

Preparing for Your Child's Online 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 **online via video call**. This allows the assessor to observe your child in a familiar home setting.

Before the Appointment

Technology check

- Use a laptop or tablet (larger screen is best). This cannot be done using a mobile phone.
- Ensure your camera, microphone, and internet connection are working.
- Place the device somewhere stable where your child can be clearly seen.

Environment

- Choose a quiet room with as few distractions as possible.
- Make sure there is enough space for play and movement.
- Turn off background noise (TV, music, siblings, pets if possible).

Toys and Materials

The assessor will ask you to have some items ready, such as:

- A few favourite toys (e.g., dolls, cars, figures, blocks).
- A book your child enjoys.
- Everyday objects (cup, spoon, ball).
- 5 random objects, such as a paperclip, lolly stick, shoe lace, toy car, pencil, ball, jam jar lid, sponge.

During the Assessment

The assessor will guide you

- Sometimes you may be asked to sit with your child and help set up activities.
- Other times, you may be asked to step back so the assessor can watch your child directly.

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 on the computer who wants to play 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 and check your internet connection.
- Have the toys/materials ready before starting.
- Try to keep interruptions to a minimum.
- Relax — the assessor understands children may behave differently online.

Questions or Concerns?

If you're unsure about the setup, need help with the technology, or have questions about the process, please contact your Care Coordinator before the appointment.

This assessment is a team effort — your support helps us see your child at their best.