



Coronavirus: Top tips for families

Try to stay calm when talking to your children or about what's happening.

Even if your children don't use verbal communication they may still pick up on your tone of voice and your stress levels.

We've put together some tips and links to online resources to help you deal with this difficult time.



www.autism.org.uk/coronavirus



1 Anxiety about unexpected changes or events



Your child's plan and routine has changed

So make a new one. Even if you're self-isolating, structure each day and time. Build in points in the day for exercise, eating and fun activities.

Top tip:



Support your child to remember your family's plan has changed and might change again but you can always make a new one.

[Visual supports](#)

[Coping with change](#)

2 Sensory sensitivity



Your child's sensory environment has changed

That may be because school, or your normal support service is not available

Top tip:



If you don't have a quiet, sensory area in your home already, make one, even if it's just the corner of one room. Fill it with homemade sensory toys and activities.

[Go to sensory environments](#)

3 Time to process information



Lots of information is coming very fast and it's changing every day

Give your child time to absorb and process each piece of news and make sure they have a source to go back to and re-read when they need to.

[Carol Gray social story](#)

Top tip:



Think about the minimum level of information that your child needs; don't overwhelm them with every single piece of news or information.

Write down the important bits or use the social stories available to explain what's happening. Give them time to think about it and let them know they can come back to you later to ask questions.



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4 Social anxiety



If you're socially isolating this might not be a problem

But if you're stuck at home with people you usually don't spend that much time with you might need to let them know that your child requires distance and their own time.

Top tip:



If you're feeling socially isolated, connect to other parents on our online community or get support through our Parent to Parent service.

[Visit our online community](#)

5 Communication and interaction



If you're child is finding communication difficult right now

Let people know that at times of stress your child might find communication, especially verbal communication, harder than usual.

Top tip:



Agree with your child how you will communicate with them - via text, or in writing, or at specific times of the day.

[Visit our online community](#)

More information

Get ideas from other families, and share your tips with them, in our [online community](#).

For more information on coronavirus and autism visit our website:

 www.autism.org.uk/coronavirus

