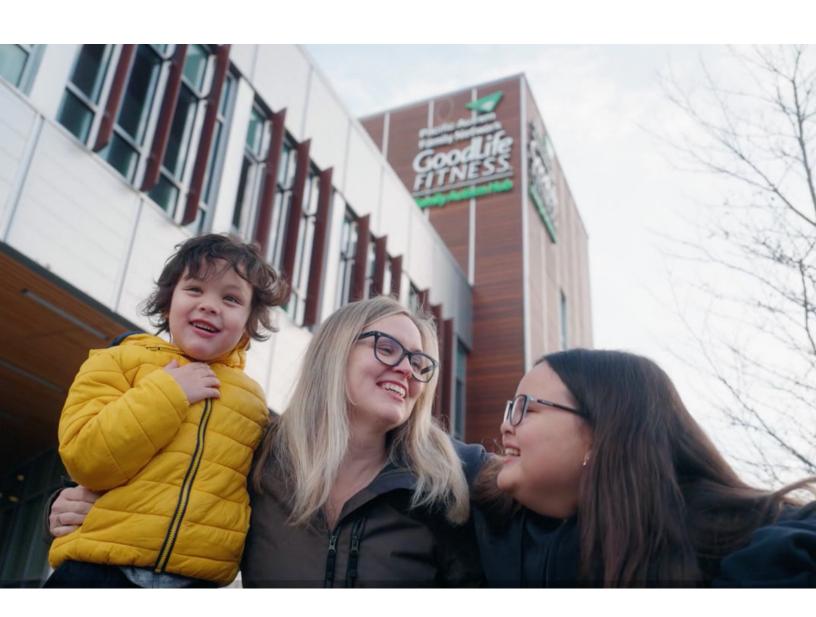


2024 WHO WE ARE Partnerships & Programs

Supporting meaningful inclusion across the lifespan





Who We Are

Pacific Autism Family Network's (PAFN) core purpose is to be a Knowledge Centre: bringing together state-of-the-art resources for research, information, learning, assessment, treatment and support; and building capacity to address the lifespan needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorder and related neurodiversities. PAFN will build upon existing lifespan services while at the same time addressing the need for support and services across the province.

The centre of knowledge and innovation involves the development of the hub in Richmond and spokes located in communities across the province, in collaboration with local community partners. The spoke centres have full access to the expertise and information services offered at the hub.

The evolution of PAFN has been an inclusive and collaborative process involving families, individuals with autism and related neurodiversities, clinicians, community professionals, researchers and representatives of government.



A Message from our Founders

Thanks to our generous donors and partners, we've strengthened vital support systems for countless individuals and families throughout the province. Every day, we move closer to meaningful inclusion for all.

Included in this package are detailed accounts of our initiatives, successes, and impact, demonstrating our commitment to creating a more inclusive society. We deeply appreciate your ongoing support and belief in our mission.

SERGIO & WENDY LISOGAR-COCCHIA,





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Inclusion Across the Lifespan

Pacific Autism Family Network improves the lives of those in the autistic and neurodiverse community by providing resources for children, adults and families. Because of our work in BC and beyond, individuals and families have somewhere to turn.

Lifespan Programs 3 months - 65+ years



















First Responder Training

Over the span of two decades, Pacific Autism has been dedicated to collaborating with first responder associations, resulting in the training of over 16,000 first responders. This comprehensive training program aims to equip responders with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively assist and support individuals within the autism community. Through these efforts, Pacific Autism continues to make significant strides in enhancing awareness, understanding, and response strategies for the benefit of individuals with autism and their families.





Your Support, Our Impact



PAFN offers 10+ annual inclusive events



Over 400 families have used the services provided by our partners at ET Music Therapy











150k people have found resources through PAFN's national knowledge network



Did You Know



79% of Canadian neighbourhoods are home to autistic children

40x

Accidental drownings are more common in autistic people



1/37 BC youth are diagnosed with autism



Our Commitment to Meaningful Inclusion

Community Engagement

GAMECHANGERS Program



PAFN is proud to be in partnership with the BC Lions Football Club to bring the GAMECHANGERS program to life. Since 2017, our partnership has been creating opportunities for individuals and families to enjoy a Lions game at BC Place in a safe, sensory-friendly environment with complementary home game tickets. Guests are gifted a special PAFN t-shirt and are seated in a designated area for added comfort.

Vancouver Aquarium

PAFN has partnered with the Vancouver Aquarium to provide visitors with autism resources, materials, complementary swag and more! Like Pacific Autism, the Vancouver Aquarium is committed to creating an inclusive environment in our community and looks forward to hosting these events.



