



**ONTARIO
AUTISM
COALITION**

5 Baintree East Street, Toronto, Ontario, M3H 3X4 (416) 843-7403

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 3, 2021

Children With Autism Continue to Wait While Todd Smith Tries to “get it right”

Once again, the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, Todd Smith, has said that most children with autism in Ontario will have to keep waiting for the core services they so urgently need. Initially, he promised that the program would be ready by April 2020. Today, 462 days after the release of the Autism Advisory Panel Report, the Minister has finally gotten around to announcing a pilot project for roughly 1.5% of the over 40,000 children registered in the Ontario Autism Program.

In his remarks today, Smith championed the 600-child pilot project as a way for the government to “start slow” in order to give the government time to “get things right.”

This government has had nothing but time to get this program right. The truth is that they have done nothing but stall and delay as families have been waiting in desperation for the core services their children need now.

Minister Smith mentioned today that the interim funding that families have been receiving while the program is being redesigned would be offered again. However, these funds will not make up for the prolonged wait. Families have been telling the government consistently that the interim funding model does not allow families to access meaningful support for their children. Once again, Todd Smith has simply extended the program that the autism community has been protesting since it was first introduced by Lisa MacLeod when the Conservatives destroyed the autism program in February 2019.

This is not good enough.

It’s time for the government to stop delaying and do whatever they have to in order to get proper support for children with autism. Families don’t need more delays and inadequate funding; they need this government to step up and support to the children they promised to help, NOW.

—30—

For more information please contact:
Angela Brandt, President, 416-843-7403

#AutismDoesntEndAtFord

The Ontario Autism Coalition is a non-profit Ontario corporation dedicated to advocacy and political action on behalf of people with autism.
www.ontarioautismcoalition.com