



VISTA academy

VISIONARY **I**NTervention **S**TRATEGIES
FOR **T**EACHING CHILDREN WITH **A**UTISM AND SPECIAL NEEDS

RESOURCE PACKAGE

Networks | Funding | Education | Therapy

www.VistaAcademy.org | Office@VistaAcademy.org | 250-300-0763

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>WELCOME</u>	4
<u>SUPPORT NETWORKS</u>	5
★OVERVIEW	5
★AIDE CANADA	5
★AUTISM & INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (AID)	5
★AUTISM BC	5
★AUTISM INFORMATION SERVICES BRITISH COLUMBIA (AIS BC)	5
★AUTISM OKANAGAN	5
★AUTISM SUPPORT NETWORK BC	5
★NORTH OKANAGAN YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES SOCIETY	6
★PACIFIC AUTISM FAMILY NETWORK	6
★SPECIAL OLYMPICS KELOWNA	6
<u>FUNDING SOURCES</u>	7
★AUTISM CANADA	7
★ COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAP)	7
★ CANADIAN TIRE JUMPSTART	7
★ CKNW KID'S FUND	7
★ COPS FOR KIDS	7
★ JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE FUNDING	7
★KIDSPORT CANADA	7
★VARIETY CHILDREN'S CHARITY OF BC	7
<u>EDUCATION SOURCES</u>	8
★ABA VISUALIZED	8
★AUTISM QUICK START GUIDE AGES 0-5	8
★AUTISM QUICK START GUIDE AGES 6-12	8
★AUTISM QUICK START GUIDE AGES 13-18	8
★AUTISM PARENT HANDBOOK (BC MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT)	8
★CRISIS PREVENTION INSTITUTE	8
★UNFURLING LITTLES	8
★NEUROWILD	8
★LEARNPLAYTHRIVE	9
<u>THERAPY SOURCES</u>	10
★MERIDIAN REHABILITATION	10
★THERAPY 4 KIDS OKANAGAN	10
★KELOWNA SMILE THERAPY FOR KIDS	10
★KIDS CREATIVE THERAPY	10

★ONE BITE AT A TIME	10
★SHINE THERAPY SERVICES	10
★HONEYBEE PEDIATRIC THERAPY	10
★REACH THE PEAK	10
★ARC PROGRAMS	11
★CENTRAL OKANAGAN FAMILY CONNECTION CENTRE (FCC)	11
★OKANAGAN CENTRE FOR AUTISM INTERVENTION (OCAI)	11
★DANIELLE WILLHOEFT	11
★MARIZA MICALLEF	11
★SHANNON HAYNES	11

CONTACT INFORMATION

Vista Academy is a registered charity.

Address	201-2333 Hunter Rd, Kelowna, BC, V1X 7C5	Website	www.vistaacademy.org
Phone	(250) 300-0763	Non-Profit Number	757002696 RR 0001
Email	Office@VistaAcademy.org	Society Number	S0065862

WELCOME

★ WELCOME

Welcome to the Vista Academy Resource Booklet!

At Vista Academy, we understand that searching for local support services, networks, resources, and funding opportunities can feel overwhelming—especially when you're already managing so much. Whether you're just starting out or looking to expand the support available to your learner, knowing where to begin can be the hardest part.

That's why we've created this resource booklet: a curated collection of helpful links and information designed to make your journey a little easier. Inside, you'll find access to a range of services including educational support, mental health resources, community networks, funding options, and more.

Each section is clearly labeled and clickable, so you can explore at your own pace and find what fits best for you and your family. We hope this booklet serves as a helpful guide as you navigate the path toward the best care and support for your learner.

Click any of the links to begin exploring!

SUPPORT NETWORKS

★ OVERVIEW

Finding the right support can make all the difference in your family's journey, and connecting with trusted organizations is a great place to start. This section highlights a range of networks that offer guidance, community programs, and educational resources to help you feel supported, informed, and less alone as you navigate what's best for your learner.

★ AIDE CANADA

AIDE Canada provides free, evidence-informed resources and tools for individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities, as well as their families and caregivers. Their interactive programs map and learning hub make it easy to find support services across Canada.

★ AUTISM & INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (AID)

The AID Search by Autism Community Training is an online portal designed to help families and practitioners easily find local services and resources for individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities. It offers a comprehensive, user-friendly database to support informed decision-making and access to care.

★ AUTISM BC

Autism BC is a nonprofit organization that provides education, resources, and community events to support individuals with autism and their families. They focus on creating connections and offering practical tools to help improve quality of life across all stages of the autism journey.

★ AUTISM INFORMATION SERVICES BRITISH COLUMBIA (AIS BC)

AIS BC offers comprehensive information and support related to autism, including guidance on diagnosis, funding, and available community resources. Their goal is to help families and individuals access the services they need to thrive within their communities.

★ AUTISM OKANAGAN

Autism Okanagan is a community-focused organization that provides local programs, events, and support for individuals with autism and their families. They work to foster connection, awareness, and inclusion throughout the Okanagan region.