PAFriend Program: Ambassadors for Inclusion



The PAFriend Program provides a platform where the voices of autistic and neurodiverse individuals, along with their families and caretakers, are valued and embraced, contributing to the promotion of inclusion for all. PAFriends have diverse avenues for engagement, including sharing their personal narratives to amplify understanding, participating in PAFN awareness initiatives through photography or filming, and speaking at events to illuminate their journey and insights with the wider PAFN community.



Our Commitment to Meaningful Inclusion

Unique Programs & Initiatives

First Responders

Since 2012, PAFN has worked with various medical associations to train over 16,000 first responders to provide better care for the autistic and neurodiverse community. Trainings consist of feedback both from real-world professionals in fire, dispatch, and police services, as well as leading behaviourists across Canada. Additionally, PAFN has created a number of courses available nationally through the Canadian Police Knowledge Network and AIDE Canada's online resources.



Neurodiverse Robotics

Neurodiverse Robotics has partnered with PAFN to deliver a robotics program consisting of four workshops for individuals who would like to explore Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Participants will have the opportunity to build, program, and participate in a challenge with VEX robots in a fun, engaging environment.









Our Commitment to Meaningful Inclusion

Unique Programs & Initiatives

Voices of Autism Birthday Club

PAFN and Voices of Autism, an autistic run self-advocacy group, have joined forces to enable individuals to experience exciting birthday celebrations with their peers. Once a month, people are invited to attend a shared birthday party complete with games, birthday cake, and a gift from Pacific Autism.



"Planning our inclusive birthday party was a breeze thanks to PAFN's amazing staff. From decorations to setup and takedown, they exceeded all expectations! The highlight? When a friend's child enjoyed the party so much, he didn't want to leave! We highly recommend #PAFN for your next birthday bash - they truly go above and beyond for you and your guests," - birthday party guest family

Connections Social Club

Founded by our self-advocacy group,
Connections is a social program providing
an opportunity for teens with autism and
related disabilities to socialize with peers
who understand their unique challenges.
Participants enjoy a relaxed atmosphere of
games, team building events, and social
exercises focused around promoting
independence and community integration.





Inclusive Events & Experiences

Creating Meaningful Memories

PAFN advocates for the allowance and respect of access for all individuals, including those with diverse needs, at public events. Since its inception, PAFN has hosted numerous sensory-friendly events across all spokes, including Sensory Santa with over 700 families per annum.

These celebrations allow unique experiences for families who may struggle to navigate standard community offerings. In addition, PAFN has worked with an array of fairs and events such as the Vancouver International Film Festival, WVPD and other community partners to offer sensory hours. By providing equitable access to individuals across BC, PAFN ensures that no families are left out.



Sensory Santa



Petting Zoo



DJ Night



Game Nights



Sensory Friendly Movie Screenings at Cineplex



Arts & Craft Events



Little Pilots Inclusive Preschool



Little Pilots Inclusive Preschool provides meaningful social and learning experiences to all students ages 2.5 to 5 years regardless of background, experience, or ability. Children with different needs learn better when they learn together.

At the Little Pilots Inclusive Preschool, children on the autism spectrum learn alongside typically developing classmates. Children who have no diagnosis benefit from the school's individualized curriculum while they build social awareness and learn to accommodate different types of friends. They master early learning lessons by sharing them with classmates and becoming role models and partners for practicing play and communication skills.



All children can learn at the Little Pilots Inclusive Preschool, regardless of diagnosis or needs. We know everyone has something to work on, whether sharing or shyness, patience or paying attention. Learning to accept and enjoy friends with differences prepares young learners to succeed in their community schools and in Canadian society.



Our dedicated instructors are well-versed in modern teaching and behavioural support techniques, receiving regular supervision and guidance from field experts. With a high ratio of specialized staff to preschoolers, we ensure individualized care and instruction for all. Our Inclusive Preschool is designed to foster success and independence from day one. For students needing additional support beyond the typical 1:10 ratio, we offer a 1:4 ratio, with learning overseen by PAFN Behavior Analysts. Those requiring even more support are welcome to attend but must bring their own 1:1 support (behavior interventionist).

