

Appendix 10: Choosing Treatment Options

Questions for Parents or Caregivers to Ask Regarding Specific Treatments and or Programs:

- ◆ What characteristic behaviors of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) am I trying to target?
 - Does the treatment that I am considering target these characteristic behaviors?
- ◆ Are there any harmful side effects associated with this treatment?
- ◆ What positive effects of treatment would I hope to see?
- ◆ What are the short-term and long-term effects?
- ◆ Can this treatment be integrated into my child's current program?
- ◆ What is the cost of treatment?
- ◆ Will my insurance company pay for the treatment?
- ◆ How much time does the treatment take?
 - Can I realistically devote the time required to the treatment?
- ◆ Has this treatment been validated scientifically?
- ◆ Have I researched the treatment?
- ◆ Was I able to interview other parents and professionals about the treatment?
 - If so, list stated pros, cons, and other areas of interest.
- ◆ Do proponents of the treatment claim that this procedure can help nearly everyone?
 - If so, this should be seen as a “red flag” to slow down and be more careful in consideration of this technique.
- ◆ What do my pediatrician and other professionals involved with my child think about the treatment's appropriateness?

Points for Parents or Caregivers to Ponder when Considering Participation in a New Intervention and or Program:

- ◆ Does the program or therapy and anticipated outcomes meet the unique strengths, challenges, or goals for my child?
 - What are the anticipated outcomes of this intervention?
 - What positive changes can I expect to see in my child's behavior, communication, eating, sleeping, learning, etc.?
 - Do these outcomes address what I see as the unique strengths, challenges or goals for my child?
 - Do these outcomes match my expectation or goals for my child?
 - Are there any potentially negative outcomes of the intervention?
- ◆ How will these goals or outcomes be evaluated?
 - How will I know if my child is making progress toward desired outcomes?
 - What method will be used to evaluate child progress?
 - How often will we evaluate child progress?
 - Who will conduct the evaluation?
 - How long will we continue until a change can be made in the intervention?
- ◆ What are the potential risks?
 - Will my child face an immediate risk?
 - Are there any risks for other family members?
 - Are there any activities, foods, etc. that will be restricted?
- ◆ What is the back-up plan if we choose to discontinue this intervention?
 - Is there any risk of discontinuing the intervention?
 - What kind of early intervention services will my child receive if we decide to stop the intervention?
- ◆ Is there a good fit between the intervention and our family life?
 - Can we do what will be asked of us?
- ◆ Have I received information about this from a variety of sources?
- ◆ Is this intervention published in peer-reviewed journals?
- ◆ Are there alternatives that are: less restrictive? Better researched?
- ◆ How will these new interventions be combined with strategies and therapies that we are already using with my child?