

The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Agenda

Thursday, June 12, 2025

2:00 – 4:00 pm

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 836 2497 2816

Passcode: 280622

One tap mobile Canada +12042727920,,83624972816#

Canada Toll-free 855 703 8985

[YouTube livestream link](#)

- 1. Meeting called to order**
- 2. Chair's comments**
 - 2.1. Lesley Sawchyn is away
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1. AAC meeting April 9, 2025
- 4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**
- 5. New Business**

- 5.1. Autism Presentation – Erika Luomo, Fund and Volunteer Coordinator, Autism Ontario

6. Old Business

- 6.1. AccessAbility Day summary, May 30th
- 6.2. Transit Optimization Consultation and Accessibility Plan
- 6.3. Follow up on Carol's APS Report September 2024 – Dan Perri

7. Barrier Removal Updates

- 7.1. Barrier Removal Update attached

8. Site Plan Sub-Committee Report

- 8.1. Site Plan Sub-Committee Report attached

9. Adjournment

Next meeting September 10, 2025; In-person and via Zoom 2:00 to 4:00



Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie
Accessibility Advisory Committee
Minutes

May 14, 2025

4:30 pm

Video Conference

Meetings may be viewed live on the City's YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/user/SaultSteMarieOntario>

Present: Carol Magnan, Don McConnell, Diana Gerhart, Derrick Lavallee, Wayne Scharfenberg, Andree Lebonte, Leslie Sawchyn (Interpreter).

Absent: Councilor Sandra Hollingsworth, Councilor Lisa Vezeau-Allen, Craig Kohler, Kerri Tucket.ss

Officials: Peter Tonazzo, Dan Perri (PW), Diane Morrell, Samir Thapa (Recorder)

1. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by: Derrick Lavallee

Seconded by: Wayne Scharfenberg

Resolved that Minutes of Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of April 09, 2025 be approved.

Carried

2. Site Plan Sub-Committee Report

4.1 Accessibility Suggestions for Residential Buildings

- Parking and walkways.
- Sidewalks and exterior space.
- Transit access.
- Interior spaces.
- Elevators.
- Washrooms.
- Easy to use tools for visual accessibility.
 - Font size calculator.
 - Color contrast analyzer.

4.2 See attached report Accessibility Suggestions for Residential Developers

3. New Business

3.1. Accessibility Wishlist for Ministry for Senior's and Accessibility

- Any suggestions/wish list provide Diane.
- Feedback about the 4th legislative review with AODA.
- More accessible units for seniors (Specifically long-term care)

3.2. Accessibility Week Event May 30th, 2025

- Outdoor Mobility activity with Derrick Lavallee
- Outdoor Vision Loss activity with Carol Magnan
- Keyboarding navigation with Dan Gowans (IT)
- Autism Awareness and Sensory Experience Activity, with Autism Ontario.

3.3. Garbage Receptacle Colour

- Discussion on colour contrast of garbage receptacles.

3.4. Playground Consultation for Manzo Park

- Information received from families of children with disabilities.
- Review the presentation.
- Any questions and feedback regarding presentation kindly provide to Diane.

