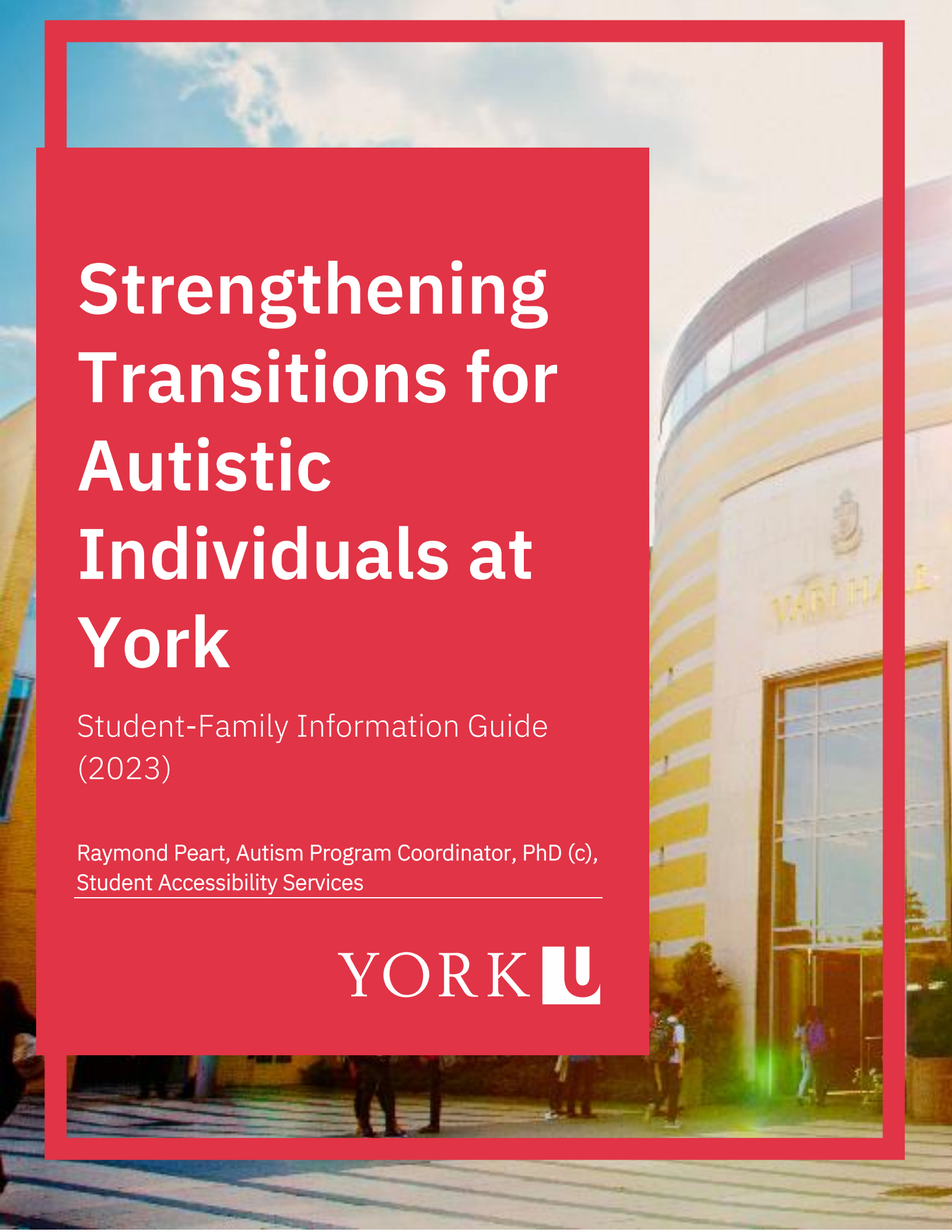


The background of the cover is a photograph of a York University building, featuring a curved facade with yellow and white horizontal stripes and a large glass entrance. A solid red rectangular overlay covers the left side of the image, containing the title and other text.

Strengthening Transitions for Autistic Individuals at York

Student-Family Information Guide
(2023)

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Student Accessibility Services

YORK 

Strengthening Transitions

STUDENT-FAMILY INFORMATION GUIDE | SUMMER 2023

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CIRCLES OF TRANSITION: A symbol of our pledge and commitment to restoring the Indigenous presence and wisdom across the territory known as Tkaronto, where the university is situated, shaping our students' transition journey in alignment with the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The guide outlines key topics to consider as you prepare to begin your academic journey at York University, such as academic planning, time management, wellness, transitional supports, and accessing resources. By utilizing this guide, families, caregivers and students can effectively prepare for their academic journey at York University.