Learn More



pacificautismfamily.com



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Paper Planes Cafe

This inclusive coffee shop is on a mission to empower autistic and neurodiverse individuals, providing meaningful employment opportunities. Proudly partnered with YVR, this Pacific Autism initiative operates as a training facility within the Vancouver International Airport's domestic arrivals, cultivating job skills and experience. Following the training, staff will be supported in their job search. The innovative, impactful, and important partnership between YVR and PAFN began in 2021 with a shared vision to make travel accessible and enjoyable for everyone.







"My role at the cafe has helped me get familiar with the workplace, to be a team player and gain comfort in talking to people."

"TJ has gained a great deal of confidence and skills since. As parents, nothing makes us happier than to see our children healthy and successful, so a big thank you to PAFN, the Paper Planes Cafe, YVR and all the people that make this possible."

- Vincent and Michelle, parents to TJ



Learn More



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preschool@pacificautismfamily.com



UP (Unlocking Potential) Early Intervention Clinic, Inc.



UP offers Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) interventions for children aged 0-5 with autism and developmental delays. Our therapy, based on these evidence-based models, focuses on enhancing social engagement and skill development. Sessions are held at our clinic in Richmond, BC, within the Pacific Autism Family Network building featuring Board Certified Behaviour Analysts (BCBAs®), Board-Certified Assistant Behaviour Analysts (BCaBAs®), Behaviour Interventionists (BIs), Speech Language and Occupational Therapy Consultation Parent Training and Professional Development and Supervision.

The in-clinic program provides a fun, social place where children can reach their potential. It's ideal if your child struggles with tasks others find easy, you seek learning in a social setting with qualified staff, you want tailored, safe experiences for young children, or if your child is under 6.

Benefits

- Highly trained and skilled behaviour interventionists
- Clinical oversight from a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA) and Certified Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) Therapists
- Individualized objectives in a variety of areas
- Speech-Language Pathologist or Occupational Therapist consultation in an enriching and stimulating environment
- Carefully crafted, individualized goal plan

"Our daughter benefited from the caring, kind, gentle and compassionate nature of the clinic and the BIs and BCs that worked with her. Her progress was constantly assessed and utilized in the creation of her treatment goals and sessions plans. We as a family were able to see her progress in-vivo and scientifically through the performance charts that were available. There was careful planning around her challenges and also a good amount of push for her to surpass her boundaries."

—Caralynne and Shane, parents of former client

Learn More



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Little Buddies consists of dedicated Occupational Therapists (OT) who specialize in assisting children with autism and developmental delays. Our family-centered, relationship-based approach aims to empower children to become happy and engaged explorers. Using play as a medium, our OTs focus on developing skills in play, social interaction, sensory processing, motor skills, self-care, and feeding. We offer therapists proficient in English, Mandarin, and Tagalog.

While some children naturally reach developmental milestones, others may need extra support. Occupational Therapists (OTs) adapt tasks and environments to help individuals succeed independently. They tailor teaching to each child's needs and collaborate with caregivers and professionals like Speech Language Pathologists and Behavior Consultants for holistic support.

Occupational Therapy is established on enabling everyday engagement through occupation. At Little Buddies, we see play as a child's main occupation. Our OTs use play to engage, foster relationships, and develop skills across various areas:

- Self-care: including feeding, dressing, toileting, sleeping, and hygiene tasks
- Productivity: participation and enjoyment in school or daycare activities, such as printing and drawing
- Leisure: engaging in play, social interaction with peers, participating in sports, hobbies, interests, and extracurricular activities
- Social Engagement: fostering family and peer relationships, and developing social skills



"Wonderful, fun, very child focused therapy. Any kid's dream! Staff care a lot about every child, and approaches allow a lot of freedom for the child to explore, control their own session, and exercise with all kinds of equipment."

—Alyse Graham

Learn More



pacificautismfamily.com



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Able Developmental Clinic Inc.



The ABLE Developmental Clinic is a private multidisciplinary clinic providing assessment, treatment and consultation for children and youth experiencing difficulties with Attention, Behaviour, Learning and Emotion. ABLE strives to be a recognized leader in providing high quality, evidence-based, and values-based services for children, youth, and families with developmental disabilities and mental health problems

Our core values encompass a sincere desire to help, respect for individuals, families, and colleagues, prioritizing evidence-based methods and outcome measurement, fostering innovation at individual, organizational, and research levels, promoting collaboration with individuals, families, and agencies, and advocating for good citizenship through active participation and giving back.

