

## 4 Tips for Parents with Children on the Spectrum

Guilford author, [Raphael Bernier](#), shares parenting resources and advice on maintaining routines for families with children on the autism spectrum.



When events like the current COVID-19 pandemic occur, it impacts all of us, but can also uniquely impact families and individuals with ASD. Below are a couple of tips that may be helpful to address the unique impacts of social distancing, school closure, and sheltering-in-place scenarios around the country.

1.) For many children with ASD, disruptions to routines can be highly problematic. Try to establish structures and consistency as much as possible. Visual schedules, social stories can be so helpful to conveying the structure and routine. There are some excellent visual tools and resources available from the [University of Miami-Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities](#).

2.) Video conferencing is a great way to connect and keep practicing social skills. Organizing those calls with structured activities, using a script or playing a game, depending on your child's abilities, could be helpful. There is a nice series of [video modules](#) available to demonstrate tools to support social communication in young children.

3.) With many therapies on hold, many parents face questions for how to organize and maintain the gains being made. The [OT Toolbox](#) has free tools, activities, and resources for Occupational, Speech and Physical Therapy to do at home with your family member with ASD.

4.) Caregivers and parents: Please make sure to take time (as difficult as this is) to support yourselves. By taking care of yourself, in whatever way is best for you, you will be much more effective in the countless roles you play for your loved one with autism.

[Autism Speaks](#) has compiled and organized a comprehensive list of resources for the autism community. And for questions and concerns about school that parents face with the school closures across the nation, the [IDEA website](#) has up to date information and resources regarding accessibility, distance learning options, and civil rights information for students with disabilities.