

STAGES OF RAISING A FAMILY WITH A CHILD ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM:



- 1) Decide to have a family (planned or not; partner or not; extended family support or not)
- 2) Birth of your child/children: Observation and Feedback from family, friends, community
- 3) The couple relationship (if you are partnered) shifts in the attention you had for each other and sometimes the INTENTION for your partnership shifts as well
- 4) Questions and Uncertainty (about your partnership, about parenting)
- 5) Evaluation and Diagnosis: Learning about ASD and Learning about your child
 - a. Pediatrician
 - b. Psychologist
 - c. Speech-Language Pathologist
 - d. Developmental Pediatrician
 - e. Occupational and/or Physical Therapist
 - f. Child Care Provider
 - g. Extended Family Members
- 6) Services and Programs: Which services and who is on your team?
- 7) Disclosure to child and siblings

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- 8) Helping child see and understand himself/herself as a whole person contributing to family life, school life, community life
- 9) Disclosure to extended family, and friends
- 10) Accepting help from professionals, family, friends, school, community
- 11) Educational Planning: an ongoing process
 - a. MCPS Autism programs and services/IEP
 - b. Autism Waiver
 - c. Private school
 - d. College
- 12) Growing towards independence: Learning self-advocacy in middle school, high school, college
- 13) Independence: Employment or Meaningful Work and Sense of Purpose