

AFTER AN AUTISM DIAGNOSIS

YOUR NEXT STEPS

An informative starting point for families and individuals following an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Diagnosis

5 STEPS POST DIAGNOSIS

No matter your starting point in the diagnostic journey, know that you are not alone, and there is a process that can work at every phase of life!



STEP 01
Understand
the Diagnosis



STEP 02
Identify
Support Needs



STEP 03
Access Local
Supports



STEP 04
Build an
Advocacy
Team



STEP 05
Plan for
Sustainability &
Growth

PATH 1

Young Children: Ages 0-5, not yet in school

THIS STAGE MAY LOOK LIKE:

Families/caregivers may notice differences in communication, play, processing, or regulation. Support at this age focuses on foundations.

COMMON NEXT STEPS:

- Explore therapies such as Speech, Occupational, ABA, and Physical Therapy.
- Contact Early On Michigan (if under 3 years of age)
- Explore your insurance benefits to see what is covered in your policy
- Learn which supports would be best for your child with your pediatrician or advocate.

KEY REMINDER:

Not every child needs every therapy. Progress happens through connection, consistency, and individualized support.

PATH 2

School-Aged Individuals: Grades Pre-K-12

THIS STAGE MAY LOOK LIKE:

A diagnosis may come after challenges in school/daycare, behavioral concerns, or academic stress. School plays a major role in accessing support.

COMMON NEXT STEPS:

- Request a school evaluation
- Understanding an IEP vs. a 504 Plan
- Collaborate with school teams on supports available within your school district
- Explore alternative if needs exceed school resources, such as ancillary therapies outside of school, or schools with alternative approaches if appropriate

KEY REMINDER:

You are allowed to advocate for your child! They have a right to support in the least restrictive environment possible.

PATH 3

Teens & Adults Receiving a Diagnosis for the first time

THIS STAGE MAY LOOK LIKE:

Many teens and adults experience relief, validation, or even grief following a formal diagnosis. This path is about understanding identify and reducing barriers, NOT “fixing” anything.

COMMON NEXT STEPS:

- Find neurodivergent-affirming providers
- Connect with peer communities both online, and in person
- Explore workplace or college accommodations
- Reframe past experiences with a new understanding

KEY REMINDER: Support is still available at any stage. Diagnosis at any age is valid.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Growing Minds ABA Therapy offers free as well as in-depth guides for purchase for each stage of diagnosis, including:

- Step-by-step roadmaps
- Sample letters & templates for providers/schools
- Michigan insurance guidance
- Metro Detroit-specific resources and recommendations

Visit www.gmaba.com to explore more resources, and reach out to us today for direct 1:1 ABA Therapy in the home and community.

REMEMBER: A DIAGNOSIS UNLOCKS ACCESS!

An autism diagnosis NEVER changes any person or family member, but it does open up a world of access points such as:

- Educational supports
- Insurance-covered treatment and services
- Workplace or academic accommodations
- Community resources

Support exists to help individuals thrive and grow exactly how they are, and we would love to help.

