

Key Issues for Families with Children with ASD across the Lifespan

Developmental Phase	Key Issues
Initial Diagnosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managing the Emotional Impact of Diagnosis• Obtaining Information about ASD and Interventions• Accessing Early Intervention Services
Early Childhood (up to 5 yrs.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding Variability in Child Development• Identifying and Accessing Evidence-based Interventions• Finding Childcare• Dealing with Stressors and Emotional Reactions
Childhood (6-12 yrs.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning about Special Education Rights and Services• Advocating for Inclusive Opportunities• Creating Social Opportunities for Child and Family
Adolescence and Young Adulthood (13-21 yrs.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preparing for Transition to Adulthood• Making Decisions about Post-Secondary Options• Promoting Community and Social Engagement• Understanding Health, Safety and Sexuality Issues• Learning about Self Determination• Engaging in Financial Planning
Transition to Adulthood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with Different Service Systems• Supporting Employment and Post-Secondary Education• Arranging for Housing• Promoting Community Access and Inclusion• Understanding and Managing Financial Benefits• Planning for Guardianship or Independence• Discussing Estate Planning
Across the Lifespan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing and Coordinating Services• Collaborating with Professionals• Managing Day to Day Behavior• Dealing with Marital Strain and Sibling Issues• Responding to Reactions of Others• Accessing Social Support and Identifying Respite• Developing Advocacy Skills• Managing Financial Demands

Bower Russa, M., Matthews, A., & Owen-DeSchryver, J. (2015). Expanding supports to improve the lives of families of children with autism spectrum disorder. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 12(2), 95-104.