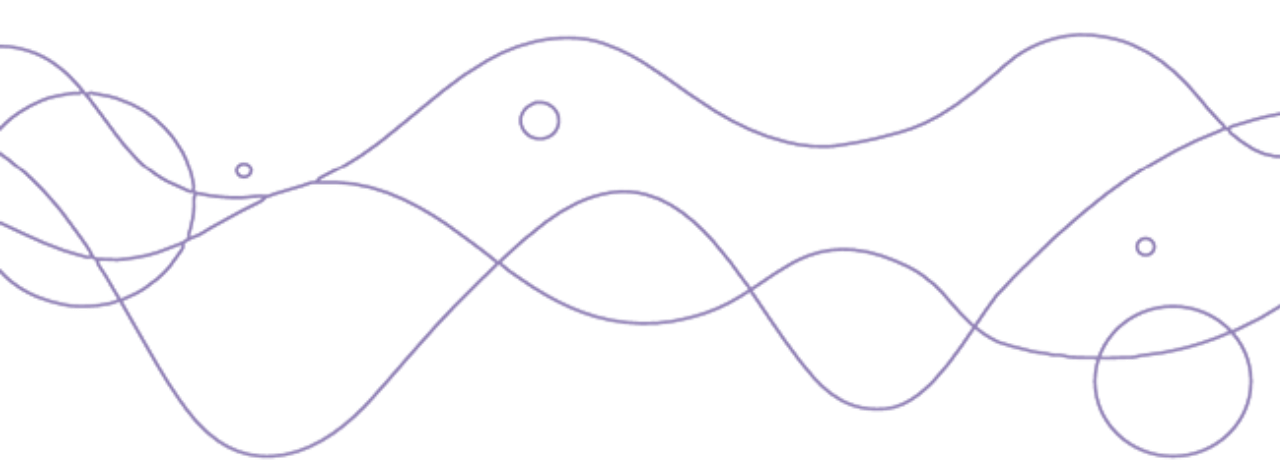
4. Next meeting

7.1 June 12, 2025

7.2 Peter (Planning) and Leslie (Interpreter) won't be available for the meeting.

5. Adjournment

Committee now adjourned.



AutismONTARIO

Autism Ontario

Exploring Autism

City of Sault Ste. Marie

Presented by: Erika Luoma, Fund and Volunteer
Coordinator



Objectives

To increase understanding of:

- What autism is and what it is not
- What neurodiversity is
- Features of autism
- How autistic individuals relate to their environment
- How to be an autistic ally

What is Autism?

Autism is **neurodevelopmental**.

Autism has
no cultural boundaries.

Every autistic person
can **thrive** with the right
support.

Autism is a type of **neurodiversity**.



What Autism is Not

Autism is **not caused by vaccinations.**

Autism is **not caused by parenting style.**

Autism is **not contagious.**

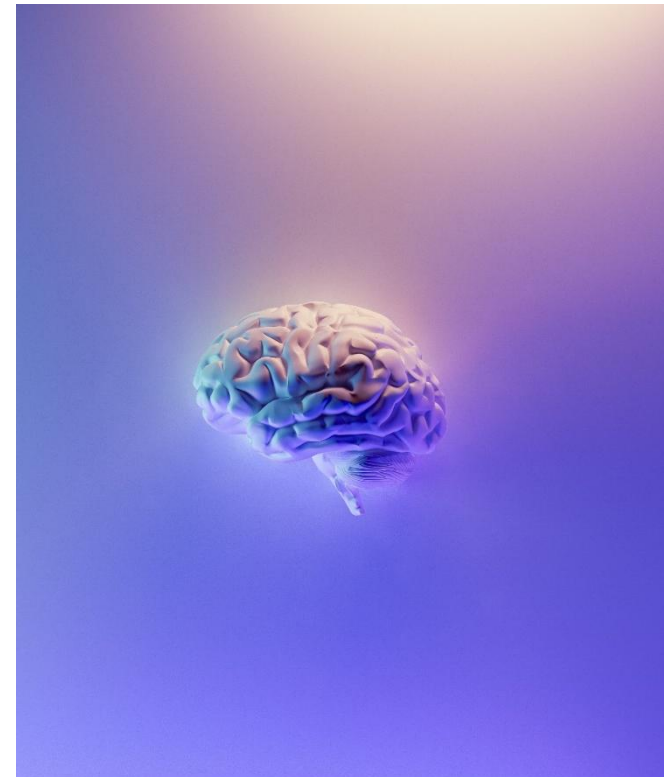
Autism is **not temporary, and it does not go away in adulthood.**



What is Neurodiversity?

“Neurodiversity describes the idea that people experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways; there is no one “right” way of thinking, learning, and behaving.”

