

# Considerations when Looking for Services for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Utah Autism Initiative Committee<sup>1</sup>



Though there is no single known cause or cure, autism is treatable. Studies show that early and accurate diagnosis and intervention can lead to significantly improved outcomes. With effective services and supports, people with ASD can live full, healthy and meaningful lives.



There is a range of traditional approaches as well as alternative approaches to diagnose, treat and manage autism with varying degrees of research and success. Traditional medicine and mental health generally rely upon the scientific study of ways to diagnose or treat ASD. Alternative diagnostic methods and treatments may not have been studied with the same rigor.



When selecting an evaluation or treatment for a child or loved one, bear in mind that methods to diagnose ASD, treatments, products and services vary in their outcomes. When considering them, ask the following questions and insist on answers:



- Is there strong evidence that it is effective?
- Is it safe? What are the possible side effects?
- Is the information reported objective, outcome based rather than testimonials?

Be cautious if:

- There are claims being made that it will produce quick results
- High pressure tactics are being used
- Payment is required before services are delivered



Consult with your medical provider, mental health professional, and education team. They can help in making decisions about diagnostic methods, therapies and products or services. They can:

- Identify quality research
- Help you to be aware of and recognize potential side effects
- Help you monitor responses to treatments



The Autism Council of Utah (ACU) is an independent council with members from the Utah Autism Initiative (UAI), state agencies, organizations supporting autism, and parents of individuals with autism. The ACU web site will help anyone interested in ASD to obtain the information to assist in careful evaluation of purchasing decisions and resource costs. [www.autismcouncilofutah.org](http://www.autismcouncilofutah.org). Links to state agencies can also be found on the web site.



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<sup>1</sup> *The Utah Autism Initiative committee (UAI) is a state inter-agency advisory panel of experts in the field of ASD-related research and treatment. UAI is formed solely to benefit the citizens of Utah affected by or having an interest in ASD. The UAI maintains no commercial interests whatsoever in any party outside the membership of the UAI.*