Services ABLE clinics provide:

- Assessment and Diagnosis (children/adults)
- Sibling Support Services
- Social Pragmatic Language Groups
- Infant and Toddler Intervention ESDM

Professions include: • Clinical Child Psy

- Clinical Child Psychology
- Child Neuropsychology Surrey
- Educational Psychology
- Individual/Family Counselling
- Behavioural Consulting Mobile
- Speech/Language Pathology



"I would regard ABLE as the best provider of multidisciplinary services in the province. Our family has had the most experience with Dr. Davies and have never found him to be anything but a consummate professional of the highest abilities and character. All of our experiences with ABLE's professionals, as well as with their staff, has been positive and I would not hesitate to recommend them to anyone."

Learn More



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SIBS Clinic | Self Injurious Behaviour

The SIBS Clinic was inaugurated to meet the specific needs of SIB patients and their families. The SIB clinic space takes advantage of PAFN's established virtual presence/platform for equitable access.

Self-injurious behaviours (SIBS) are acts where a person physically harms themselves. It includes behaviours such as head banging with knees or objects, self-biting and chewing, pinching, slapping, hitting and punching. The impact of SIBS occurs at multiple levels, including the health care system, the education system, and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), who are the source of treatment funding, respite care and medical supplies for many of these children. SIB can also extend beyond childhood, making it a concern that impacts individuals across their lifespan. The personal impact on those with SIB and their families is immeasurable

The SIBS clinical space centralizes our clinical experience at PAFN for the community. We utilize our resources to distribute knowledge, generate novel approaches to assessment and management, enhance training opportunities, and provide integrative treatment. As a result of this work the SIBS clinic is now located on the 3rd floor of PAFN.



Learn More





Autism Support Network



The Autism Support Network is a trusted organization offering resources, education, and support to families dealing with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Our vision is to foster a secure, inclusive community where individuals with ASD can thrive to their fullest potential through access to science-based treatments. We provide personalized support, parent groups, and information sessions on various topics related to ASD, including Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) as a treatment option.

Our focus is on building local networks across British Columbia to facilitate connections among families. Through neighborhood meetings and guest speaker presentations, we address a range of challenges faced by families, such as social skills development, feeding issues, and behavioral concerns. Our dedicated volunteer parents offer experienced guidance and support to those navigating the autism journey, aiming to empower others with knowledge about evidence-based treatments.



"ASN has been incredibly supportive and informative to have in my life. Not only has the parent facebook group been a wealth of knowledge and support, but I have personally reached out to ASN staff directly for advice and guidance throughout our journey. I am incredibly grateful and appreciative the time they took to go over things with me and the patience to answer all of my questions. Things like where to find a behaviour interventionist, what school district has great support, how to advocate in schools, where to put job postings for therapists are all questions we all have when we first start this journey. The facebook parent group is support group is somewhere I have always felt comfortable, safe and supported to post in."

—Parent, Cassandra

Learn More



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Sponsored Program

Autism Integrated Medical Services (AIMS) Clinic



The purpose of the AIMS clinic is to provide well integrated, 'best practice' multidisciplinary medical and allied health services for diagnostic screening, assessment, and treatment of individuals with autism spectrum and/or related neurodevelopmental disorders across the lifespan.

The Autism Integrated Medical Services (AIMS) is the multidisciplinary team of physicians working closely with ABLE. This is where patients can get MSP-covered services such as developmental and behavioural paediatrics and medical genetic consultation (some genetic services are not MSP-covered), as well as specialized private services.

Comprehensive services offered include:

- Medical Genetic Consultations available for all ages, offering personal and/or family-focused genetic counselling, molecular genetic testing and evaluation of environmental disease risks via analyses of personal metabolome, proteome and gut microbiome
- Developmental Paediatrician Consultations

 includes comprehensive assessment,
 diagnosis and treatment recommendations
- General Paediatric Consultations Include evaluation of past and present health of child, including a physical examination and appropriate laboratory investigations



"AIMS is the only, that I am aware of, Integrated medical clinic for our special kids. This clinic should act as an example of what government should strive for."

Learn More



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ET Music Therapy



ET Music Therapy operates on the principle that music is a powerful tool for connecting with individuals of diverse needs. Our holistic, family-centered approach, guided by a neuro-diverse philosophy, supports each individual in reaching their authentic potential while respecting their unique neurology. We prioritize trauma-informed, sensory-informed, and positive behavioral techniques, tailoring programs to promote connection and independence. Collaborating with other service providers, we ensure comprehensive support for each client. Our dynamic sessions create a safe environment for exploration, leveraging music's sensory and emotive qualities to stimulate interaction and skill development. We celebrate diversity and do not discriminate in any aspect of our work.

