

BUILDING INDEPENDENCE

Strategies for Families

Parent Counseling 3/31/22

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TAKE A MOMENT TO THINK...

- What does independence mean to you?
- What does your child currently do independently?
- What is something you hope your child will do independently in the future?

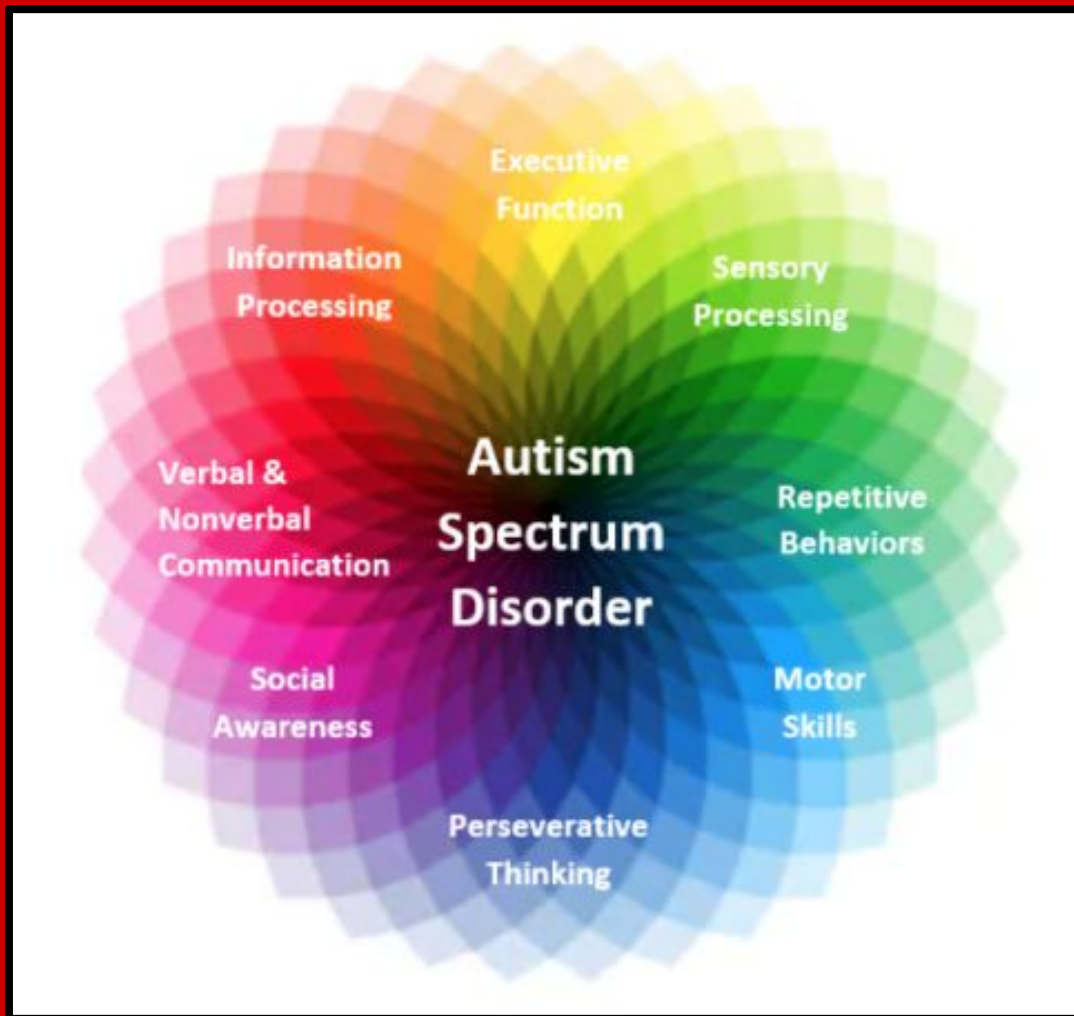
THE MYTH OF INDEPENDENCE

~~Non-Disabled
People =
Independent~~

~~Disabled People =
Dependent~~

Interdependence





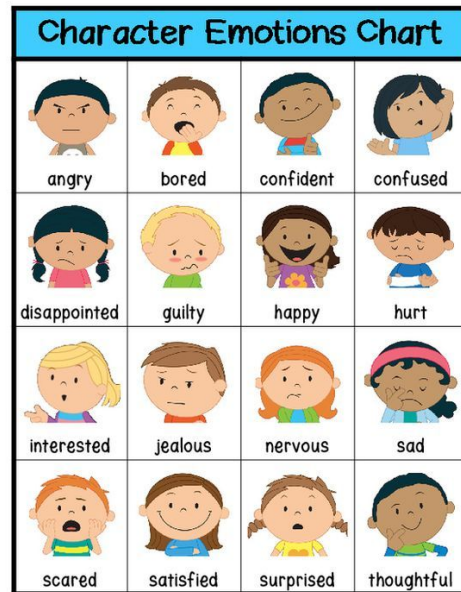
SELF-AWARENESS AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION

IDENTIFYING AND LABELING EMOTIONS

Children should be taught the language necessary to label and identify the different emotions they may experience. This lets them know that feeling different emotions is normal! By giving them the vocabulary needed to describe how they're feeling, you are encouraging them to express themselves.

