

Autism Connect Helpline: Frequently Asked Questions

Question: **What is Autism Connect?**

Answer: Autism Connect is a free national autism helpline that provides information, support and advice on referrals to help you identify the relevant supports you need. For example, Tim was feeling overwhelmed when he called in after his son was newly diagnosed. The Autism Connect advisor helped support Tim make a clear plan of what to do next. He received positive information around autistic identity, services and peer support connections available to support him and his son. He finished the call feeling relieved and able to take the next steps.

Question: **Who is this service for?**

Answer: This service is available to anyone seeking support related to autism. The service was created for autistic people seeking guidance around diagnosis and services, their families or friends, and anyone supporting an autistic adult or child in education, health settings or workplaces.

Question: **How do I access / use the service?**

Answer: Autism Connect advisors can be reached via:
Phone: 1300 308 699
Email: info@autismconnect.org.au
or Webchat: www.amaze.org.au/autismconnect
and from 8am to 7pm (AEST), Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

Question: **Can Autism Connect provide me with counselling if I need it?**

Answer: No. While our Advisors can provide some emotional support, Autism Connect is not a counselling service and it does not provide healthcare referrals. But we can give you information about how to access these services. If you are seeking counselling support, the Autism Connect advisors will be able to guide you on how to seek counselling or therapies that may work best for you.

Question: **Are my conversations with Autism Connect advisors confidential?**

Answer: Yes. All conversations between you and Autism Connect advisors are confidential. We record and keep this confidential information for when you might call back in the future. This is so that you don't have to repeat some basic information to us. We do not share personal data with any third parties without your express consent. Our privacy policy and statement can be viewed on our website at www.amaze.org.au

Question: **If I have spoken to an Autism Connect advisor I am comfortable with, can I call back to speak to the same person?**

Answer: We have a team of Advisors with a broad range of backgrounds, specialties and lived experience. They work together to provide you with evidence based and the latest information. This means anyone you speak to will be there to help you. You may or may not reach a person you have spoken to before, or they may not be available for a call.

Question: **I thought Amaze already has a helpline. How is this different?**

Answer: Amaze's helpline was previously known as the Autism Advisor service. It was only available in Victoria. Due to the positive impact of this service, it has now been funded to be Australia wide and renamed Autism Connect.

Question: **My state already has an autism helpline. Why should I contact the Autism Connect helpline?**

Answer: Autism Connect is both a national and local information helpline. Autism Connect advisors provide information and advice that is independent, rather than connected to a particular service or provider who may refer you to their own services. The advisors also have access to resources that provide the latest information about autism in Australia and around the world.

Question: **How do I find out if Autism Connect is available in my state?**

Answer: Autism Connect currently has Advisors located in Victoria, the ACT and Tasmania. You can still call us on 1300 308 699 from any state for general or nationally based advice. For example, NDIS information. Autism Connect will have local Advisors and more local knowledge in all states by June 2021. Visit the Autism Connect webpage to find out when it's ready to officially launch in your state.



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