(Baumer & Frueh, 2021)



Language and Autistic Identity

Clinical model:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Preferred terms:

- Difference or condition
- Low support versus high support needs



Language and Autistic Identity 2

Referential language:

Identity-first language

Person-first language

It is often best to ask an individual directly if they are comfortable telling you how they would prefer to be identified.



Autism Prevalence

Highlights:

- 1 in 50 (or 2.0%) Canadian children and youth aged 1 to 17 years were autistic
- Males were diagnosed 4x more frequently than females

[Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
[Full Report](#)



Core Features

Core Features of Autism:

- Social communication
- Restrictive and repetitive behaviours
 - Sensory processing
 - Focused interests



Social Communication

Autistic people may have differences in:

- Socio-emotional reciprocity
- Non-verbal communication
- Developing and maintaining relationships



Restrictive and Repetitive Behaviours

An autistic person may:

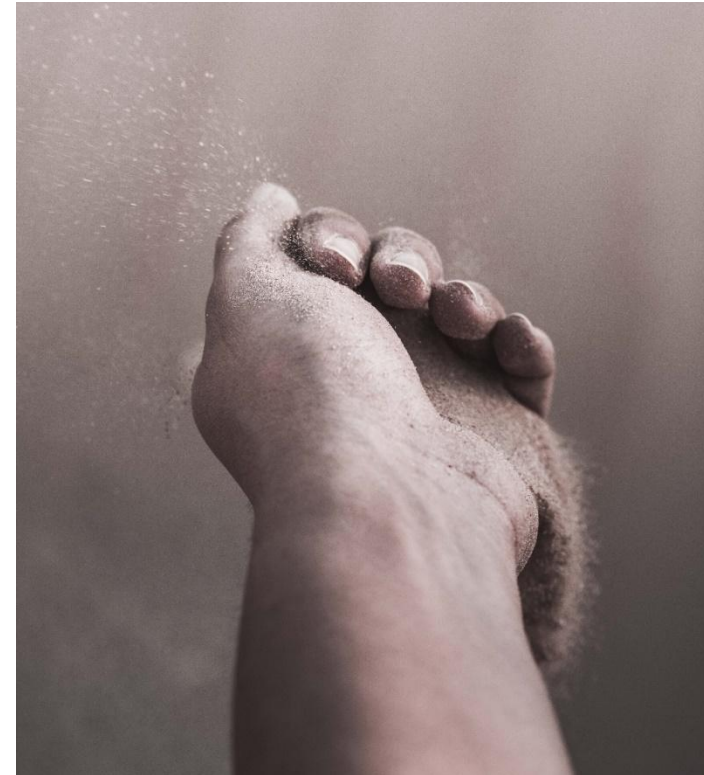
- Engage in repetitive motor movements
- Have difficulties adapting to change
- Experience sensory differences
- Have an intense focus or special interest



Sensory Differences

Autistic people may have differences in:

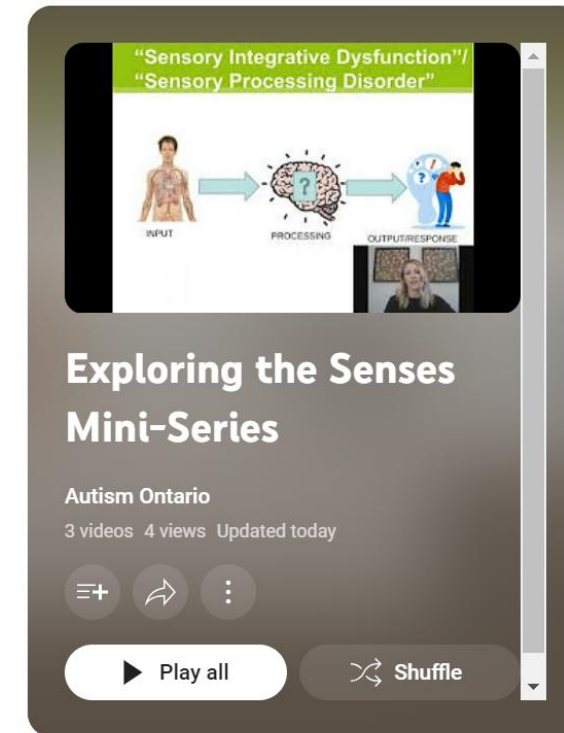
- **over-** or **under-**responsiveness to sensory input
- **seeking out** or **avoiding** sensory input