Sessions may include:

- Experiences targeting Auditory skill
- Therapeutic application of guitar, piano, percussive instruments, etc.
- Creative movement to music, utilizing both improvised & recorded music
- Vocal improvisation & vocal exploration
- Songs/interventions targeting speech development
- Professionally guided musical interactions/ experiences providing proprioceptive/
- vibrational input from selected instruments for self regulation
- Song writing

"With music, my son participates way sooner than in other environments, with increased focus and eye contact. He loves music and that tends to bring him out of his shell."

— Kristy Hunt, Parent



Learn More



604-813-8017



etmusictherapy.com/contact-us



JET (Jobs, Employment and Training)



JET is an innovative project aimed to support young adults 19 years of age and older with disabilities. JET is for individuals who are no longer eligible for school, but still need to acquire skills in critical areas. Areas that will, when met, open up the community around them with opportunities for meaningful participation, vocation and interaction.

JET is combining field experts in target areas, like Communication, Life Skills, Community Access, Assistive Technology, and Health and Fitness, with Behavior Analysts. This allows us to break concepts down, and tailor education to the student, giving them the best opportunity to learn. JET's mandate and vision are to take the skills learned in the classroom and transfer them into real world settings one step and skill at a time.

Heidi Valeriano and her son, JP, share a connection, strengthened by their mutual love for music and dance. Since 2021, their lives have been enriched by the JET program. Within the embrace of this innovative program, JP has not only found support but has also flourished, marking the beginning of a remarkable journey toward empowerment. Heidi's appreciation for the JET program runs deep, as she recalls the immediate sense of welcome she experienced upon introduction, with gratitude to program staff Joaquin and Michelle. "The JET program has brought our family peace of mind," the mother of two expresses. "JP eagerly anticipates spending time with the exceptional staff who enrich his days." For JP, JET has become an integral part of his daily routine, offering tailored support and avenues for personal growth.





Learn More



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Go Group



PAFC's social enterprise initiative, GO Group, provides paid, goal-oriented employment opportunities. GO stands for goal oriented in that all GO Group employment is temporary and transitional (approximately 6 months); the focus is on acquiring relevant vocational skills and tangible work experience such that individuals are better qualified for community employment in the respective industry. Specific workplace readiness and vocational skills goals are defined at the onset of employment. The skill acquisition progress is regularly tracked to ensure individuals' learning is well-supported.

As individuals reach each skill goal, PAFN will validate and issue digital badges, a new way of showcasing skill competency. Individuals who are job ready can use digital badges to highlight their skill set.

Additional transition supports to future employment are available through our Adult Programs Team. We work collaboratively with career practitioners and key contacts in individuals' support networks towards the common goal of gaining employment after GO Group.

Currently, the GO Group hires through the following ventures that meet the sustainable business functions within the Hub: GO Café, GO Custodial, and GO Landscaping. GO Group is being piloted at the Hub with an aim to expand to satellite sites





"GO Group is my first job and has let me learn more about how to take care of a building and everyone is very nice. I feel happy to be looking for more jobs now. Thank you, PAFN."

—Henry, past participant

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SRDC/BCWIN



BC WiN, an innovative recruitment initiative, connects individuals with diverse abilities to employment opportunities while aiding BC employers in meeting workforce needs. Established in 2013 by the Employment Action Committee, BC WiN has grown from a research pilot to a successful model, addressing labour shortages and supporting inclusive hiring commitments. Despite challenges posed by the pandemic, BC WiN remains dedicated to filling job openings and improving outcomes for job seekers with disabilities. Supported by funding from the Government of Canada's Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities, BC WiN continues to evolve and meet the demand for diversity and inclusion in the workforce.

Recruitment & Retention Services

Inclusive Workforce Consultants are experienced HR professionals, with years of hiring and retention experience. We focus on abilities in relation to the job and connect people with diverse abilities to well-paying, long-term careers, PT, FT, hybrid and remote working opportunities.

Inclusive Employment Best Practices

We research, identify and share inclusive employment best practices. Lessons learned since 2015 are helping to inform national standards that support the new Accessible Canada Act, promoting the Four Pillars of Accessibility: Commitment. Readiness. Recruitment. Retention.

SRDC

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) is a non-profit research organization established in 1991 specifically to develop, field test, and rigorously evaluate new programs. SRDC is leading the project's project management and research activities.

"This has been the best program for my son. He has been doing different programs for over 20 years, and this program really provided him with the confidence and support to find work."

