



Phoenix Outreach Guide to Self-Isolation

General tips for staying at home

- Try and keep a predictable routine each day. For example, having mealtimes at the same time, going out for some exercise at the same time each day.
- Try and keep the time your child wakes up the same each day. This will help prevent sleeping difficulties.
- Show your child what is going to happen in the day, either using visuals or writing if your child can read.
- Allow regular opportunities for your child to move. This could be going for a walk, going to the park or doing something in doors like Just Dance videos on Youtube or the website Go Noodle. This will help them regulate their emotions.
- Ask your school what interventions and supports your child has at school and whether these can be implemented in the home (for example, Attention Autism, Zones of Regulation, Numicon).

If your child is dysregulated from the change of routine you can try:

- Reducing demands, e.g. expecting less work.
- Making sure they have lots of opportunities for sensory and movement.
- Having a calm quiet space where your child can withdraw. You could create a quiet corner in your house (e.g. drape a blanket over a couple of chairs to create a den) this is your child's space and they should be left alone when they are there.
- Reduce your language. If your child is very upset use only one word at a time.

Sensory activities

These activities would be ideal for younger children or children who are pre-verbal or at an early stage of language development, but a range of sensory experiences are important for all autistic children.

- Fill a tray with dry foodstuffs such as cornflakes, dry rice, pasta, lentils or beans (be mindful of what materials you use if your child will eat it) and allow your child to play with it. You could also provide cups, bowls and jugs for your child to fill and empty.

- If your child is preverbal, copy their actions when they play. For example, if they are sprinkling rice through their hands you could sprinkle rice through your hands. When you are doing this, try not to use any language and tune in to your child. You can do this any time, for example if your child is jumping, jump with them and mirror their vocalisations. This is called intensive interaction. More information can be found on Dave Hewitt's Youtube channel.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJruQPRx3Jk&t=171s>
- Make cloud dough – (two parts flour to one part oil, plus natural colouring such as turmeric or flavouring such as cocoa powder)



- Make cornflour slime (mix cornflour and water until you have a slimy consistency) You can add colour to this.
- Use shaving foam or soap foam to make marks in the bathroom.
- For children with some language, you could play the tasting game where your child covers their eyes and has to guess what food they are tasting.
- Involve your child in daily activities. For example, cooking. You might want to measure ingredients out precisely first so your child can join in easily, or allow your child to cut soft fruit using a blunt knife.
- Use old bottles to make shakers and add rice and anything else your child likes to look at (e.g. glitter). You can also use old containers to make drums.
- Freeze small toys in ice cubes. Explore different ways to get the toys out e.g adding warm water, using toy hammers.

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- Draw shapes on sandpaper and cut them out. Your child can colour these in with big crayons for a nice sensory experience.
- Thread beads of penne pasta on to wool or string to make necklaces.
- <https://theimaginationtree.com/> has lots of nice ideas for sensory play you can do at home.
- Make bubble socks. Cut the bottom off a plastic bottle. Secure a sock over the cut end using an elastic band. Rub the sock in washing up liquid and blow to make bubble snakes.



Learning activities

These activities would be suitable for pupils who have more language and are increasing in independence. These children are likely to have homework set from school. In addition please consider the following ideas.

- Keep a routine. Your child could do their school work at the same time everyday.
- If your child is reluctant to do their schoolwork, follow it up with a really rewarding activity. This could be supported by a now and next board.
- Use Youtube channels such as [Cosmic Kids Yoga](#) to support your child's emotional regulation.

- Give your child jobs and responsibilities in the house which are linked to their learning and give structure to their day. For example, weighing and measuring ingredients, follow a recipe, helping count out money for shopping, helping you do online shopping or writing a shopping list, helping with washing and sorting clothes, washing windows.
- Give opportunities for your child to practice independence e.g. preparing their own snack, getting their own outfit ready for the day, watering plants.
- Lots of schools have logins for educational websites. Ask your child's teacher for their up to date logins. 2simple has free access for some of it's programs.
<https://2simple.com/free-access/>
- If your child is doing phonics or learning to read
<https://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/> has fun games.
- BBC Bitesize has resources for Primary and Secondary age pupils
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>
- Away from the screen, TTS has some activity books to download <https://www.tts-group.co.uk/home+learning+activities.html>
- For online maths games: <http://www.ictgames.com/mobilePage/index.html>
- Some websites offer free tasters e.g. <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home> (reading) and <https://pobble.com/for-parents> (writing)
- If your child has a special interest, you could create an interest box of things they are interested in. They can have time in their routine to add things to this and explore and discuss it. You could also link activities to your child's special interest where possible.
- Make sure you are timetabling breaks in to your child's day. You can ask school how often they need breaks.
- Try and limit screen time.
- Your child could keep a diary of their time at home. They could share this with teachers when they go back to school.
- Now you have more time in the mornings, encourage independence e.g. children getting dressed without reminders, preparing their own breakfast.

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- Have a go at science experiments: <https://www.thoughtco.com/safe-science-experiments-604178> has some idea for safe and easy science experiments.
- For older pupils try these maths tricks <https://www.thoughtco.com/math-tricks-that-will-blow-your-mind-4154742> Your child can check that they work using different numbers. Nrich maths also has problem solving activities up to secondary age <https://nrich.maths.org/>