Sensory Differences 2

For more information on sensory integration:

- [Exploring the Senses Mini-Series](#)
- [The Sensory Experience Series](#)



Focused Interests

Potential benefits of focused interests:

- Improved social and emotional development
- Build meaning and purpose
- Build relationships



Co-Occurring Conditions

Approximately 50% of autistic teens and adults have a co-occurring mental health condition:

- **Anxiety:** 42-55%
- **Depression:** 26%
- **Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD):** 40-70%
- **Bipolar disorder:** 7.5%



Masking

Masking/camouflaging is when an individual seeks to hide or minimize autism traits to “fit in”.

Examples of masking:

- Suppressing stims
- Making eye contact
- Hugging relatives
- Making “small talk”



Masking 2

Effects of masking:

- Increased signs of anxiety and depression
- Increased suicidal behaviours
- Higher rates of autistic burnout
- Impacts the development of self-identity



Autistic Self-Advocacy

Protective factors:

- Viewing autism as a “difference” and not a “disability”
- Being accepting of an autism identity



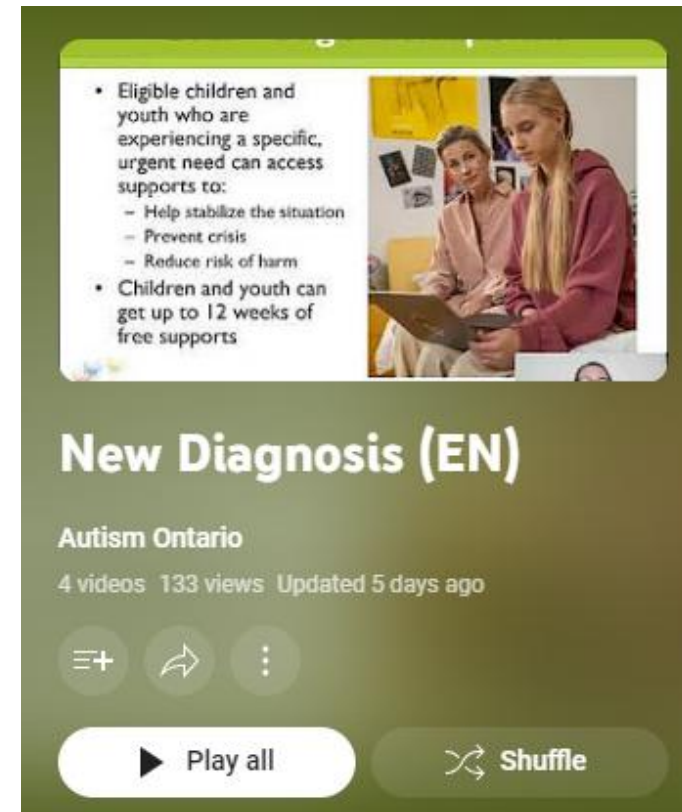
How to be an Autistic Ally

- Seek out knowledge created and shared by autistic people
- Put aside expectations or stereotypes
- Use empathy- listen to people's stories to better understand their experiences
- Ask questions and be curious
- Consider how your social norms/niceties may be uncomfortable for someone else

Resources for Childhood Diagnosis

For Children, Youth, and Teens:

- [Now What- New Diagnosis Video Series](#)
- [Mental Health and Sensory Challenges for Teens](#)



Resources for Adult Diagnosis

For Adults:

- [Transition to Adulthood Resources](#)
- [Mental Health Literacy Guide for Autism](#)
- [Autism Self-Advocacy Network- Welcome to the Autistic Community](#)

Autism Ontario Adult Supports:

