

Community

- Get connected with family support networks (e.g. *Extend-A-Family*, *Partners for Planning*, etc.)
- Encourage your child to try new things and new experiences through recreation, social programs and school (e.g. camps, social groups, friends at school)
- Look at different directories for new idea, services, or programs that you can access (e.g. *Connectability*, *City Kids* or *Surrey Place's Community Resource Directory*)
- Communicate with your child(ren) to see what they like to do, then find opportunities for them to participate in their interests
- Take a look at camps in January of each year to plan for the summer (e.g. use the 'Find Your Perfect Camp' function on the *Ontario Camps Association* website)
- Get outside! (E.g. get the *Easter Seals Access 2 Entertainment* card for movies with your child, or get the *TTC Support Person* card to get on the bus with your child for free)

Funding

- Apply for funding (*Assistance to Children with Severe Disabilities*, *Special Services at Home*, etc.)
- Take a look at *Holland Bloorview's Funding and Financial Assistance Programs Guide* for families who have children with disabilities – online and in the resource centre
- Think about the future (e.g. *Community Living's Inspiring Possibilities Guide* on estate planning, or *RDSP*)

Health

- Find a doctor in your area through the *College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario* website
- Refer to *CCAC (Community Care Access Centres)* to get access to a Care Coordinator
- Encourage your child to talk to someone if they need to – the same goes for caregivers (e.g. *The What's Up Walk-In Clinic* for walk-in counselling)
- Try Parent Groups or Sibling Workshops (e.g. *Extend-A-Family*, *Holland Bloorview Parent Talks*, or *Sibshops* by *Autism Ontario* and *Community Living*)

School

- Find resources online to help you understand the system. (e.g. Take a look at the *Special Needs Roadmaps* or *Easter Seals Kids at School* online)

- Make an 'All About Me' Binder for your child to keep at school (containing need-to-know information), or update your child's 'All About Me' Binder at the beginning of each year. (E.g. try the *Keeping It Together (KIT)* toolkit if you need some ideas)

Self-Care

- Involve your child in decision-making as much as possible. Encourage them to be an advocate too!
- Take a look at respite services in your area (e.g. www.respiteservices.ca or *Safehaven*) for caregivers

Transition

- Connect with Service Providers for Person Directed Planning (i.e. *Corbrook, Community Living Toronto*)
- Set short and long term goals with your child and family

Last updated by a Family Support Specialist in August 2018