

Backgrounder: Expanding Individualized Funding for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to Children Under the Age of 12

A re-elected Saskatchewan Party government will expand eligibility for individualized funding for autism services to children under the age of 12 who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Benefit:

- Children ages six to 11 who have been medically diagnosed with ASD will be eligible for an annual individualized funding benefit of \$6,000. This is expected to benefit 1,000 children in Saskatchewan annually.
- Expansion of the children's individualized ASD funding program will come into effect following the 2021-22 Budget.

Background: Individualized Funding for ASD Services

- In the 2018-19 Budget, the Government of Saskatchewan delivered on an election commitment to provide parents of children under the age of six who have been medically diagnosed with ASD with individualized funding in the amount of \$4,000 annually to purchase services that best suit their child's individual needs:
 - That amount was increased to \$6,000 per child in the 2019-20 Budget and increased again to \$8,000 per child in the 2020-21 Budget.
- In the 2011 election, the Saskatchewan Party indicated that a goal was to extend funding for children with ASD above age six in the amount of \$4,800 annually.
- Individualized funding provides parents with the flexibility and freedom to choose from a range of therapeutic interventions and supports that will most benefit their children. The current program benefits about 500 children annually.
- The current list of eligible services for children under the age of six can be found here:
 - <http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca/redirect.cfm?p=90571&i=107487>.
- With the commitment to increase eligibility for individualized funding to children under the age of 12, a re-elected Saskatchewan Party government will again consult with parents and stakeholders to determine services that should be added to the list of eligible services.

Cost: \$6M annually.