At any point, feel free to contact the Autism Program Coordinator, Raymond Peart, at rpeart@yorku.ca for any inquiries related to the autism program and services.

For questions about what documentation needs to be submitted, contact: sasreg@yorku.ca. We use individual-first language (e.g., autistic individual or autistic student).

If you have a preference for what type of language we should use, please let us know.

FIRST STEPS

Accepted to York

To register with Student Accessibility Services, you must be a registered student with the university. We cannot look at any documentation or put accommodations in place until a student is registered with our department.

Register with Student Accessibility Services

After you have registered with York University as a student, please visit the following link and select New Students to register: <https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>

Connection Meeting

For May to August only, students who identify as autistic will be registered for what is called a Connection Meeting (or pre-intake). Once a student registers with our department and has indicated that they identify as being autistic, we will book the Connection Meeting. Registration is busy, so your Connection Meeting book can take up to 1 to 2 weeks. During the Connection Meeting, students will meet their Accessibility Services Counsellor and the Academic Skills Coach, who works only with autistic students. We encourage students to invite a family member or someone who has supported them through their journey to get to this point. The meeting is an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other and ask questions. We encourage you to ask as many questions as you want.

The meeting is designed to build relationships with newly registered Autistic students and their families, familiarize them with our services, and clarify the roles of academic skills coaches and accessibility counsellors. If parents or supports have questions beyond the session, they can be referred directly to Raymond Peart at rpeart@yorku.ca, who works exclusively with parents and caregivers.

Connection Meetings can take place in -person or virtually.

Here are some key areas to think about as you begin your studies at York University and that you can ask about in the Connection Meeting.

SUMMARY OF FIRST STEPS YOU SHOULD BE TAKING

As a summary, here are the initial steps you should be taking:

1. Acceptance to York University
 - Receive admission letter and confirm acceptance
 - Set up your York University student account
 - Review your program requirements and course options by connecting with academic advising: <https://www.yorku.ca/laps/support/academic-advising/>
 - Familiarize yourself with important dates and deadlines: <https://registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates>
 -
2. Register with Student Accessibility Services
 - Visit <https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/> and select "New Students"
 - Gather required documentation for registration (e.g., medical or psychological assessment, Individual Education Plan)
 - Complete the online registration process
 - Await confirmation email from Student Accessibility Services
 -
3. The Connection Meeting
 - Await an invitation to schedule a Connection Meeting (this may take 1-2 weeks after registering with Student Accessibility Services)
 - Choose a meeting format (in-person or virtual)
 - Prepare a list of questions or concerns you'd like to discuss during the meeting
 - Invite a family member or support person to join the meeting
 - Attend the Connection Meeting and meet your Accessibility Services Counsellor and Academic Skills Coach

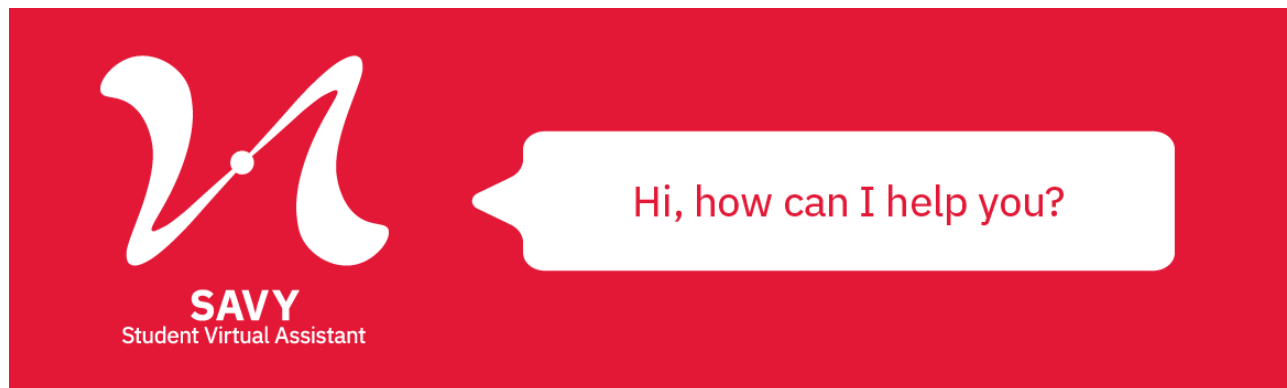
The Connection Meeting provides an opportunity for students to meet their Accessibility Services Counsellor and Academic Skills Coach, ask questions, and discuss any concerns they may have. By engaging with the support team early on, students can feel confident and well-prepared as they embark on their academic journey at York University.

