



Preparing for Your Child's In-Person ADOS Assessment: A guide for parents and carers

What is an ADOS assessment?

The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) is a play- and conversation-based assessment used by trained professionals to understand a child's communication, social interaction, play, and behaviour.

Your child's assessment will take place **in-person at a clinic location**. This allows the assessor to observe your child.

Before the Appointment

It is important that your child knows where they are going and why. You can explain the assessment to your child in an age appropriate way.

For younger children, you could tell your child the assessors name and that they are going to play with toys and do some activities to find out how their brain works.

For older children and teenagers, you could explain that the assessor will do activities with them and talk about topics such as feelings and friendships to understand their social interaction style, strengths and differences.

During the Assessment

The assessor will guide you

- Typically the assessment takes place without a parent in the room, unless there are safety reasons for a parent to be present. Parents can remain in the room if this helps the child to feel safe, but it is important that the parent does not get involved in the assessment or try to help the child.



National Neurodiversity Assessments

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Be yourself

- Encourage your child to play and respond naturally.
- Don't worry if your child doesn't "perform" — the assessment is about seeing their usual ways of interacting.

Supporting Your Child

- Let your child know in advance that they'll be meeting someone new who wants to do activities and talk.
- Keep the explanation simple and reassuring.
- Have a snack and drink nearby in case they need a short break.

After the Appointment

- The assessor may ask you some questions separately.
- You will be given an opportunity to share your observations and concerns.
- Results and next steps will be explained after the assessment.

Key Reminders

- Be on time. The assessor will have other families attending after your appointment.
- Try to keep interruptions to a minimum.
- Relax — the assessor understands children may behave differently in new places and with strange people.

Questions or Concerns?

If you have questions about the process, please contact your Care Coordinator or our Admin Team before the appointment.

This assessment is a team effort — your support helps us to get to know your child; their strengths and their differences.