

Home activity suggestions

This is a very unusual time for children and as we all know, children with autism struggle with changes to routine unless there is preparation for the change. Below we have outlined some activity ideas to include every day. When you are working with your child, please try and keep activities as fun and engaging as possible. This will benefit both parties and create a more relaxed atmosphere for all. You may find you are learning things yourself!

- Create a routine for the day, ideally with times attached, if your child is keen on the times. Write it down/with stick pictures to support. If you have a whiteboard you can use this, if not, on paper is fine. Ensure your child sees it and understands it.
- Stick to the schedule! If you have allocated 20 minutes for a seated activity/work, even if things are going well and you want to continue, have the break when you have scheduled it.
- Often adults think they need to vary things frequently when actually the child likes and feels safe knowing the routine. It is something they perceive to have an element of control over, particularly when many other aspects are changing regularly.
- Have regular movement breaks. These could be going to get a drink/using the loo, having a stretch, or a more active time for 5 minutes max. Otherwise the break becomes the activity.
- Get physical!– Movement is essential to keep young brains developing and keep us fit and strong. thebodycoach.com is running PE sessions, PE with Joe on Youtube, every week day at 9.00 a.m, fun for all!
- Use the once a day outing to walk /jog. Incorporate activities such as looking for certain items/certain size sticks, leaf colours, identifying different trees/spring flowers – use an app to reference them
- Making things such as bread dough – incorporates so many learning opportunities – weighing/measuring, hand strengthening with kneading, sensory input with the touch, the science of watching the dough rise and the smell of bread cooking, as well as learning to use the oven. Making little rolls is good for manipulating the dough and they take much less time to cook!



- Keep treats as treats and use yourself! Snuggling down with a loved one to watch something/look at a book together is very bonding and calming. Your child will benefit from you being as relaxed as possible with them, keep smiling and breathing deeply, modelling this will help them.
- Your child may like to create a small area like a den (equivalent to a quiet room) you could use cushions and a throw over some chairs for the most basic one. Alternatively, if they have their own room, having some time alone, with reduced sensory input can be calming and organising.



- Use the Zones of Regulation to help you and your child. Work with your child to learn about the zones and as a useful tool to help all the family talk about their emotional and physical state.
- Print or make a small zones chart and stick it on the fridge for all to access.
- Lastly, look after yourself and give yourself some time (even 5 minutes is better than nothing!) to relax. Breathe deeply when possible, it helps to calm the nervous system. Time and space are some of the best regulators!