STAFF ROLES

The following people are all staff members of Student Accessibility Services:

- **ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES COUNSELLOR** (this person will be assigned to you by the department)
- **ACADEMIC SKILLS COACH** – Works exclusively with registered autistic students with time and stress management, organization, improving executive functioning, skills tutoring, university system navigation
- **AUTISM PROGRAM COORDINATOR** (Raymond Peart) – works with prospective students, their families, educators from school boards, community organizations, Faculty and other departments. If you are a family member or support person and have a question, you can contact me directly at rpeart@yorku.ca

ASK A QUESTION USING YORK'S VIRTUAL ASSISTANT



SAVY is a virtual assistant that helps students along their academic journey at York. It can either answer questions directly, or point students to resources on over 500 topics, including directions and wayfinding, upcoming deadlines, and people and places on campus.

SAVY is different than a chatbot because it knows enough about students to provide more personalized content including services and events related to campus and Faculty. SAVY also differs from a Google search because it gives a single authoritative response to questions that it is trained to answer. Here are some areas of interest in which SAVY can support you:

- Where to Find Key Resources
- Academic Advising Referrals
- Registrarial & Financial Services
- Campus Life & Events
- Career Advising Information
- Mental Health & Wellness Resources
- Campus Services

Click here to begin using SAVY and get the answers you need:

<https://go.yorku.ca/asksavy>

GENERAL INFORMATION

SELECTING YOUR COURSES

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Student Accessibility Services is not responsible for a student's course selection. Students must contact the academic advising department for their program for guidance on course selection and academic planning. You can find the link to the academic advising department here:

<https://www.yorku.ca/laps/support/academic-advising/>.

UNDERSTANDING FINANCES AND FUNDING

For any questions or concerns regarding OSAP and the Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD), students can direct their inquiries to their accessibility counsellor or Student Financial Services. Student Financial Services provides guidance and support for all financial matters related to your education at York University, including bursaries and scholarships. To contact Student Financial Services or learn more about their offerings, please visit their website at the following link: <https://sfs.yorku.ca/>.

OSAP

The Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) is a government financial aid program designed to help students cover the costs of post-secondary education. OSAP offers a combination of grants and loans to eligible students attending full-time, part-time, or online programs at recognized institutions. This financial aid can pay for tuition, books, transportation, living expenses, and more. To learn more about OSAP, explore the various forms and resources, or apply for financial assistance, please visit the York University OSAP website at the following link: <https://osap.yorku.ca/osap-forms>.

Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD)

The Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD) is a financial assistance program to help students with disabilities cover the costs of education-related services and equipment required for their academic success. The BSWD aims to offset the expenses students with disabilities may incur during their studies. To learn more about the BSWD and to determine eligibility, please visit the York University website at the following link: <https://sfs.yorku.ca/aid/scholarships/disabilities>.

RESOURCES FOR PHYSICAL SPACES ON CAMPUS

Assistive Technology Lab DB1017: https://yuoffice-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/g/personal/rpeart_yorku_ca/EQQbKSeAlAdHkFSAiH9PM0UBIE_Le4tICUcXbYOU5eU4EA?e=MVy2wf

Adaptive Lab in Room 134 of the Scot Library: <https://www.library.yorku.ca/web/ask-services/accessibility-services/adaptive-equipment-lab/>

AUTISM-FOCUSSED RESOURCES

ON CAMPUS AUTISM-FOCUSSED RESOURCES

- Academic Skills Coaching (inquire with Sadhna)
- Peer Connection Group (inquire with Sadhna)
- Family/Caregiver Connect with Program Coordinator (inquire with Ray)
- Autism Mentorship Program (asmentor@yorku.ca)
- Low sensory space (inquire with Sadhna or Rob)

OFF CAMPUS AUTISM-FOCUSSED RESOURCES

- Dori Zenner & Associates: <https://dorizener.com/>
- Redpath Centre: <https://redpathcentre.ca/>
- Kerry's Place: <https://www.kerrysplace.org/>
- Auticon: <https://auticon.com/ca-en/>

IMPORTANT LINKS

Here are some important links that you might find helpful.