This is a crucial skill that helps allow children to become self-aware and solve problems on their own. You can teach this skill by using:

- ★ Visual Feelings Charts
- ★ Using "I feel statements"
 - "I feel (insert emotion) when you (insert action). Could you please (replacement behavior)?"
- ★ Modeling expressing your feelings
 - "I'm feeling happy/excited/anxious/calm today. How are you feeling today?"



HAVE A DESIGNATED CALM DOWN SPACE

Having a specific space to relax and reset that is consistently utilized can assist with developing calm down routines and support emotional regulation.

- ★ Identify a specific area at home that can be utilized when your child needs a break. This space should be comfortable and easily accessible.
- ★ Including a small basket with a preferred toy, a social story about calming down, a fidget, a key ring holding emoji pictures for identification of emotions, and a choice board with calm down strategies can be available in designated space to support the articulation of feelings as well as provide reminders of coping strategies.



EXAMPLES OF CALMING/COZY CORNERS

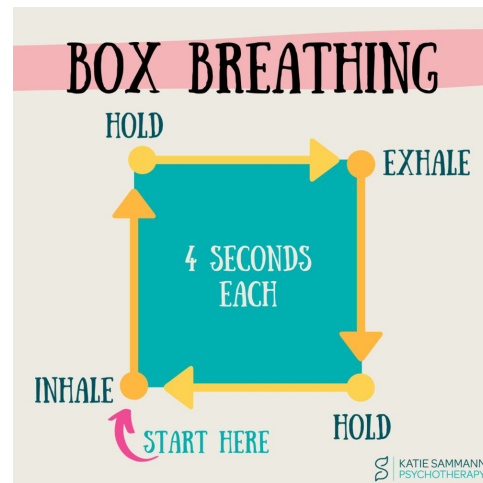
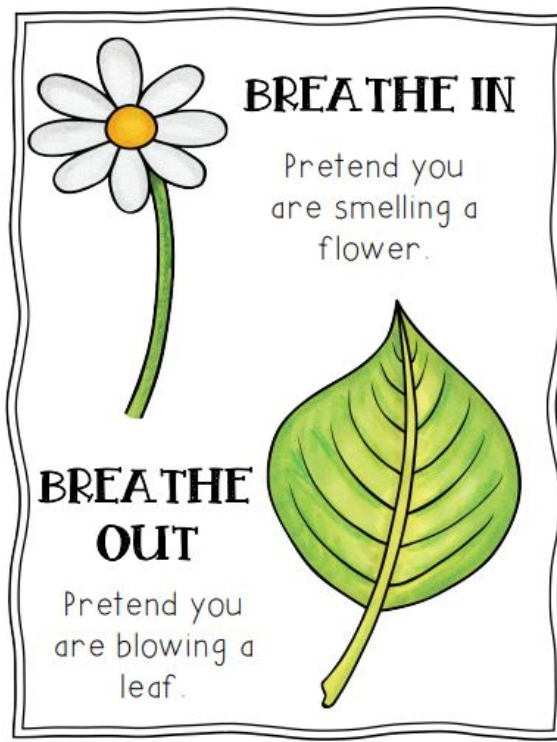


USE MINDFULNESS STRATEGIES/VIDEOS

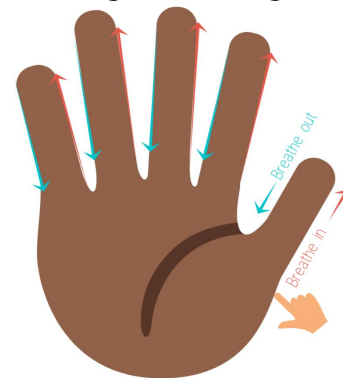
- ★ Flower or Candle Breaths
- ★ Box Breathing
- ★ Five Finger Breathing
- ★ Thought Bubbles
- ★ Rainbow Relaxation
- ★ Headspace for Kids

CANDLE BREATH

1. INHALE AS THOUGH YOU WERE SMELLING A SCENTED CANDLE.
2. EXHALE THROUGH YOUR MOUTH, PRETENDING YOU ARE BLOWING ON A CANDLE FLAME GENTLY ENOUGH FOR THE FLAME TO FLICKER, WITHOUT BLOWING IT OUT.



