



The ADOS-2 Assessment

A Guide for You and Your Child

About this guide

This guide explains what to expect during the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule, Second Edition (ADOS-2), which is an important part of your child's autism assessment at NeuroFX. Understanding what happens during the ADOS-2 will help both you and your child feel more prepared and comfortable on the day.

What is the ADOS-2?

The ADOS-2 is a structured observation that forms part of the gold-standard approach to autism assessment. During the ADOS-2, your child will engage in play-based activities and conversation with one of our trained assessors. This allows us to observe how your child naturally communicates, interacts, and responds in different situations.

The ADOS-2 is not a test that your child can pass or fail. There are no right or wrong answers. It is simply an opportunity for us to spend time with your child and learn more about how they experience and interact with the world.

Practical details

Who will conduct the assessment

The ADOS-2 will be conducted by Cheyenne Contreras, a Child and Adolescent Developmental Specialist, with Tina Fox observing. Both are experienced in working with children and young people and will ensure your child feels comfortable and at ease throughout the session.

Where does it take place

The ADOS-2 takes place at our Bedford Consulting Rooms in a quiet, child-friendly assessment room. The environment is designed to be welcoming and comfortable for children and young people.

Address:

Bedford Consulting Rooms, 4 Goldington Road, Bedford, MK40 3NF

How long does it take

The ADOS-2 usually takes around 45 to 60 minutes, depending on your child's age and needs. Please allow up to 60 minutes for the session. If your child needs a break at any point, this can be accommodated.

Can parents be present

Parents will wait outside the assessment room, provided your child is settled and comfortable. This helps create a natural environment where we can observe how your child interacts with an unfamiliar adult. If your child finds it difficult to separate from you, we will work together to find the best approach to ensure they feel safe and supported.

What happens during the ADOS-2

The ADOS-2 involves a series of activities that are tailored to your child's age and developmental level. These activities are designed to encourage natural communication and interaction. Depending on your child's age, the session may include:

- Play-based activities with toys, games, or imaginative scenarios
- Conversation about interests, experiences, or everyday topics
- Simple tasks that involve sharing, taking turns, or working together
- Activities that allow your child to show how they respond to social situations

The activities are carefully chosen to feel natural and engaging. The assessor will follow your child's lead and adapt the session to match their interests and comfort level.

Important: The ADOS-2 is not designed to make your child feel anxious or uncomfortable. If your child becomes distressed at any point, the assessor will pause the session and provide reassurance.

Preparing your child

Helping your child understand what to expect can make the assessment feel less daunting. Here are some ways you can prepare your child for the ADOS-2:

Explain the assessment in simple terms

You can describe the ADOS-2 to your child in an age-appropriate way, such as:

"You are going to meet someone who wants to learn more about you. You will play some games and do some activities together. It will be a bit like playing with a new friend."

Reassure your child that there are no right or wrong answers and that they can just be themselves.

Talk about what will happen

Let your child know:

- Where they will be going (Bedford Consulting Rooms)
- That they will spend some time with a friendly adult who will play and talk with them
- That you will be nearby, just outside the room
- That the session will last around an hour

Bring comfort items if needed

If your child has a comfort item, such as a favourite toy, blanket, or sensory object, please bring it along. Having something familiar can help your child feel more at ease. You may also want to bring a drink or a snack in case your child needs a break.

Keep the day as calm as possible

Where possible, try to keep the day of the assessment calm and low-key. Avoid scheduling other stressful activities before or immediately after the ADOS-2. Arriving a few minutes early can also help your child settle in and feel more comfortable.

On the day of the assessment

Arrival

When you arrive at Bedford Consulting Rooms, you will be greeted by our team. Your child will be introduced to Cheyenne, who will explain what will happen during the session in a friendly and reassuring way.

During the session

While your child is with Cheyenne, you will be asked to wait outside the assessment room. If your child struggles to separate from you, we will work together to find a solution that helps your child feel comfortable.

After the session

Once the ADOS-2 is complete, you will have a brief opportunity to ask any questions about the session. The assessor will not provide diagnostic conclusions immediately, as the ADOS-2 is just one part of the overall assessment process.

After the ADOS-2

The information gathered during the ADOS-2 will be combined with the ADI-R interview, questionnaires, and any other reports or assessments you have provided. This comprehensive approach ensures we have a full understanding of your child before reaching any conclusions.

You will receive an outcome letter and a detailed report as outlined in your assessment pathway documentation.

Questions or concerns?

If you have any questions about the ADOS-2 or would like to discuss any concerns about your child's participation, please contact us:

Telephone: 0333 533 3303 **Email:** info@neurofx.co.uk **Website:** www.neurofx.co.uk

We understand that assessments can feel overwhelming for both you and your child. Our team is here to make the process as comfortable and supportive as possible. Thank you for trusting us to work with your family.

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This document follows NICE guideline CG128 for autism assessment and diagnosis.