AUTISM
Sefton Council
All Together Now

Routines and Coping with Change

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Why we all have routines?

10 reasons for routines in family life.

1. Routines set out how families organise themselves.
2. Gets things done.
3. Give families time together to have fun
4. Lets us know when things are happening, in what order and how often.
5. Reduces stress levels.
6. Establishes expectations.
7. Creates a calmer household.
8. Gives children some structure in their day and helps to create smoother transitions between activities.
9. Enables children to become more confident and more independent.
10. Helps us as parents to remember important things.

When life is busy, routines can help us feel:

More organised

More in control

Routines often:

- Helps us get through daily tasks more efficiently
- Means you don’t have to sort out difficulties and make decisions
- Means that life is more predictable which makes children feel safe
- Enables children to cope better with changes. .

Routines can teach your child healthy habits

- Brushing their teeth
- Taking breaks
- Exercising
- Bedtime
- Sensory activities
- Meals and eating healthy foods
- Home/School activities
- Play activities

These everyday routines provide rich opportunities to support a child's development and learning whilst having fun.

Routines enable the building of curiosity, social skills, self- control and communication skills

We know that children and young people who have autism also benefit from routines.

- So, what happens when children and young people get stuck?
- What happens when it all breaks down?
- How can we do a bit of problem solving ?
- What do we need to do to help us to cope?

To do this we need to focus on change and the difficulties change presents to some of our children and young people.

Change is all around us.

There are so many changes especially today, in this current climate

The list is endless.

Daily changes

Having a change of activity
Accepting computer has ended
Eating a new food.
Having a supply teacher in school.
Accepting a different glue stick.

Minor changes

Moving classes
Moving up in a sports class

Major changes

Moving house
Moving schools
Bereavement
Having a new baby in the family
Divorce and separation

During the Covid epidemic change has been massive, changing all our lives

For some of our children and young people even the slightest change can lead to anxiety.

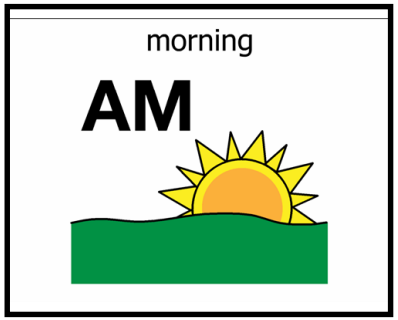
Other Reasons which may lead to anxiety are:

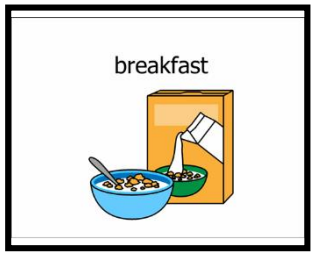
- Trouble with problem solving due to inflexible thinking, making it difficult to imagine a different plan
- They may not understand cause and effect, making it difficult to predict consequences
- Wanting to have control over their lives.
- Sameness means predictable - predictable means safe.

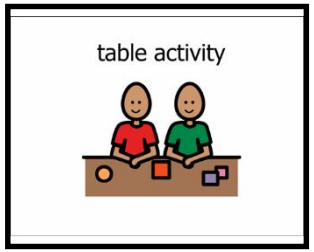
What can help?

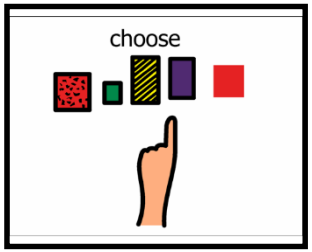
By using a visual schedule for daily activities.