5 Finger Breathing



MINDFUL MOMENT



MOTIVATION

TYPES OF MOTIVATION

Intrinsic Motivation

... things that motivate you based on internal rewards (comes from within oneself)

Extrinsic Motivation

... things that motivate you based on external rewards (comes from others/the environment)



INCREASING INTRINSIC MOTIVATION



→ Increasing Autonomy

Autonomy refers to a person's ability to act on his or her own values and interests. It is having independence in one's thoughts and actions.

- ◆ We want to have control over what we do and when we do it
- ◆ Giving the child a chance to choose activities and/or order of activities

→ Mastery

- ◆ We want to feel like we're improving and succeeding
- ◆ Place demands carefully. We want to challenge them but still allow for them to be successful
- ◆ Gives children a role in creating goals, and allow for adjustment as needed, focusing on a growth mindset

Got Motivation?

Non Self Determined →

Self Determined

Source

Example

Impersonal

There is no real point in doing this because my success is unlikely or impossible.

External
(Extrinsic)

I'm doing this because of a reward I might receive or because I'm being forced.

Somewhat
External

I'm doing this because I feel guilty or think that I ought to do this.

Somewhat
Internal

I'm doing this because I personally value the goal.

Internal
(Intrinsic)

I'm doing this because it is important to my self worth.

Internal
(Intrinsic)

I'm doing this because I really want to do it.

DAILY LIVING SKILLS

PROMOTING CHOICE AND AUTONOMY

Allowing your children to make choices gives them:

- Valuable experience toward developing decision-making skills
- A sense a control in their life
- Builds self-esteem

Choices should be ones that you can agree to. Provide your child with two to three choices and praise their ability to make a good choice when they make a decision between them. The “wrong” choice is also valuable, as it provides for practice in coping with undesired outcomes.



TEACH SELF-CARE SKILLS


Daily Living Skills such as brushing our teeth, brushing our hair, washing our face, washing our hands, and toileting are all necessary skills for independent living.

Visual schedules for younger children with pictures of activity can be useful in visual recognition of activity and encourage completion of task. As children get older they can graduate to use of a chart format with a check-off list or small personal reminders that list self-care activities.

SELF-CARE ROUTINES AND DAILY LIVING VISUALS

 brush hair	 wash face	 dry face
 brush teeth	 toothpaste	 toothbrush
 put on toothpaste	 wet washcloth	 soap
 bath	 shower	 dry off











Brushing Teeth

1	Put water 	on toothbrush 
2	Put toothpaste 	on toothbrush 
3	brush teeth 	Don't Forget! top  bottom 
4	Brush Tongue 	
5	Spit in Sink 	
6	Put water 	on toothbrush 

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Hygiene Schedule

These are pictures for the hygiene schedule. Just laminate them, cut them out, put velcro on the back and they are ready to be attached to your schedule.

bath 	brush hair 
get dressed 	wash face 
deodorant 	lotion 
brush teeth 	shower 
bathroom 	wash hands 

-----This is the hygiene schedule. Just laminate and put hard velcro inside each square.







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USE VISUAL SCHEDULES

Schedules can provide a structure for children and teens. Transitions can be difficult for many children and having a schedule that is consistent can be beneficial in ensuring successful shifts between activities. Visual schedules can be particularly helpful for younger children.

- ★ Find pictures of the activities and create a daily schedule that can be reviewed regularly.
- ★ Go over each item on the schedule and remind your child to check the schedule after each activity to identify what they will be doing next.

EXAMPLES OF VISUAL SCHEDULES

_____ 's Schedule	
In the morning, this is what I do...	All Done! ✓
Wake up 	
Brush my teeth 	
Get dressed 	
Eat breakfast 	
Go to school 	
Have a great day at school! 	

_____ 's Schedule	
At night, this is what I do...	All Done! ✓
Eat dinner 	
Read a book 	
Take a bath or shower 	
Brush my teeth 	
Put on pajamas 	
Say goodnight 	
Go to sleep 	

ASSIGN CHORES AT HOME

Children can benefit from being involved with everyday chores at home. This can help them feel proud of their contributions at home as well as teach useful skills necessary for independent living. Start with simpler chores for the younger children and more involved chores as they get older. Model the activities first and take a step by step approach, then engage in the task with your child as they are learning. A good place to start can be:

- ★ Helping set/clear the table for a meal, wash and dry dishes, wipe off tables after a meal
- ★ Vacuuming or dusting
- ★ Collecting garbage and place outside in the trash
- ★ Feeding the family pet
- ★ Preparing a grocery list, shopping for items, unpacking items/putting items away

