

World **AUTISM** *Acceptance Month*



April 2025

Understanding and Supporting
Children with Autism
Guide for Foster Carers, with
Compassion and Care



Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disorder that affects communication, behaviour, and social interaction. It is considered a spectrum because it impacts individuals differently and to varying degrees.

WHAT IS AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)?



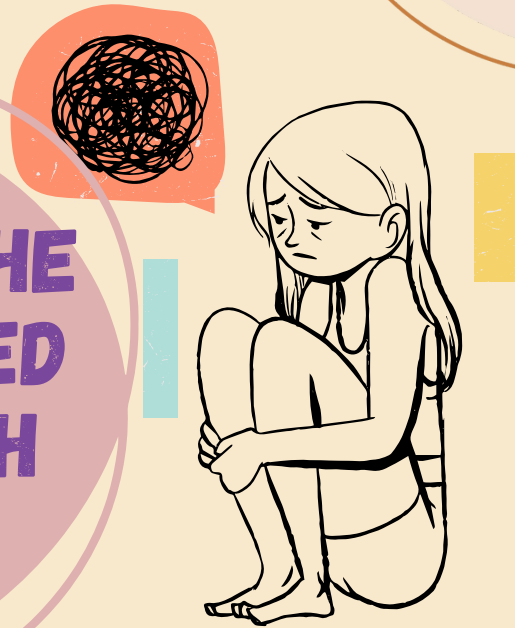
AUTISM AND WORLD AUTISM MONTH:

Every April, the world comes together to raise awareness about autism, promote inclusion, and highlight the importance of supporting people with ASD. During this month, activities and initiatives take place globally to improve understanding and reduce the stigma around autism.

Communication:
Difficulty in
expressing needs,
understanding
social cues, and
engaging in
typical
conversations.

Behavioral
Sensitivities: Over-
sensitivity or
under-sensitivity
to sensory inputs
like sound, light,
touch, and smell.

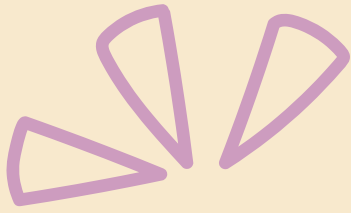
UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY CHILDREN WITH AUTISM



Social Interaction:
Challenges in
forming
relationships or
engaging in social
situations in
conventional
ways.

Repetitive
Behaviours:
Repetitive
movements or
behaviours, such
as hand-flapping,
rocking, or strict
routines.

HOW TO PREVENT MELTDOWNS IN AUTISM

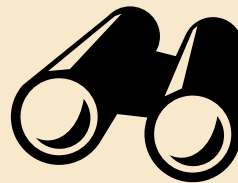


Establishing Routines



Maintaining a consistent daily routine can help children feel more secure and reduce anxiety. clearly communicate any changes in the routine in advance to prepare your child.

Recognizing early signs



Pay attention to subtle signs that indicate your child is becoming overwhelmed or distressed. these signs can include increased agitation, repetitive behaviours, or withdrawal. By recognizing these signs, parents can intervene early and prevent meltdowns.



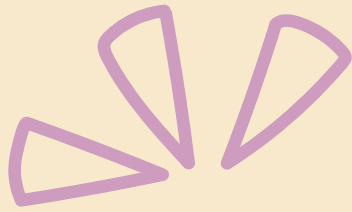
Providing sensory breaks



Sensory overload can contribute to meltdowns. offer your child sensory breaks in a quiet and calming environment, allowing them to regroup and regulate their emotions.



HOW TO PREVENT MELTDOWNS IN AUTISM



Teaching coping strategies



Teach your child coping strategies, such as deep breathing exercises or using a sensory tool, to help them manage their emotions and self-regulate.



Encouraging self-expression

Allow your child to express their emotions in a safe and non-judgemental space. encourage them to communicate their feelings through words, drawings, or other creative outlets.



RELAXED BREATHING

- To practice make sure you are sitting or lying comfortably
- Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so
- Try to breathe through your nose rather than your mouth



- Deliberately slow your breathing down. Breathe in to a count of 4, pause for a moment, then breathe out to a count of four
- Make sure that your breaths are smooth, steady, and continuous - not jerky
- Pay particular attention to your out-breath - make sure it is smooth and steady

RELAXATION ROUTINE



RESOURCES AND SUPPORT FOR FOSTER CARERS

- [The Fostering Network](#)
- [The National Autistic Society \(NAS\)](#)
- [Social Care Institute for Excellence \(SCIE\)](#)
- [The National Fostering Group](#)
- [First Response Training](#)