Learn More



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Employment Works Canada



Employment Works Canada is a 12 week prevocational program focused on skills based experiential learning. Employment Works (EW) is a 12-week program that offers employment preparedness training and support to autistic adults and persons with disabilities. The program is designed for individuals who want to enter or return to the workforce, and who are willing to develop and practice the skills needed to support employment success.



Employment Works addresses various areas of employment preparedness training, including self-development, social and communication skills, life skills and confidence building. Through the 12-weeks, the Employment Works program aims for:

- Participants to acquire and/or advance their employment relevant skills;
- Participants to develop and work towards achievable employment goals;
- Participants to build confidence and broaden community engagement for greater social inclusion and enjoyment;
- Community reach to build capacity and awareness of the contributions individuals with ASD, or other barriers, bring to the workplace and to identify ways to create inclusive environments that foster success; and
- Mentors and co-workers to develop an understanding of the importance of mentorship and how they can support participant's efforts to achieve employment skills and vocations goals

"Thank you so much for all your support and the hard work you put into the Employment Works program. Evan loved attending Employment Works! He will definitely miss everyone. You really helped build his confidence!"

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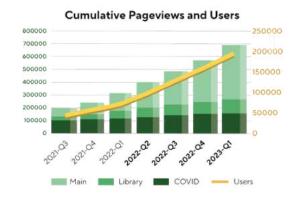


AIDE Canada



The Autism and/or Intellectual Disability Knowledge Exchanged Network (AIDE Canada) is a national initiative supporting self-advocatees, parents, families, caregivers and service providers in the autism and/or intellectual disability community. Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, it is a trusted source for the information our community needs.





Library























Learn More



aidecanada.ca/connect/chat-with-us



First Responders

PAFN has been working to educate police officers, firefighters, and 911 call dispatchers for over 12 years. By partnering with emergency service organizations PAFN has trained over 16,000 first responder professional on autism. This amazing work is continuing through the AIDE Canada platform.







Research

Dwell Stack

AMAZON JOINS AUTISM ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP IN-HOME HEALTH PLATFORM

An innovative iOS app and web admin application have been developed to provide care teams methods to collect, store, and monitor biometric and/or environmental data for those on the autism spectrum.

In collaboration with 2m Foundation, First Place Global Leadership Institute and Pacific Autism Family Network, the UBC Cloud Innovation Centre (CIC) has developed an iOS app and web administrative application that provides care teams with a method to collect, store, monitor and access biometric and environmental information on variables that may trigger or precede a seizure or meltdown for an individual on the autism spectrum. The UBC CIC team developed three major components to capture biometric and environmental information that could potentially be used in a model for predicting seizures.

These components include:

- 1) An iOS app that collects biological data via an Apple watch
- 2) Environmental sensors based on integrated third-party solutions; specifically Airthings and/or DIY Arduino Gas Sensors which collect carbon dioxide (CO2) info among other elements
- 3) A web administrative (admin) application which provides access to centralized data that contains information from wearable devices and environmental sensors



Learn More



pacificautismfamily.com/dwell-stack



Spokes

The Pacific Autism Family Network (PAFN) aims to bridge the gap in specialized resources for families, particularly in remote areas of the province. Through a Hub-and-Spoke model, PAFN establishes satellite locations across BC, connected to the main hub in Richmond. This model streamlines access to resources, reduces service duplication, and provides essential education and support for various professionals. Spoke programs in Prince George, Chilliwack, and Kelowna offer community-driven social opportunities and caregiver support, while serving as local advocates for inclusion and navigation of services.



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Kelowna Spoke 250-469-0014 kelowna@pacificautismfamily.com 200-2000 Spall Road, Kelowna, BC V1Y 9P6

Prince George Spoke 250-645-0995 princegeorge@pacificautismfamily.com #216-1811, Victoria Street, BC V2L 2L6

"We are thrilled Prince George was selected to be one of the first Pacific Autism Family Network spokes linked to the Richmond centre of excellence opened in November 2016. Our dream is that the Prince George spoke will offer coordinated access to local and provincial resources and support for families and individuals living with autism in the north. From the moment concerns are first identified, this centre will provide assistance through diagnosis, treatment strategy, and life transitions through to adulthood; in conjunction with offering education, training as well as support groups for families and individuals. This regional network will ensure families have access to the highest quality, familycentred care; we are humbled to have the opportunity to participate."

—Jason and Jordan Oliver

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Support Meaningful Inclusion Today

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Cheque payable to Pacific Autism Family Center Foundation
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Let's Get Social!

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