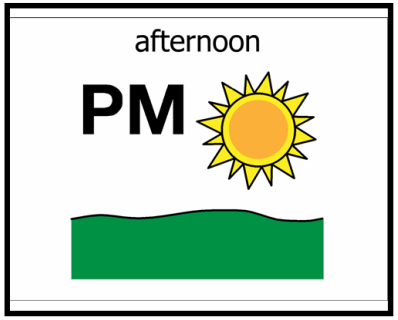
Our Daily Routine at Home



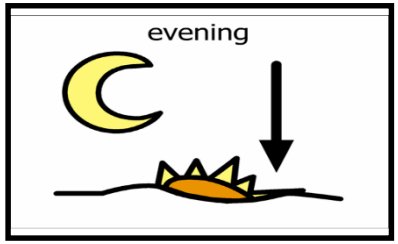








Remove the symbol when the activity has finished. Put the symbol in a finished packet.

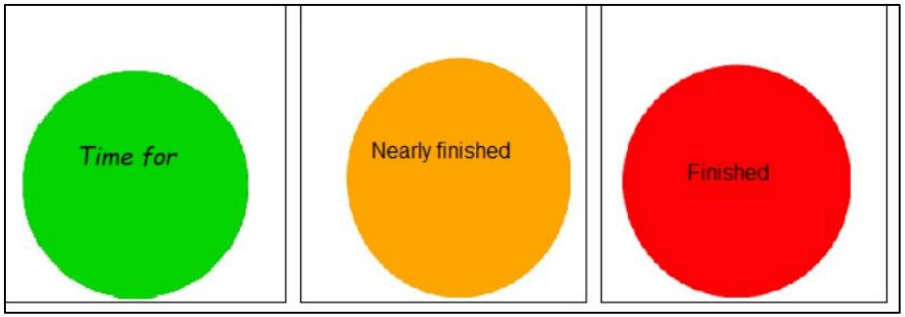


What can help?

Prepare young people for change

Use another Visual

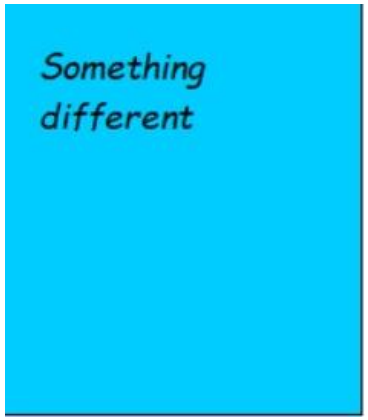
Use traffic lights



Give a warning that an activity is about to start, nearly finish or it is finished

Use a Timer

Show something different card



What can help?

I'm ok

I'm not ok

Tune in to child and young person's feelings

Notice what the young person is doing?
Note if their behaviour is changing?

Young person is not coping.
Getting louder.
Fidgeting.
Losing a bit of control
Getting a bit cross

Rescue now

I can see that you are not feeling ok.
Lets do this now?

Divert attention to another activity
Go for a walk
Have a snack
Introduce different toy

What can help?

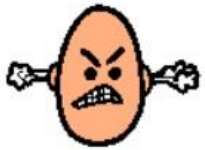
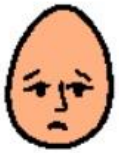
Talk about emotions.

Use visuals

I’m ok

I’m not ok

What can help?
All the family talking about how they are feeling?
I am on green.
I feel ok.
I am on blue.
I feel a bit cross.
I am on yellow.
I am not feeling happy.
I am on orange.
I feel very cross.
I am on red.
I am losing control.
I can try this .
Go for a walk.
Take a break.
Exercise.

Level	Person place or thing.	Makes me feel like this:	I can try this:
5			
4			
3	Mum has burnt the toast		Take a break and have a cup of tea
2			
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What can help?

Having a sense of humour.

Lowering demands.

Giving yourself a pat on the back.

Useful Websites

https://www.seftondirectory.com/autism
https://www.seftondirectory.com/kb5/sefton/directory/advice.page
https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zh9v382
https://www.pinterest.co.uk/
https://www.twinkl.co.uk/

Books useful for parents

'When my worries get too big'
Kari Dunn Baron
Forward by Brenda Smith Myles

'The incredible 5 point scale'
Kari Dunn Baron