

Frequently Asked Questions: SmartStart Hubs

What is a SmartStart Hub?

Ontario's Children's Treatment Centres and Surrey Place in Toronto are taking on a new service called SmartStart Hubs. As SmartStart Hubs, these agencies will be a clear point of entry to services for children and families. Each Hub will bring together local child development professionals, giving families that have a concern about their child's development seamless connections to assessments and services.

How does it work?

Anyone with a concern about their child's development—whether their child is meeting developmental milestones—can contact the SmartStart Hub to start the process of assessment. No diagnosis or referral is required.

What will the SmartStart Hub do for my child? For my family?

Think of the SmartStart Hub as the front door to child development services. You'll be warmly greeted, and you'll have a conversation with a professional about your concerns, your child's development and strengths, and any supports that might be needed. In some cases, the agency that is the SmartStart Hub will be able to offer services and programs for your family and your child. Depending on what is recommended, the SmartStart Hub might also connect you with another provider in your area that can provide services. You won't need to tell your story again because the SmartStart Hubs works directly with partner agencies in your community.

If I already have a referral, do I use the SmartStartHub?

If you have a referral, you might not need the SmartStart Hub. It is primarily a place where families can go when they have questions about their child's development and need a place to connect for advice and potentially for services.

How do I find the SmartStart Hub in my community?

The SmartStart Hub in Durham Region is Grandview kids. In other communities, the Children's Treatment Centre provides SmartStart Hub services. You can find your local Children's Treatment Centre at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/childrens-rehabilitation-services#section-4>.

Is every child development provider a SmartStart Hub?

Twenty-two providers across the province serve as SmartStart Hubs. These providers offer service to every community in Ontario.

What kind of services can the SmartStart Hub organize for my child and my family?

SmartStart Hubs will connect you to assessments and services including speech and language pathology, occupational therapy and physical therapy, as well as mental health services, specialty clinics and family-based supports, like respite services and parent coaching.

How are SmartStart Hubs connected with other service providers?

Between Ontario's Children's Treatment Centres and Surrey Place, every community in the province has a SmartStart Hub. These providers bring together local



professionals to ensure the range of child development services are connected. That means families have one place to go to access the range of services and supports that will help their child reach development goals. Families no longer need to make connections on their own—the SmartStart Hub can do this for them.

Does my child need a referral to go to a SmartStart Hub?

No referral or diagnosis is necessary. If you have concerns about your child’s development for any reason, you can go directly to the SmartStart Hub that serves your community. You can also access the SmartStart Hub through another service provider in your community, your child’s doctor, your child care provider or your child’s school.

Does my child need a diagnosis to get service at a SmartStart Hub?

Your child does not need a diagnosis to access services through the SmartStart Hub.

Do SmartStart Hubs do more than meet our family and assess our child?

Yes, agencies that are SmartStart Hubs offer child development services like physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech language therapy. Some offer other services like behavioral therapy or specialty clinics. If your child needs clinical services that aren’t offered by the SmartStart Hub, or your family can benefit from programs offered by other agencies, the SmartStart Hub will connect you with partner agencies in your area for services.

What happens if my child needs services that the SmartStart Hub doesn’t offer?

The SmartStart Hub will connect you with a partner agency that can provide the services your child and family need. The SmartStart Hub is your door to a range of child development services.

What does it cost to use the services of a SmartStart Hub?

There is no cost. In Ontario, children and youth up to age 19, and up to age 21 for youth in school, can access a SmartStart Hub, as well as all publicly funded child development services, for example, services for kids with physical disabilities, developmental disabilities or communication disorders.

What if there isn’t a SmartStart Hub in my community?

There is a SmartStart Hub for every community in Ontario. If you aren’t sure where your local Children’s Treatment Centre is, you can find it here; <https://www.ontario.ca/page/childrens-rehabilitation-services#section-4>. Grandview Kids is the SmartStart Hub in Durham Region.

When will SmartStart Hubs services be available?

All 22 SmartStart Hubs will be set up and delivering services to families by January 2023.

Do I have to go to a SmartStart Hub in person, or can we arrange for a virtual appointment?

Many SmartStart Hubs services, including exploratory conversations, may be accessible by phone or video chat for families who cannot easily visit in person.



Do I have to go to a SmartStart Hub to arrange services for my child?

Not at all. SmartStart Hubs are intended for families who aren't sure where to go to access services, or what services they should receive. If you know your child's support needs and where to go to access a particular service, you can contact that service provider directly.

What are the benefits of going to a SmartStart Hub?

The SmartStart Hub gives you and your family a clear point of entry to a wide range of children's services. You'll receive a warm welcome, and you will only need to discuss your concerns about your child's development one time. The Hub will connect you to local professionals for assessments and child development services—in some cases these may be provided by the SmartStart Hub organization itself. SmartStart Hubs are a clear point of entry to Ontario's child development services.

We are already receiving services from Grandview Kids, or we have in the past. Are we eligible for SmartStart Hub?

Yes. However, you may benefit from completing an About My Child intake assessment to ensure your information is up-to-date, so we best understand your child's needs and your goals.

How is my information, including personal health information, shared between Smart Start Hub partners?

With your consent, information included in the About My Child intake tool will be shared between SmartStart Hub formal partners. This means you will not have to repeat your story.

What questions will I be asked during the SmartStart Hub referral process?

We are using an intake tool called *About My Child*. About My Child is a tool that asks a family to describe their child's strengths and share their concerns about their child's functioning and health. It is based on the World Health Organization's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) framework, and incorporates family-centred, strength-based, functional, developmental and life-course principles and approaches (CanChild, 2022). This process takes approximately 20-30 minutes to complete with our Service Navigation team.

I am concerned about the development of multiple children. Can I refer more than one child?

Yes, but separate referrals are required for every child/youth.

For more information, please contact the Grandview Kids Service Navigation team at 905-728-1673 x2468.