



Pathways to Autism Support in BC

Featuring Guest Speakers:
Symbia Barnaby, Brock Sheppard & Jake Anthony

MARCH 22ND, 2022 AT 10AM



WELCOME

- ▶ Traditional Welcome:
 - ▶ I am coming to you today from the unceded traditional ancestral lands of the Coast Ts'msyen Peoples, specifically the Nine Allied Tribes of Lax Kw'alaams
 - ▶ Thank you to the Indigenous Peoples whose ancestral land that this event is taking place on and I want to recognize the many nations whose sacred traditional role is the stewardship of the lands that connect us
 - ▶ Thank you for the invitation to speak
 - ▶ Thank you to all the attendees for taking the time to be here as it demonstrates your commitment to honoring Indigenous Peoples with Disabilities
 - ▶ Traditional Prayer

TODAY WE WILL COVER

AutismBC Programs

Autism Allyship

**Autism and Indigeneity
Intersectionality**

AUTISMBC PROGRAMS

Autism in BC



1 IN 32 CHILDREN IN BC RECEIVE AN AUTISM SPECTRUM DIAGNOSIS.

THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 70,000 AUTISTIC PEOPLE IN BC – 21,000 UNDER THE AGE OF 19 AND 50,000+ ADULTS.

THE OVERALL WAIT TIME FOR AN AUTISM ASSESSMENT IN BC IS APPROX 84 WEEKS.

AUTISM FUNDING STOPS WHEN A CHILD TURNS 19. VERY LIMITED RESOURCES FOR ADULTS.

AT THE CORE OF AUTISMBC

WE ARE HERE TO EMPOWER THE AUTISM COMMUNITY WITH CREDIBLE INFORMATION, VETTED RESOURCES, AND USE OUR PLATFORM TO HIGHLIGHT, CELEBRATE, AND AMPLIFY AUTISTIC VOICES.

BREAKING DOWN STIGMAS



What is autism?



What it is ✓



A neurodevelopmental difference (different brain wiring), a natural variation



Affects every aspect of a person's being: how they perceive, experience, interact with and interpret the world



A minority neurology



Lifelong

What it isn't ✗



A learning disability



An illness or disease



Bad behaviour/willful defiance



Bad parenting



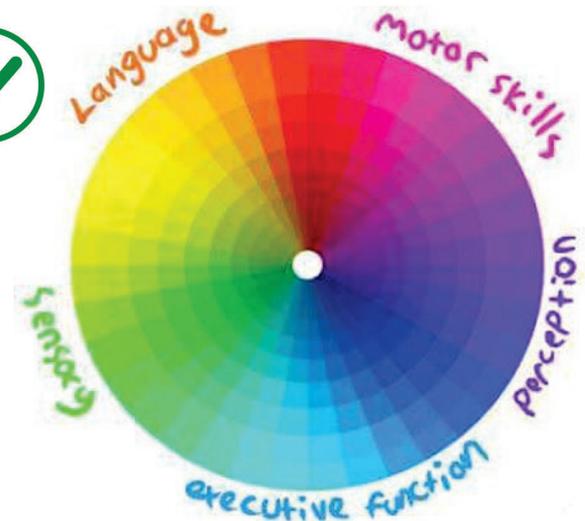
Affects only children

BREAKING DOWN STIGMAS



More Autistic

Less Autistic



When you've met one person with autism - you've met one person with autism.

-Dr. Stephen Shore

AUTISMBC



OUR VISION

An inclusive society where people on the autism spectrum are living their best life

OUR MISSION

We empower, support and connect the autism community in BC

AUTISM BC PROVIDES SUPPORT IN 3 KEY PROGRAMMING AREAS:

- Support: Autism Information and Referrals to Supports
 - Learning: Training and Workshops
 - Connection: Social & Support Groups and Events
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SUPPORT PILLAR



- There is an incredible amount of information to learn about autism—new questions, challenges, and opportunities arise frequently. Our Resource Team provides current, credible information and advice. We can help with big changes, like life transitions, or topics like mental health, and seeking service providers. We have been there and have the lived experience to help you with referrals to community supports, and options that might resonate with you and your family.
 - Our Resource Team: Information Requests, Referrals, Responding to Inquiries
 - Creating Theme Team Information Packages and AutismBC Blogs
 - Interviews with community members, AutismBC Connects Profiles
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AUTISM INFORMATION

- Autism is a lifelong spectrum disorder. If you choose to pursue diagnosis, we recommend accessing information to make informed decision throughout your autism journey.
- Early diagnosis can result in early intervention, which can improve a child's chances of achieving the most developmental gains. Everyone's journey is different.
- In listening to the autistic community, we are recognizing there are hundreds, likely thousands, of individuals who do not get diagnosed as children or at all. These individual still require support and connection throughout the province.

SHARING LIVED EXPERIENCES: THE WORK THAT SEPARATES AUTISMBBC

The image displays three screenshots of the AutismBC website, each featuring a different article. Each article includes a circular profile picture of the author, the article title, the date, and social media sharing buttons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The first article is 'AutismBC Connects: Facing Ableism in the School System' by Cole Lawrence, dated Sep 30, 2021. The second is 'AutismBC Connects: The Female Autism Phenotype' by Kristen Hayes, dated Mar 27th, 2021. The third is 'AutismBC Connects: Autistic and of Asian Descent' by Juliant Kumanto, dated Apr 24th, 2021. Each article also includes a small content warning icon.