★ AUTISM SUPPORT NETWORK BC

Autism Support Network BC offers a wide range of resources, events, therapy options, and educational opportunities for individuals with autism and their families. They focus on building connections and providing support to help families navigate the autism journey with confidence.

SUPPORT NETWORKS CONT.

★ NORTH OKANAGAN YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES SOCIETY

North Okanagan Youth and Family Services Society provides comprehensive support services for youth and families, including Indigenous programs, school outreach, home support, and group activities. Their goal is to strengthen families and promote well-being within the community through accessible, inclusive care.

★ PACIFIC AUTISM FAMILY NETWORK

Pacific Autism Family Network offers a wide range of resources, educational programs, and treatment services for individuals with autism and their families. Their comprehensive approach aims to support lifelong learning, development, and well-being within a welcoming community environment.

★ SPECIAL OLYMPICS KELOWNA

Special Olympics Kelowna provides year-round sports training and athletic competition for individuals with intellectual disabilities, promoting physical fitness, self-esteem, and social inclusion. They offer a wide range of programs and events tailored to all ability levels, fostering personal growth and community engagement through sport.

FUNDING SOURCES

★ AUTISM CANADA COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAP)

Autism Canada's Community Assistance Program provides financial support and resources to autistic individuals and their families who are facing urgent or unexpected needs. The program aims to help improve quality of life by assisting with costs related to therapy, equipment, education, and basic living expenses.

★ CANADIAN TIRE JUMPSTART

Canadian Tire Jumpstart provides financial assistance to help children from families facing financial barriers participate in sports and physical activities. Their support covers registration fees, equipment, and transportation costs to ensure every child has the opportunity to stay active and engaged.

★ CKNW KID'S FUND

The CKNW Kids' Fund provides individual family funding to help cover the costs of essential services and support for children with special needs. This assistance aims to reduce financial stress and ensure families can access therapies, equipment, and programs that improve their child's quality of life.

★ COPS FOR KIDS

Cops for Kids provides individual family funding to support children facing financial barriers, helping them access essential programs, therapies, and equipment. Their goal is to ensure every child has the opportunity to participate fully and improve their well-being.

★ JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE FUNDING

Jordan's Principle provides funding to support the health, social, and education needs of First Nations children, ensuring they receive timely and equitable access to essential services. This initiative helps remove barriers so that children can access the care and support they need to thrive, regardless of jurisdictional complexities.

★ KIDSPORT CANADA

KidSport Canada provides financial assistance to help children from low-income families participate in organized sports and physical activities. Their funding covers registration fees and equipment costs, aiming to remove financial barriers and promote healthy, active lifestyles for all kids.

★ VARIETY CHILDREN'S CHARITY OF BC

Variety Children's Charity of BC offers financial assistance to families for a wide range of needs, including assessments, therapies, equipment, tuition, tutoring, and more. Their support helps ensure children with special needs have access to the services and resources necessary for their growth and development.

EDUCATION SOURCES

★ ABA VISUALIZED

ABA Visualized provides a variety of visual resources, training materials, books, and tools designed to support Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) learning and practice. These resources help families, educators, and therapists better understand and apply ABA strategies to support individuals with autism.

★ AUTISM QUICK START GUIDE (0-5)

The Autism Quick Start Guides from the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development provide age-specific information and practical steps for families of children with autism. These guides help families understand the diagnostic process, access supports, and plan for their child's unique developmental needs at each stage.

★ AUTISM QUICK START GUIDE (6-12)

The Autism Quick Start Guides from the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development provide age-specific information and practical steps for families of children with autism. These guides help families understand the diagnostic process, access supports, and plan for their child's unique developmental needs at each stage.

★ AUTISM QUICK START GUIDE (13-18)

The Autism Quick Start Guides from the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development provide age-specific information and practical steps for families of children with autism. These guides help families understand the diagnostic process, access supports, and plan for their child's unique developmental needs at each stage.

★ AUTISM PARENT HANDBOOK

The Autism Parent Handbook, provided by the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development, is a comprehensive resource designed to guide families through the journey of supporting a child with autism. It offers practical information on diagnosis, available services, therapies, and strategies to help parents advocate for their child's needs.

★ CRISIS PREVENTION INSTITUTE

The Crisis Prevention Institute offers practical de-escalation tips designed to help caregivers, educators, and professionals safely manage challenging behaviours. These strategies focus on preventing crises by promoting calm communication and understanding, creating a safer environment for everyone involved.

★ UNFURLING LITTLES

Unfurling Littles provides free resources designed to support parents and caregivers of young children. Their materials offer practical guidance, activities, and tools to help nurture development and well-being in early childhood.

★ NEUROWILD

Neurowild is a colorful, neuro-affirming project led by Em Hammond—an autistic, ADHD-diagnosed Speech Pathologist, illustrator, and mother of three neurodivergent children—that offers charming, accessible illustrated resources to help parents, educators, and clinicians better understand and support neurodivergent kids.