Phone: 1-800-472-7789 x 230

Email: adultsupports@autismontario.com

Your Feedback Matters: Share Your Thoughts

- Title of presentation:
 - Exploring Autism
- Date of training:
 - 06/12/2025



https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CommunityTraining_Attendees24

Contact us:

Phone: 416-246-9592

Toll Free: 1-800-472-7789

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Autism Ontario Presents: Exploring Autism Resource List

Video Links (in order of appearance)

- Nishnawbe Aski Nation: [What is autism?](#)
- NowThis: [Human Neurodiversity Should Be Celebrated, Not Treated as a Disorder](#)
- Spectrum Autism Research News: [What to know about repetitive behaviors in autism](#)
- Autism Ontario: [The Sensory Experience – Gym Class](#)
 - View Entire Series: [The Sensory Experience](#)
 - View Mini-Series: [Exploring the Senses](#)
- AIDE Canada Peer Advice Video: [How can I encourage others to embrace their individuality?](#)
 - View the entire series of Peer Advice Videos: [Life and Social Skills Advice from Self-Advocates](#) and [Parenting Advice](#)
- AM-HeLP: [Understanding Autistic Mental Health](#)
- Neurodivergent Rebel: [Thoughts on being an Actual Ally to Autistic People](#)

Community Partners Resources

- [Allyship Tips for Neurotypical Friends of the Autistic Community](#)
- [Autism Parent Resource Kit](#)
- [Foundational Family Services \(FFS\)](#)
- [Mental Health and Sensory Challenges for Teens Toolkit](#)
- [OAP Provider List](#)
- [Sensory Processing Differences Toolkit](#)

Books

- [Neurodiversity: The birth of an idea.](#) Judy Singer.
- [Unmasking Autism: Discovering the New Faces of Neurodiversity.](#) Devon Price.

Research Links

- [Autistic People and Masking](#)
- [Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada: Autism: About, causes and co-occurring conditions](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada: Full Graphic](#)
- [Report of the National Autism Spectrum Disorder \(ASD\) Surveillance System](#)
- [Spark: Special Interests in Autism](#)
- [Understanding Autistic Burnout](#)

See slide deck for full list of research references.

If you have any additional questions or are seeking further information about the content of this presentation, please contact webinars@autismontario.com



Autism Ontario Programs and Services

Autism Ontario Resources

- [About Autism](#)
- [Caring for the Caregiver Guidebook](#)
- [Caregiver Supports](#)
- [Creative Arts Therapy Guide](#)
- [Learning Resources](#)
- [Let's Talk: Teen Mental Health](#)
- [Mental Health Resources](#)
- [School Supports and Resources](#)
- [Stimming Resource](#)
- [Ten Facts About Autism](#)
- [Toileting Guidebook](#)
- [What to Expect: Core Clinical Services](#)

[Click Here](#) to see **On-Demand** webinars on our **YouTube Channel**.

Autism Ontario Programs and Services

- [Adult Services](#)
- [Children & Youth](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Family Supports](#)
- [French Language Services](#)
- [March Break / Summer Funding](#)
- [Newsletter Sign- Up](#)
- [Webinars](#)

Positive Advocacy Resources

- [Celebrate the Spectrum](#)
- [Political Advocacy Toolkit](#)
- [School Advocacy Toolkit](#)
- [Special Education Advisory Committee \(SEAC\)](#)

New Diagnosis Resources

Accompanying resources for each video are available in the description through the links below.