VISUALS FOR CHORES AT HOME

CHORE CHART!	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Lillie - laundry	✓		✓		✓		✓
Lillie - take garbages to curb	✓						
Owen - empty garbages		✓				✓	
Owen - feed dog ^{morning + night!}	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Connor - put toys away		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Connor - set + clear table	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Dad - walk the dog	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Everyone - read 20 min.	✓✓	✓✓		✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	

's CHORE CHART							
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	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
 makes bed							
 tidy room							
 help with dishes							
 clean washroom							
 set table							
 takes out garbage							

TEACH YOUR CHILD ABOUT MONEY

As your child gets older they should have some understanding about money. Consider providing opportunities for your child to earn a small allowance when completing chores or necessary tasks.

Assist your child with understanding the concept of saving and spending money. Consider creating opportunities for your child to identify a desired item and make a plan to save for it and take a trip to make the purchase together at the store. Assist your child with purchasing the item for themselves.

SELF-ADVOCACY

TEACH YOUR CHILD TO ASK FOR BREAKS

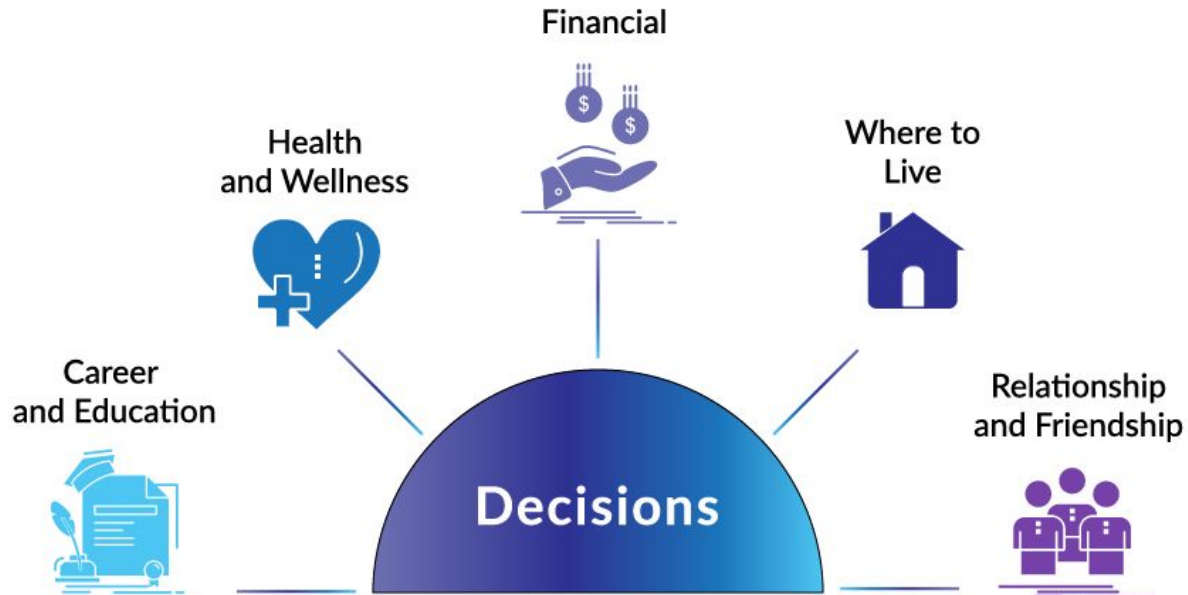
Recognizing the need to take a break can be helpful at all ages. Once in practice, it can help with avoiding tantrums and increase productivity while respecting the individual's sense of self

- ★ Children can communicate their need for a break vocally, using a “break” button or tab on their device, pointing to or holding up a readily available “break” visual, using an agreed upon non-verbal cue, etc.
- ★ You can also incorporate other strategies to meet your child's needs during break times, such as choosing a movement activity, practicing a coping skill, or choosing free-time activities



CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

- Help your child identify who is in their circle of support
- These individuals can help your child to access community resources to increase their independence as well as make decisions



TEACHING SELF ADVOCACY

“Don’t make decisions for us, be guided by us.

Don’t speak for us, silence the rest so we can speak for ourselves.

Don’t talk over us, about us, for us, just listen to us”

- theautismadvocate.com



RESOURCES

- Google Drive Folder of Resources
- Syosset Parent Support Resources
<https://www.syossetschools.org/domain/294>
- Autism Parenting Magazine
<https://www.autismparentingmagazine.com>
- Parent to Parent of Long Island
<https://www.parenttoparentnys.org>
- ASAN – Autistic Self Advocacy Network
<https://autisticadvocacy.org/>