★ LEARNPLAYTHRIVE

Learn Play Thrive provides resources and continuing education for professionals working with Autistic individuals. Their mission is to promote strengths-based, ethical, and neurodiversity-affirming practices, helping OTs, SLPs, social workers, psychologists, and other practitioners better support the Autistic community.

THERAPY SOURCES

★ MERIDIAN REHABILITATION

Meridian Rehabilitation offers a range of services, including occupational therapy, speech therapy, kinesiology, and rehabilitation to support individuals of all ages. Their team works collaboratively to help clients improve communication, mobility, and daily living skills for greater independence and quality of life.

★ THERAPY 4 KIDS OKANAGAN

Therapy 4 Kids Okanagan provides comprehensive services, including assessments, occupational therapy, kinesiology, and speech therapy for children. With both in-person and online options available, they offer flexible, family-centred support to help children reach their developmental goals.

★ KELOWNA SMILE THERAPY FOR KIDS

Kelowna Smile Therapy for Kids offers a range of pediatric services including physical therapy, occupational therapy, aquatic therapy, and developmental assessments. Their team provides personalized, play-based support to help children build strength, confidence, and essential life skills.

★ KIDS CREATIVE THERAPY

Kids Creative Therapy offers occupational therapy services tailored to support children's development and daily functioning. With both in-person and online options, they provide flexible, creative, and family-focused care to meet each child's unique needs.

★ ONE BITE AT A TIME

One Bite at a Time offers specialized behavioural therapy for children, with a focus on feeding disorders and mealtime challenges. Their approach supports families in building positive, stress-free eating habits through evidence-based strategies tailored to each child's needs.

★ SHINE THERAPY SERVICES

Shine Therapy Services provides pediatric physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and play-based interventions to support children's physical and developmental needs. Their team focuses on creating fun, engaging therapy experiences that help children build skills and confidence in everyday activities.

★ HONEYBEE PEDIATRIC THERAPY

Honeybee Pediatric Therapy provides a neurodiversity-affirming approach to speech-language pathology and occupational therapy. Their services celebrate each child's unique strengths while supporting communication, sensory, and daily living skills in a respectful, inclusive, and empowering environment.

★ REACH THE PEAK

Reach the Peak provides personalized, evidence-based behaviour intervention for neurodiverse children, focusing on communication, social, and daily-living skills through play-based ABA. Services are flexible and offered in-home, in-centre, or in daycare by skilled professionals.

★ ARC PROGRAMS

ARC Programs in Kelowna provides therapeutic, developmental, and mental health support for children, youth, families, and adults. Services include school-based programs, family support, and community-based interventions to build resilience and connection.

★ CENTRAL OKANAGAN FAMILY CONNECTION CENTRE (FCC)

The Central Okanagan Family Connection Centre (FCC) provides individualized and group-based support for children and youth (0–18) with developmental needs, neurodiversity, or disabilities—no diagnosis required. Services include therapy, developmental monitoring, parenting support, and community connections to help families thrive and build independence.

★ OKANAGAN CENTRE FOR AUTISM INTERVENTION (OCAI)

The Okanagan Centre for Autism Intervention (OCAI) provides individualized Early Intensive Behaviour Intervention (EIBI) for children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the Kelowna area. Their services include assessments, development of personalized programs, and collaboration with other professionals, all grounded in evidence-based practices like Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) .

★ DANIELLE WILLHOEFT

Danielle brings over a decade of experience supporting children, youth, and adults in home, centre, and community settings. With degrees from UBC and the Florida Institute of Technology, she blends her expertise in behaviour analysis with a trauma-informed, assent-based approach. Her work focuses on teaching skills that are accessible, inclusive, and truly meaningful to each learner and their family. Danielle is also a trained sexuality and health educator who values open communication and whole-person well-being.

★ MARIZA MICALLEF

Mariza has spent over five years supporting neurodivergent learners, with three and a half of those years at Vista Academy. She is currently completing her Master's in Professional Education with a specialization in Applied Behaviour Analysis and is on her way to becoming a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA). Her approach is warm, collaborative, and empowering. Mariza focuses on helping learners develop independence, self-advocacy, and meaningful life skills while ensuring each child feels safe, respected, and understood. In addition to her work at Vista Academy, she provides in-home behaviour services and parent coaching, partnering with families to build practical strategies that support growth and success across home, school, and community settings.

★ SHANNON HAYNES, M.ADS, BCBA

Shannon is a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst and holds a Master of Applied Disability Studies (Applied Behaviour Analysis Specialization) from Brock University. She brings over a decade of experience working across private homes and centres, school districts, and community and public sector services. Her approach to behaviour support and intervention is family and client-centred, compassionate, and neurodiversity-affirming. Her services often focus on autonomy, self-advocacy, and empowerment of children and their families. She is guided by values of kindness, patience, and empathy; and strives to create a learning environment that allows every child to shine in who they are, learn, and grow to meet goals that they value. She provides in-person and virtual services in home and community settings via direct intervention services, caregiver coaching, community consultation, and staff supervision.