- [Funding for Children Under 5](#)
- [Funding for Children Over 5](#)
- [Talking About Autism](#)
- [Funding Outside of the Ontario Autism Program \(OAP\) \(video\)](#)
- [Funding Outside of the Ontario Autism Program \(OAP\) \(resource list\)](#)

Community Partner Resources

- [Access OAP](#)
- [AccessOAP FAQ](#)
- [AIDE Canada Learning Resources](#)



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2025 AAC Barrier Removal Update – June 2025

1. Vulnerable Person's Registry; \$20,000

- 1.1. Annually allotment - paid in January

2. Curb cuts; \$10,000

- 2.1. Annual allotment
 - 2.1.1. Oakwood Drive curb cuts
 - 2.1.2. Looking for other suggestions

3. Accessible Pedestrian Signals; \$10,000

- 3.1. Annual allotment

4. Parks - Swings and Musical Instruments; \$10,000

- 4.1. Community Services Department is updating parks annually as budget allows

5. Outdoor seating/benches; \$10,000

- 5.1. Annual allotment

6. Captioning at Council Meetings; \$6000

- 6.1. Current technology is through Zoom and YouTube captions

7. Video Remote Interpreting; \$5000

- 7.1. Trial in progress at Civic Centre

8. John Rhodes Community Centre equipment; \$2000

- 8.1. Sledge repairs
- 8.2. New batteries for pool and sledge lifts identified

9. Contingency for other barrier removal; \$12,000

- 9.1. Looking for suggestions from the Committee

10. Barrier Removal Reserves - \$61,388.33



Site Plan Report – June 12, 2025

Committee members: Derrick Lavallee - Chairperson, Donald McConnell – Chairperson AAC, Carol Magnan, Wayne Scharfenberg

Diane Morrell – Staff Resource

Site Plans: Address, Description (if there is one)

Ignition Patio:

- A more solid barrier than ropes should be erected and also ensure that it is cane detectable for persons with vision loss. Suggested cane detectable barrier is: 'Cane detectable is a barrier that starts at ground level and has a raised edge or is more than 2" but less than 5" above ground level, i.e., a railing, to avoid cane entrapment.'

686 Black Road:

Proposed expansion to Place of Worship

- Strongly suggest that doors, walls, and window employ colour contrast for people with vision loss to be able to locate doors more easily.
- When installing exterior windows on the ground level, avoid designs in which glass extends to the ground. Such windows can be easily mistaken for doors by individuals with vision loss, making it difficult for them to identify building entrances. Apply siding or frosted glass in a contrasting color on the lower portion of the windows, to prevent it from appearing as transparent glass extending to the ground.

911 Great Northern Road:

Proposed office space in accessory to the existing Motor Vehicles Sales and Parts Dealer

- No comments from the Site Plan Sub-committee on this application.

104 Rankin Road:

Proposed conversion of existing school to residential units, along with the construction of three new buildings

- Ensure all Barrier Free parking spaces comply with the requirements specified in Section 5.5 of the [City of Sault Ste. Marie, Zoning By-law](#), including the use of HTA compliant signage
- Ensure outdoor amenity spaces comply with [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\) - Design of Public Spaces](#)
- Ensure the pedestrian link to Robin Street is accessible, ensuring consistent 1.5 m path width
- Ensure a safe and accessible pedestrian route connects the street and/or nearby bus stop to the building entrance, avoiding passage through parking areas. Where crossing a drive lane is unavoidable, clearly mark pedestrian crossings with pavement striping
- Ensure sufficient lighting along paths of travel and surrounding areas to help people feel safe while walking to the building and around the building
- Strongly suggest that doors, walls, and window employ colour contrast for people with vision loss to be able to locate doors more easily.
- Ensure zero step entrances and zero step emergency exits are included so everyone can safely and efficiently exit the building in an emergency
- It appears that the proposed renovated school has a path of travel from the rear of the building (South facing) to the drive lane. Please include pavement markings on the drive lane to alert drivers of the pedestrian crossing.
- Consider incorporating a Parabus loading zone beside the accessible parking with a raised curb. Parabus requires a curb to deploy the ramp onto. This reduces the ramp's angle, improving safety and accessibility during boarding and drop-off.
- Ensure 15% of every type of unit (1-bedroom, 2-bedroom, 3-bedroom etc.) includes barrier free design

- We include the 'Accessibility Suggestions for Residential Buildings' document, should you wish to incorporate accessibility in other areas of the buildings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol L. Magnan".

Carol Magnan
Chair, Site Plan Sub Committee