AutismBC Connects: Facing Ableism in the School System
SEP 30, 2021

AutismBC Connects: The Female Autism Phenotype
MAR 27th, 2021

AutismBC Connects: Autistic and of Asian Descent
APR 24th, 2021

Content Warning: Bullying, systemic ableism, graphic details of abuse and lack of care, coarse language.



LEARNING PILLAR

- Understanding autism is an important step in supporting people on the autism spectrum and in building awareness and acceptance. Whether you are the parent of an autistic child or looking to become a professional in the field, we can help. Our workshops empower the autism community through knowledge and encourage the growth of strong, inclusive communities.
 - Workshops include: Behavioural Support, Waiting for Assessment, and Custom or Community Training
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AUTISM AWARENESS TRAINING

AutismBC awareness training gives community members an overview autism and working with people on the people on the autism spectrum.

We do this to build supportive, inclusive communities for autistic people through the delivery of trainings

Over the course of our session you will be invited to expand your awareness about how people on the autism spectrum may experience the world. You can gain insight and create ideas on how you may adapt environment to provide supports.

Our training is informed and developed by ASD professionals and autistic self-advocates.



CONNECTION PILLAR

- We know the importance of community and the role connections play in our daily lives. Our members can take part in events and activities, build friendships, and have fun! Many of our programs are grassroots and volunteer-led. We support social clubs for people of all ages and abilities. Together, we build a support network and strengthen the community and bring people together.
- These Programs are: Community Support Groups, Online Minecraft Social Clubs, AutismBC Goes Community Events, AutismBC Talks Information Sessions, Ticket Give Away Program

SUPPORT GROUPS THROUGHOUT BC

"I just wanted to thank you both for conducting that session. It was very informative and extremely helpful for someone like me who is about to embark on this unknown journey of stepping into adulthood.

Lisa, I'm so glad that you informed me about it and it really was a pleasure to be part of this important conversation on transitioning into adult services. As you can both imagine this is a very scary and overwhelming time for a family to go through and having the support of other moms who can relate to your journey and the experiences that come with it makes a world of difference." Fazileh

"I am so happy I found these meetings. This is something that I look forward to each month. Connecting with other like me. Feeling like I'm not alone and Gaining resources and support".
D.W. Autistic Adult from the Cariboo District.

AUTISMBC MEETS!

GETTING TOGETHER ON THE SPECTRUM
For Autistic Adults
Wednesdays: 4:30–6pm

0-10 YEARS FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS
Tuesdays: 10–11am

10 YRS TO ADULTHOOD FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS
Thursdays: 10–11am

FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS OF ADULTS
Wednesdays: 12–1pm

MEET THE FACILITATORS

Lisa Watson
Jake Anthony
Lindy Chau
Sharon Gratian

www.autismbc.ca/events



AUTISM ALLYSHIP



WHAT IS AN AUTISM ALLY?

An autism ally is a person who makes a sincere, conscious effort to understand, connect with and support people on the autism spectrum. These individuals both accept and appreciate the knowledge they gain by learning from the lived experiences of members of the autistic community. They then take this new-found understanding and knowledge, using it to raise awareness about, as well as make a difference in the lives of autistic individuals that they connect with.



HOW TO BE AN AUTISM ALLY



1. Always be opening to listening, learning & adapting;
 2. When in doubt, ask and don't assume;
 3. Be a supporting voice, not a leading one;
 4. Break down societal stigma and misperceptions about autism.
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ALWAYS BE OPENING TO LISTENING, LEARNING & ADAPTING



- The autism spectrum is so wide and all of us are different. To quote Dr. Stephen Shore; *"When you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism."* Being an ally means listening to, as well as learning from the experiences and the way in which autistic people see the world. This requires you to adapt your way of thinking to view the world through an autistic lens.
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WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK AND DON'T ASSUME

- Being an autism ally means having a strong understanding of what it means to be autistic in order to support and amplify the voices of people on the spectrum. Whenever you're unclear about anything to do with a person's autism, it's really important that you take the time to ask questions and gain a better understanding of that individual's situation. This way, you have the ability to provide well-informed support and share accurate information about autism with others.
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BE A SUPPORTING VOICE, NOT A LEADING ONE

- Being a good ally means helping to educate neurotypical members of the community about, as well as creating a better understanding of what it means to be autistic. Still, people with a lived experience ultimately know what it's like to be on the spectrum, as well as the unique skills and challenges that they have better than anyone else. It's crucial that the voices of autistic individuals are leading the discussions around autism awareness, as well as building a more inclusive and supportive society. It's the role of an autism ally to help amplify those voices, not talk over them.
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BREAK DOWN SOCIETAL STIGMA AND MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT AUTISM:

