

Supporting Individuals with Autism During Quarantine

- **Create a schedule** – Plan activities for the day that work for your family and outlines goals. Include things like activities for daily living, tablet time, mealtime, and enrichment activities. Use visuals if you can as this is helpful for all to know what will be occurring that day.
- **Use flexible time to your benefit**- Practice chores and activities for daily living that may take too long to practice on a typical day. Utilizing this time to go at a slower pace for your son or daughter is helpful. For example- brushing teeth can take a longer amount of time and even include breaks, but is also teaching an important skill.
- **Use the resources that are available** - Many schools, groups, and organizations have shared wonderful resources. If they are overwhelming, try one and repeat it each day. Seeing the same material consistently can help individuals to understanding the activity and increase the success with the activity.
- **Use timers to transition activities** - If tablets/technology are causing battles, set timers. Many products have a timer that can be used for specific apps or run in the background. Many students are used to timers being a cue for a change and this could help reduce the battle of removing it.
- **Plan for some physical activities** - Many schools use YouTube channels like GoNoodle or Cosmic Kids Yoga, so these may be videos that your son/daughter has already seen. They often use catchy songs or preferred characters to make being active fun. There are also a lot of fitness apps that are currently offering free trials.
- **Outside adventure with a plan and reinforcement** - If going outside is safe, have a purpose (going to check the mail, finding a specific neighborhood feature). Bring something along (snack, favorite item) to keep your son/daughter engaged along the way. Once you achieve your goal, offer the choice of going inside or staying outside. Safety & elopement is often a huge concern for families. If you have not notified your local police department that your child is a potential elopement risk, this is a great time to share that information. The Big Red Safety Box (National Autism Association) has downloads on their website to help families navigate these conversations.
- **Video chat with friends and family** - Video chat is a great way to connect. Sometimes seeing someone else will provide something to talk about and keeps us connected to those we are not seeing as often. Many of the video chat applications have fun features (filters/emojis) that are interactive.
- **Take care of yourself** - When parents have a few free moments, they should be intentional about taking time to do something that brings them a piece of normalcy and joy.