



Media Release
For Immediate Release
February 6, 2019

Ford Government's One-Size-Fits-All Approach Fails All Children with Autism

Families who have children and youth with autism, and those who support them, are mobilizing to pressure the Ford government to reverse changes to the Ontario Autism Program that were announced today by the Hon. Lisa MacLeod.

The [Ontario Autism Coalition](#) (OAC) and the broader autism community are furious at the Ontario government's move to a flat-rate amount of funding for every child instead of funding based on individual need. One result of this change will be that children with higher needs will no longer receive adequate funding for life-changing Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) at the high intensity level they require. Children at the mild end of the spectrum may receive more funding than is needed. Both scenarios are an irresponsible use of taxpayers' dollars.

Equally disastrous is the government's reinstatement of an age cutoff for funding levels, with older children receiving significantly less than younger children. The OAC fought age cutoffs twice under previous Liberal governments, with Conservatives' endorsement. It defies reason that this government would choose to roll the clock back to a time when a birthday was believed to affect a child's level of need, only a year after they argued as the official opposition party that this logic is flawed and harmful to families.

Autism is a spectrum made up of diverse individuals with diverse needs. Allocating a uniform amount of money to everyone in the program, regardless of needs, may sound like equality, but it ignores the importance of equity. Some children may require significantly more therapy in order to make gains, while others may need much less.

The OAC calls on the Ontario government to slow down, and consult with experts, advocates and families at all stages of service, to come up with [better solutions](#), before ploughing ahead with a rushed program that will only hurt the very children and families it is supposedly designed to help.

—30—

For more information:

Laura Kirby McIntosh, President (English and French) - 416-315-7939

Marguerite Schabas, Secretary-Treasurer (English and French) - 416-545-9160

Christine Levesque, Director - Special Operations (English and French) - 905-325-8420

Sarah Klodnicki, Director - Special Operations (English only) - 905-746-6371

The OAC is a province-wide organization that advocates for Ontario's autism community.