

TEN TOP TIPS TO HELP YOUR CHILD



1. Talk to them about what they understand.

This would be a good time to check the facts with them on the internet as the information is changing daily.

2. Turn off the news on the TV in front of your child, and limit access to social media.

There is lots of speculation in the media and social media which can cause high anxiety. Limit internet access for your child and avoid uncertain conversations in front of them.

3. Teach hygiene.

Schools have been teaching all children good hygiene to protect everyone from COVID-19. As parents we can do this at home too. BBC Newsround has produced a video to explain about the importance of handwashing to children.

4. Provide predictability/structure and routines.

Children with autism need lots of predictability, structure and routines. Visual timetables (pictures, checklist, symbols), diaries or calendars can help with this. Discuss with your child each morning what is going to happen that day, who they are going to be with, what activities they can do and when.

5. Keep them busy with fun activities.

Use this time to do some fun activities at home that you may not normally have the time to do. Teach some life skills, for example cooking, helping with housework, reading, etc. Check with your child's school what websites they would recommend that could help with fun learning activities, homework or other learning options. The BBC is providing daily lessons on BBC Bitesize.

6. Teach calming strategies.

Many children with autism struggle to self-regulate and relax. Explore different options to help to reduce anxieties, such as yoga, breathing exercises, relaxing music, sensory games, meditation and video clips. Every child is different, and you know your child best. YouTube has lots of ideas for activities but remember to check them out yourself first before showing your child.

7. Reassure them.

It's important to reassure your child that they will be o.k and things will get back to normal.

8. Keep it simple and factual.

Avoid using language and terms your child may not understand.

9. Call/ video call/ write to relatives.

If your child is missing a favourite person or worried about a relative, explore ways to keep in touch to reassure your child they are ok, for example video calls through FaceTime, WhatsApp or Skype or writing them a letter.

You can find more advice from Birmingham City Council about talking to your child [here](#)

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