

UBC Anxiety Stress and Autism Program

A Social Wellbeing Resource Guide for Autistic Youth and their Caregivers



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Using This Resource Guide

This guide is meant to help autistic youth (aged 13+) and their caregivers to access resources to foster positive and healthy social wellbeing and social relationships. Although the focus of this guide is primarily about social wellbeing, there are also resources recommended that may also be helpful for other behavioural, emotional, social, and environmental concerns.

Please note that while most of the resources listed here are from organizations we collaborate with, our lab cannot guarantee the quality or effectiveness of these programs. We encourage you to conduct your own research and reach out directly to the organizations for further information.

What is Social Well-being?

The ability to build and maintain meaningful, authentic relationships with others is considered to be social wellbeing. Positive social wellbeing is vital to healthy functioning and promotes overall positive wellbeing such as improved mental health, improved emotional regulation, improved self-esteem/empathy and improved immune system functioning (1). Furthermore, positive social wellbeing increases one's overall resilience through a sense of belonging and value (1, 2). Relationships with family members, friends, community members and peers all encompass social relationships which improve our social wellbeing.

Resource Guides and Programs: Social Well-being

Below are several resources and programs that autistic youth and their family may find useful in fostering interpersonal relationships. Note that some of the hyperlinks in this resources package may lead to pages where no events are currently listed. This is because the registration dates for those events have passed. We have included these links so that you are aware of these programs and can check the registration dates when they are updated. Please revisit these links periodically to stay informed about upcoming events.

Programs and Social Groups

[Square Peg Society](#). A non-profit organization dedicated to improving and supporting the wellbeing of adults on the spectrum. They host community-building events for autistic adults such as movie nights, virtual groups, online drop-in relationship Q&A sessions guided by certified sexual health educators, and more!

[Getting Together on the Spectrum](#). A virtual group designed to provide autistic adults with the opportunity to meet other individuals on the spectrum in an environment that is understanding and non-judgemental. Hosted by AutismBC.

[Autistic Dating Peer Group](#). A 6-week online discussion-based program that enables autistic adults to share their relationship struggles and successes and support each other. Hosted by Canucks Autism Network.

[Autistic Youth and Wellbeing](#). A program offering an opportunity for autistic youth to come together and foster well-being through discussion and learning. Topics discussed include friendships, relationships, self-advocacy, and boundaries. Hosted by Canucks Autism Network.

[Neurodivergent Living Network](#). A virtual group aimed to build a community of support for the daily living activities of all types of neurodiverse and neurodivergent families. Open for autistic adults, parents and partners of autistic individuals, Hosted by AutismBC.

[Dungeons and Dragons - Virtual](#). A virtual D&D program for having fun, building social connections, and developing communication, collaboration, frustration tolerance, and emotional resilience. Hosted by Canucks Autism Network.

[**Dungeons and Dragons – In-Person.**](#) An-person D&D program for having fun, building social connections, and developing communication, collaboration, frustration tolerance, and emotional resilience. Hosted by Canucks Autism Network.

[**Women’s Peer Group.**](#) A virtual peer group for autistic women, gender non-conforming individuals, and gender-diverse adults in BC. This group provides a natural space for individuals with similar lived experiences to come together and build meaningful connections. Hosted by Canucks Autism Network.

[**Birding with Me.**](#) A beginners bird watching walk through Stanley Park led by an Autistic facilitator. This program is part of the Birding With Me series offered through Stanley Park Ecology Society. Hosted by Canucks Autism Network.

[**Project Love Run.**](#) Project Love Run is a women's only running group for autistic women to run and share stories about how society and its systems can complicate the relationship with their bodies and make running feel inaccessible. Hosted by Canucks Autism Network.

[**Walking Club.**](#) A walking club to meet peers and staff from Canucks Autism Network to go on a stroll in the park and spend some time outdoors. Hosted by Canucks Autism Network.

[**The Autism Support Network of British Columbia.**](#) Offers various resources including social skills workshops and events designed to foster social interaction and support for autistic adults and their families

[**Pay What You Can Peer Support – Autism Peer Support Group.**](#) An online peer support group that span a broad variety of topics, from specific diagnoses to more general issues people often struggle with. Hosted by PWYCPS.

[**Autism Canada ASD Central.**](#) A facebook group for autistic individuals to share their experiences, ask questions and connect with one another with each other, share their experiences and clear doubts.

[**B.C. Autism Advocacy.**](#) Grassroots advocacy group on facebook consisted of passionate parents representing families, parents, caregivers and service providers of children on the spectrum.

[**Connections Valiant**](#) A game night event with peers that includes video games, card tricks and pizza. Hosted by Pacific Autism Network and Neuro Valiant/ Connections Valiants.

Resource Guides

[**AIDE Canada: Healthy Relationships Toolkit.**](#) A collection of information related to the creation and maintenance of healthy relationships in a neurodiverse world.

[**Enhancing Effective Sexual Health Promotion for Autistic and Disabled Youth.**](#) From Health Canada. SIECCAN offers two toolkits geared towards both service providers of and youth on the spectrum, providing comprehensive sexual health services and education.

[**Healthy Relationships, Sexuality and Autism**](#) (HRSA) is a webinar educational series supporting teens and adults with autism through introducing concepts of sexuality and social skills through a sex-positive lens.