Accommodations

A video highlighting the legal right of accommodations and Student Accessibility Service's Role:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1y6adIBnXnE>

Assistive Technology Lab

A brief video that highlights the role of the Assistive Technology Lab in DB1017:
[**Student Accessibility Services – Assistive Technology Lab DB1017**](#)

Project ADVANCE

While this is an older video, it continues to capture the essence of our summer transition program:
[**Student Accessibility Services – Project ADVANCE**](#)

After the First Week

From 2015 to 2019, we conducted a 4-year survey of first-year Autistic students, documenting the challenges they faced after their initial week. This video provides an insightful glimpse into their experiences: [Students Accessibility Services – After the First Week](#)

Common Points of Discussion to have with your accessibility Counsellor and Academic Skills Coach

Below are some common topics to ask about in your meetings with your Accessibility Counsellor and Academic Skills Coach.

Academic Planning and Support | Students often seek guidance on course selection, interpreting academic expectations, enhancing academic performance, and discussing course load. Accessibility counsellors can address these concerns during the Connection Meeting and use or provide the following resources:

RESOURCES

- YU Course website: <https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/cdm>
- REM: <https://www.sis.yorku.ca/sis-module/registration-and-enrolment-module-rem/>
- Academic Advising: <https://advising.students.yorku.ca/>
- YU Start: <https://www.yorku.ca/yustart/>
- Writing Centre: <https://www.yorku.ca/laps/writing-centre/writing-support/accessibility-specialist/>

Time Management and Scheduling | Developing practical time management skills and creating schedules for course-related activities are essential for academic success. The Academic Skills Coach or Learning Skills can offer guidance on creating and maintaining production schedules and time management strategies to help students balance their academic and personal lives.

RESOURCES

- Learning Skills: <https://www.yorku.ca/scld/learning-skills/>

Accessing Resources and Support | Students often need help navigating online resources, discovering campus opportunities, seeking technological assistance, obtaining

accommodations, and accessing additional support services. Accessibility counsellors can provide information on available resources and direct students toward the appropriate services to ensure they receive the necessary support.

Wellness | Addressing students' wellness concerns, including their physical and mental health, and assisting them in making informed decisions about their education and well-being are crucial to our support services. Accessibility counsellors can discuss these topics during the Connection Meeting to ensure students feel comfortable discussing any challenges and know how to access resources to address them.

RESOURCES

- Student Health and Well-Being: <https://counselling.students.yorku.ca/>

Transitional Supports | Students frequently inquire about programs or services that help ease their transition into their first year at York University. The Connection Meeting offers an excellent opportunity to discuss **Project ADVANCE or Transition Tuesdays** designed to support students in making a smooth transition to university life. Please see Angela and Eugenie for further information.

RESOURCES

- Project ADVANCE: <https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/event/project-advance>
- Regional Assessment Resource Centre (RARC): <https://www.queensu.ca/rarc/>

Groups (Clubs), Tutoring, and Peer Support | Encouraging students to participate in campus groups and clubs, such as the Peer Connection Group led by Autistic students, can help them build social connections and enhance their overall university experience. Additionally, discussing the Autism Mentorship Program (AMP), run by the Clinical Psychology Department (asmentor@yorku.ca), will ensure students know the academic and social support available.

RESOURCES

- Autism Mentorship Program (AMP):
https://bebko.apps01.yorku.ca/clp/?page_id=132

Inquiries about Quiet Spaces on Campus | Students often inquire about quiet spaces on campus, which provide an opportunity to discuss the AT Lab in DB1017 and the lab specifically for registered students in Scott Library. While the AT Lab offers registered students access to low sensory spaces, free printing (with limitations), and computers equipped with the latest assistive technology, the lab in Scott Library provides a space for registered students to do

their work, although printing is not free there.

Accessibility counsellors can explain the process to setting up an adaptive lab account and direct students to consult with Rob (robertr@yorku.ca) if they need further assistance.