

# First 30 Days Checklist

Your step-by-step guide after an autism diagnosis

From The Autism Parent Roadmap • [autica.app](https://autica.app)

Print this checklist and work through it at your own pace. There's no prize for speed.

## WEEK 1: Process and Gather

- Let yourself feel whatever you're feeling
  - Grief, relief, fear, hope — all valid
- Get the written evaluation report
  - Call the diagnosing provider if you haven't received it
- Tell your partner/co-parent (if applicable)
  - Get on the same page before making decisions
- Hold off on telling everyone else
  - You don't owe anyone an explanation until you're ready

## WEEK 2: Learn the Landscape

- Learn the basics of ABA, Speech, and OT
  - Visit: [autism.org/advice-for-parents](https://autism.org/advice-for-parents)
- Call your insurance company
  - Ask: "What autism therapies are covered? Pre-authorization needed?"
- Research early intervention (if child is under 3)
  - Visit: [cdc.gov/autism](https://cdc.gov/autism) or [autismspeaks.org/early-access-care](https://autismspeaks.org/early-access-care)
- Find 1-2 parent communities
  - [MyAutismTeam.com](https://MyAutismTeam.com), [AANE.org](https://AANE.org), or Autica app

## WEEK 3: Start Building Your Team

- Get referrals for therapy evaluations
  - Ask pediatrician or diagnosing provider
- Call 2-3 ABA, speech, or OT providers
  - Ask about waitlists — they're long, call early
- Schedule follow-up with diagnosing provider

- Request school evaluation (if age 3+)

## WEEK 4: Set Up for the Long Game

- Create a folder system (physical or digital)
  - You'll accumulate a LOT of paperwork
- Start a "wins" journal
  - You'll need this on hard days
- Schedule something for yourself
  - Even 30 minutes. You matter too.
- Take a breath
  - You've done a lot. It's okay to pause.

### What Can Wait (Months 2-3)

- Telling extended family — do it when you're ready
- Researching every therapy — start with the big 3
- Diet, supplements, biomedical interventions — basics first
- Big life decisions — don't restructure everything in month one
- Comparing your child to others — every path is different

### Common Mistakes to Avoid

- ✗ Going to 40 hours of therapy immediately — start slow
- ✗ Googling at 2am — step away, join a real community
- ✗ Trying to "fix" everything at once — one priority at a time
- ✗ Not asking for help — let people bring dinner, say yes to help
- ✗ Forgetting your child is still your child — they need your presence

### Key Resources

**IDEA (Your Rights):** [sites.ed.gov/idea](https://sites.ed.gov/idea)

**Early Intervention:** [cdc.gov/autism/treatment/accessing-services.html](https://cdc.gov/autism/treatment/accessing-services.html)

**State Insurance Laws:** [ncsl.org/health/autism-and-insurance-coverage-state-laws](https://ncsl.org/health/autism-and-insurance-coverage-state-laws)

**Parent Communities:** [MyAutismTeam.com](https://MyAutismTeam.com) • [AANE.org](https://AANE.org) • [Autica app](https://autica.app)

**Remember: This is a marathon, not a sprint.**

Your job is to show up, learn as you go, and love your kid fiercely.

You're already doing that.