

Phoenix Children's Autism Evaluation Process - FAQs

What is the autism diagnostic evaluation process?

Phoenix Children's has developed a new process to better serve our patients and families in need of autism diagnostic evaluation. The new process will allow our Developmental Pediatrics and Psychology divisions to evaluate the needs of children and families who are interested in accessing autism diagnostic evaluation. Our team will inform families of the best next steps at Phoenix Children's or provide a recommendation to a community resource.

Why is this new process being implemented?

Like many health systems in the nation, Phoenix Children's is seeing an increase in the number of families who are interested in receiving an autism diagnostic evaluation for their child. We want families to receive the care they need for their children as early as possible, whether that is through Phoenix Children's or external community providers and resources.

When is the new process being implemented?

The new Phoenix Children's Autism Diagnostic Evaluation Request Process is being rolled out August 9, 2023. For families with existing requests for autism evaluation, the process will begin with them receiving a survey that will ask about their child's current need for autism diagnostic evaluation.

How will families be notified of this new process?

Families with children who have an existing request for service will be sent a survey via text message or email to help our providers assess each child's current need for services. Families may also be asked to complete a second survey to further identify each child's current needs and eligibility criteria. It is important that the surveys be completed by the due date provided. The results of the surveys will allow Phoenix Children's team to inform the family of the best next steps.

What will be included in the surveys to families with an existing request?

Both surveys are screening tools for autism diagnostic evaluation at Phoenix Children's. The first survey will ask about the child's current need for services and if they have been previously evaluated for autism. The second survey will include questions about the child's age, health and behaviors.

What can families with existing requests expect after they complete the survey?

Phoenix Children's team will follow up with each patient's family who completes the surveys. After our clinical team reviews the responses in the completed surveys, families will either be contacted with next steps or receive a recommendation for services at a community agency or pediatrician.

How will Phoenix Children's handle new requests for autism evaluation?

Patient families should work with their primary care provider or pediatrician if a child shows signs of autism. The provider can then submit a request for evaluation through Phoenix Children's On-Demand platform to begin the process of determining eligibility for autism services.

At Phoenix Children's, we are focusing on early identification of autism and connection to therapies. We will be prioritizing children 6 years old and younger. To help efficiently serve families, our developmental pediatricians will be completing autism evaluations for children 3 years old and younger while our psychologists will be completing autism evaluations for children 4 through 6 years old who have co-occurring complex medical needs and genetic conditions.

If a child does not meet the above-mentioned criteria, what will the process be?

We recognize that there are children who are 4 through 6 years old without complex medical needs or genetic differences and older children who also require autism evaluations. If needed, we can provide families with a list of community resources.

How can I learn more about this new autism evaluation process?

Visit the Phoenix Children's [website](#) for additional information and a list of community resources.

If you have other questions that have not been addressed by this FAQ sheet, please contact the Developmental Pediatrics division for children 0 through 3 years old at 602-933-2327 and for children 4 through 6 years old, please contact the Psychology division at 602-933-0414.