- Knowledge is power. As an ally, everything you learn from autistic individuals you connect with gives you the information that's needed to break down stigma and misunderstandings surrounding autism. Sharing what you've learned with other neurotypical people gives you the opportunity to amplify the voices of autistic people, without speaking for them.
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AUTISM AND INDIGENEITY INTERSECTIONALITY



ABOUT ME

▶ Introduction:

- ▶ My English name is Symbia Barnaby
- ▶ My traditional name is Guu Gaw Jung
- ▶ My Spirit name is Warrior Woman
- ▶ Pronouns She/Her
- ▶ I am of Mi'kmaq/Haida decent
- ▶ I am a solo parent of 6 children (5 of which have special needs)
- ▶ I am a Practical Nurse
- ▶ I am a Birth/Postpartum Doula
- ▶ I am an Indigenous Activist and Inclusion Advocate
- ▶ I am a story teller
- ▶ I am a film maker
- ▶ I am a Wisdom Translator

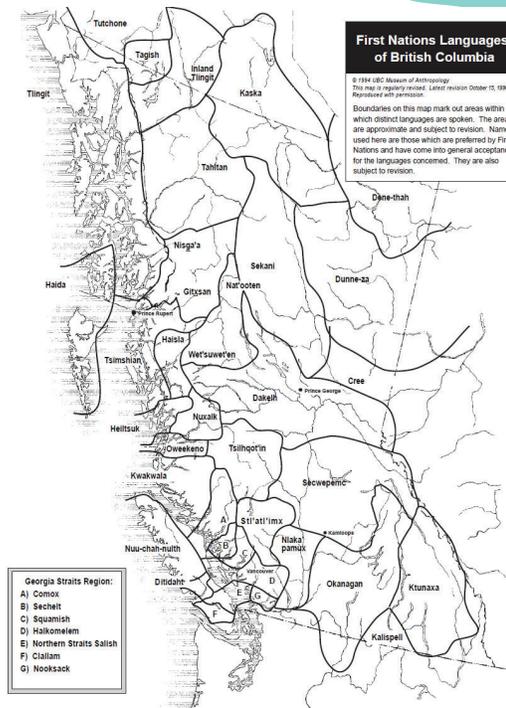


OUR STORY:

- Process took 3 years
- Constant turnover
- Lack of cultural awareness (offered a voluntary care agreement when asking for respite)
- Diagnosed at 10 years old (missed whole early childhood interventions)
- Group of parents came together to hire a BI from Greater Vancouver Area
- Following COVID:
 - 1 device
 - Personal capacity
 - Services shut down (respite, social groups, structured supports)

BARRIERS TO SERVICES FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

- Proximity
- Accessibility (languages, plain language, physical)
- Availability
- Affordability
- Colonization (value systems incongruent, history, child welfare system)
- Racism (interpersonal, institutional and systemic)



SUPPORT SERVICES TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- ▶ What do effective support services to Indigenous Peoples look like?
 - ▶ Plain language
 - ▶ Develop mutual trust and respect (N.B this may take some time!)
 - ▶ Work alongside families/individuals from a strength based approach
 - ▶ Information sharing/transparency
 - ▶ Service coordination
 - ▶ Trauma-informed care (discretion/confidentiality)
 - ▶ Access to formal supports within close proximity (i.e. developing local programs, tele-health, traveling practitioners etc.)
 - ▶ Community centered solutions (build on natural support system)
 - ▶ Hold space for elders, traditional helpers, and traditional healers (who have been historically discredited)

SELF ADVOCACY STRATEGIES



Constructive Collaborative Approach:

- ▶ Build Communication
 - ▶ Build Trust
 - ▶ Build Safety
 - ▶ Build Capacity
 - ▶ Build Connections
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ALLYSHIP



- ▶ What does it mean to be an ally?
 - Stand Alongside – Amplify – Use Spaces of Privilege
 - ▶ What kinds of things can you do to support Indigenous people with disabilities and their families?
 - ▶ On a local level?
 - ▶ On a regional level?
 - ▶ On a provincial level?
 - ▶ On a federal level?
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CONCLUSION

- ▶ Together we get to help move this generation forward in creating a fairer, more just, and more inclusive Canada
 - ▶ Together we have a responsibility to create and hold space for Indigenous Peoples with disabilities to speak their truth about their experiences in order to co-create a future no longer based on systemic injustices
 - ▶ Together we have the ability to transform this into a positive journey for Indigenous Peoples with disabilities and their families
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WHAT WE COVERED

- Autism is a lifelong neurodevelopmental spectrum disorder
 - There are many autistic youth and adults across BC
 - Everyone is different
 - When we are more understanding and accepting of everyone we help to build stronger more inclusive community.
 - Together we have a responsibility to create and hold space for Indigenous Peoples with disabilities to speak their truth about their experiences in order to co-create a future no longer based on systemic injustices
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QUESTIONS



Intergenerational friendships:

Practicing language and culture in honour of our ancestors, and honouring our Elders wisdom through decades of change.

Featuring: Hazel Squakim & Jessica Morin

APRIL 5, 2022 AT 10:00 - 11:30 AM



Connecting Indigenous Cultural Safety and Addressing Racism in the Health Care System

with Harley Eagle

APRIL 12TH, 2022
10AM VIA ZOOM

