The following is a brief checklist of things to help you get started. This checklist is meant to serve as a guide only and is not exhaustive of all services and supports you should explore for your child or family member. For the supporting information and details, visit www.pathfindersforautism.org/autism-by-age

HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE, AND RELATED THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS
___ Understand the definitions for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), and why a person should be diagnosed.
___ Learn about treatment options and therapies
___ Sign up for the Autism Waiver
___ Apply to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
___ Investigate Behavior Supports if you need them
___ Schedule regular re-evaluations and medical follow-up to measure progress and identify challenges
___ Develop a system to organize your paperwork
___ Develop a good group of providers and supports that will continue to work with your family on a long term basis
___ Learn more about Medical Assistance
___ Explore dental resources
___ Explore miscellaneous health and medical resources
___ Explore funding options for Medical Care

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY
___ Learn all you can about Assistive Technology services available
___ Explore financial assistance for Assistive Technology

EDUCATION
___ Learn all you can about educational options that are available (Diploma vs Certificate of Completion)
___ Learn about the special education process and IEPs
___ Learn about 504 Plans
___ Determine with your IEP team which state assessment tests are most appropriate for your child
___ Contact your Parents’ Place of Maryland, Partners for Success Family Center, or the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for assistance with school issues, IEP development, school resources
___ Prepare for the transition from elementary to middle school
___ Understand your student's placement options
___ Address any instances of bullying immediately
___ Understand matters of discipline including suspension and expulsion
___ Get involved with your local Special Education Citizen’s Advisory Committee (SECAC) or the Maryland Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)
___ Explore summer time options
___ Develop a system to organize education records
___ Contact your local Child Find office
___ Explore homeschooling as an educational option
___ Explore additional educational resources
___ Explore additional special education legal resources as needed
___ State resources for assistance with school issues, IEP development, school resources

SOCIAL AND RELATIONSHIPS
___ Help your child learn about appropriate social skills

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___ Teach your child about his/her body and sexuality as age appropriate
___ Develop the recreational and leisure activities that your child enjoys

SAFETY
___ Teach your child about stranger danger
___ Discuss what is appropriate talk and touch
___ Address wandering and elopement
___ Explore additional safety resources

FUNDING FOR SERVICES AND LEGAL ISSUES
___ Review the “Financial Things Every Parent of a Child with Autism Needs to Know”
___ Sign up for the Autism Waiver
___ Determine if your child is eligible for Social Security Benefits
___ Apply to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
___ Investigate Low Intensity Support Services (LISS)
___ Learn about life planning tools and options
___ Develop a system to organize financial and legal records

SUPPORT: SUPPORT GROUPS AND RESPITE
___ Network with others at a support group
___ Identify your support system
___ Take care of yourself, your spouse, your other children
___ Investigate respite care options
___ Involve your other children

ADVOCACY AND SELF-ADVOCACY
___ Learn how to be an advocate for your child
___ Get involved with your local Special Education Citizen’s Advisory Committee (SECAC) or the Maryland Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)
___ Help your child learn self-advocacy skills