

Acknowledgement



This statement is to acknowledge that ***An Early Start for your Child with Autism*** was created in 2012, and there has been changes in the autistic community since the publication. A new version of the ESDM manual was published in 2025. In the second edition, the authors acknowledged moving towards a neuro-affirming approach using language use and delivery of the model.

The book does provide evidence-based practices and practical strategies for parents, however the language use in the book is outdated to the language used commonly now.

- It is common that child with autism, autism, autistic and autistic child are used interchangeably within the community. There is ongoing conversation within the autism community around preferences for identity-first (i.e., autistic) vs. person-first (i.e., child with autism) language use.
- The book uses a medical model/perspective of autism; you may notice its use of deficit language (i.e., talking about autism related concerns/problems). The autistic community practices a positive language and acceptance of autism, over a perspective of changing the individual and viewing autism as concerns.
- 'Problematic behaviour' is often used in the book. Autism Nova Scotia tends to use the wording 'interfering behaviours', and always views these behaviours as a form of communication that is purposeful and meaningful to the individual.
- Autism Nova Scotia continues to focus on a strength-based approach and person directed lens. For example, the book tends to say, 'Why is it a problem', whereas ANS prefers to focus on what the child can do (i.e., their strengths) and what we can do to support them.
- 'Red flags', as used in the book, is no longer common to indicate suspected autism characteristics.
- Symptoms, treatment, and similar words are slowly being faded. As the community has shared autism is not something to be treated or a disease with symptoms.
 - Words such as support, intervention and skills are commonly used instead.

As the language and understanding of autism and interfering behaviours evolve, we will update materials and our practice. It is our hope that the authors will issue a new version of the caregiver book in the coming years to reflect these changes in the manual and autistic community.

Questions?

For general information about Autism Nova Scotia and the QuickStart NS program, please visit:

autismnovascotia.ca/programs/quickstart-nova-scotia-new or contact us at: quickstart@autismns.ca



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