings and intervention techniques...until you understand
- teach you how to work with your child at home on issues you are concerned about