

Private Autism Assessments

- In 2023, we are raising \$2 million to provide 500 children in BC, access to a private autism assessment.
- In BC, the average cost of a private autism assessment is \$3,000.
- The current wait time for an autism assessment in the public system is two years.
- While ASD can be diagnosed as early as 2 years old, the average age a child in BC is assessed is 6.5.

Responding to the needs of our community, Variety BC began funding private autism assessments in June 2021. At that time, the wait list in BC for an assessment through the public health system was between two to three years, while privately, an assessment could be completed within three to six months.

With the cost of a private autism assessment averaging \$3,000, many financially vulnerable families aren't able to access the private system leaving them no other option than to wait ... that was until Variety stepped in and began providing this critical funding. With a confirmed diagnosis, the provincial government will provide a family \$22,000 in annual funding to be used for specialized therapies and behavioural intervention. This funding drops significantly to \$6,000 once the child reaches school age*.

Research from the Pacific Autism Family Network shows that the average age of an autism diagnosis in British Columbia is six and a half years old. With early intervention being key to ensuring that kids on the spectrum achieve to their full potential, Variety is now stepping in to help ensure families receive financial support much earlier so their child can thrive and grow into their best selves.

**An average family who has a child with ASD will pay \$65,000 to \$75,000 annually for intervention*

Psychoeducational Assessments

- In October 2021, Variety BC began funding psychoeducational assessments which provide a comprehensive evaluation of a child's intellectual and academic abilities. Educators can then provide the student with an individualized learning plan tailored to their strengths, fostering confidence and mental well being in school.
- In BC, the cost of a psychoeducational assessment averages \$3,000.
- In 2023, Variety BC is raising \$300,00 to provide 100 children in BC with a psychoeducational assessment.

Variety began funding psychoeducational assessments in October 2021 after identifying an educational system in BC unable to keep up with the demand. Families are facing a wait time of over 2 years for a public assessment while watching their child fall deeper and deeper behind in school. These assessments are crucial because they provide a comprehensive evaluation of a child's intellectual and academic abilities allowing school administrators to tailor a child's lesson plan in a way that works for the student.

Psychoeducational assessments are so important because having learning challenges isn't just a problem that students face at school ... it's something that affects every aspect of their lives.

A study from the Child Development Institute based in Toronto, shows that 40% of children with a learning disability demonstrated difficulty with anxiety, depression, or low self-esteem. It also revealed that up to 75% encountered difficulty with social relationships, which begin in childhood and are vital for lifelong wellness.

By helping to identify a child's learning disabilities and offering a tailored support plan through the assessment, not only does this set a child up for greater success in school ... but for success in life. As word begins to spread that Variety is funding these assessments, we are receiving more and more requests for help from desperate and concerned parents.

With your support, we can continue to intervene and help ensure that kids who need psychoeducational assessments today, don't need to wait regardless of their socioeconomic situation. These assessments build a child's confidence and self-esteem which leads to healthier student bodies and ultimately stronger communities. Thank for helping to build a brighter future for all British Columbians.