



*'Living life to the full'*  
*John 10.10*

# *An information pack to support remote learning for parents*

## A. Why Structure and Routine is Important

When your world is very chaotic and confusing, there is a lot of uncertainty which leads to anxiety. Children with ASD or a Learning Disability require a very concrete, literal and predictable world to feel secure. Something can have a specific meaning in one situation and mean something totally different in another. For this reason many children have a strong need to control all activity and interaction around them. To help deal with this insecurity and anxiety, we have to decrease the uncertainty in their lives. The following strategies can help do that:

### 1. Providing accurate and easily understandable information about COVID-19

See Section B for more information

### 2. Build structure into daily routine

The more structured and predictable the daily routine is, the less uncertainty there is for the child. The following can be found on our school website. <https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/My-Daily-Timetable.pdf>

MY DAILY TIME TABLE											
Before 9 am	9 - 10am Exercise <b>Examples:</b>	10-11 am Home learning <b>Examples:</b>	11-12am Creative <b>Examples:</b>	12- 1pm Lunch	1pm to 2pm Online Learning <b>Examples:</b>	2pm to 3 pm Exercise/ fresh air <b>Examples:</b>	3pm to 4pm Help at home <b>Examples:</b>	4pm-5 pm Quiet time <b>Examples:</b>	5pm - 6pm Dinner	6pm - 7pm Free <b>Examples:</b>	7pm Bed time routine
Wake up 	Family or dog walk 	Reading/ story time 	Lego - Lego challenge on home learning. 	Wash hands 	School homework Activities/ E-learning activities 	Bikes/ Scooter 	Tidy up toys/room 	Puzzles/ free Lego play 	Wash hands 	Your choice 	Shower/ Bath 
Breakfast 	Sensory circuit See home learning zone 	School homework Activities/ E-learning activities 	Arts and crafts- See home zone 	Help make lunch 	Maths/English -Writing -Typing Alphabet/ Letter/ Number Practise & Home learning zone On website 	Sensory circuits 	Pick up and Sort laundry 	Fine motor sills - threading 	Help make dinner 	Sing/Dance Dress up 	Brush teeth PJ's on 
Brush teeth 	Joe wicks- 9:30 am YouTube see PE in home learning on our Website 	Maths/English -Writing -Typing Alphabet/ Letter/ Number Practise & Home learning zone On website 	Cooking 	Lay table 	(ABC) 	Ball games 	Pack/ Unpack dishwasher 	Movies 	Lay table 	Video call friends 	Bedtime story/ reading 
Get dressed 	Yotim 	(ABC) 	Sensory play 	Eat 	Education based iPad Androids Apps 	Play inside 	Hoover 	Ipad/tablet Free choice 	Eat 	Hobbies/ Play with your toys 	Listen to calm music 
Make bed make bed 	Bounce or dance 	Sensory diet activities 	Music - play an instrument and explore home learning. 	Wash up 	Arts and crafts 	Gardening 	Learn to make tea. tea 	Family board game time 	Wash up 	Yotim 	Sleep 



### Using Alarms

Set different alarms throughout the day. Keep the same ones every day to create a routine. You can use different songs to mark different points in the day. Eg. start the morning routine with a good morning song.

### 3. Using a Visual Schedule.

If possible, provide visual (pictures or written) schedules so children can see what is coming up next and what they are doing. This provides predictable order to their day. These visual schedules provide a nice detailed path to follow. It lets them know what to expect and when to expect it. This alone can drastically reduce anxiety. Refer to the schools guidance on the school website at <https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Guide-to-using-Visual-Timetables.pdf>

### 4. Keep Your Routine Habits the Same.

Keeping familiar routines throughout the day uses less brain effort eg. keep the same personal care rituals. This adds predictability and certainty to the child's world. See Section E on 'Maintaining Sleep Routines'

### 5. Transitioning between Tasks

Children with ASD or LD often have difficulty switching their brain activity between different tasks. They do much better if they have warnings or reminders when the one activity is ending and another is beginning, especially if the current activity is a favourite activity. To ease transition difficulties try to:

- Ensure that the child always knows what will be coming up next (e.g. watch TV then bath)  
– For guidance on Now/next please visit - <https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Now-Next-Guidance-notes.pdf>
- Give the child five, three, and one-minute reminders that the activity is going to end and they will move on to the next activity. Use timers if it helps.
- Using a timer to count down – sound activated timers effective; these are readily available online. <https://www.online-stopwatch.com/full-screen-stopwatch/> but a cooking timer works just as well.

This way their brain is prepared for what is coming up next, and the reminders help bridge the transition. This is particularly useful for limiting time spent on tablets – there are some apps available that allow you to control this from your phone, eg.



Parental control app on an Iphone or  Screen time on an android and iphone

## 6. More Resources

### Handwashing Advice

The following resources on handwashing can be used in conjunction with the social stories about coronavirus on our school website. <https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/social-stories/>

1. For Hand Washing Tips for People With Sensory Difficulties visit <https://www.sensoryintegration.org.uk/News/8821506>
2. How to wash your hands NHS song | NHS  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9VjeIWLnEg>
3. Wash Your Hands with Baby Shark | Baby Shark Hand Wash Challenge |  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L89nN03pBzI&v1=en>
4. Workbook for children about washing hands.  
<https://www.schuelke.com/gb-en/news-media/Hand-Hygiene-Teaching-Pack-Free-Download.php>

### School closure pack

This is a readymade visual pack developed by the Illinois Autism Partnership and is suitable for all our students.

[https://l.ead.me/bbTE3n?fbclid=IwAR0v2tMb8KiDBSRH1jvW4B4xNnR7HEGadMt4hE5wNPc55Mhc\\_lgzzPaeIxE](https://l.ead.me/bbTE3n?fbclid=IwAR0v2tMb8KiDBSRH1jvW4B4xNnR7HEGadMt4hE5wNPc55Mhc_lgzzPaeIxE)

## B. Re-read Information on COVID-19 and school closure

There are loads on the internet at the moment about the Coronavirus. Stick to government, NHS and well known charity pages for valid and up-to-date information.

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/health/coronavirus>

The following link on our website will take you to the social stories provided about school closures

Self Isolation and COVID-19, <https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/social-stories/>



<https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/School-closed-visual.pdf>

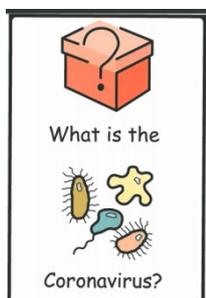


<https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/School-is-closed-social-story.pdf>

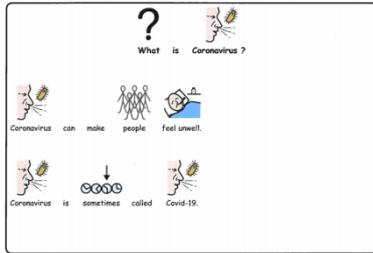
2020



<https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/School-Closed-Calendar.pdf>



<https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Version-1-What-is-Coronavirus-Social-Story.pdf>



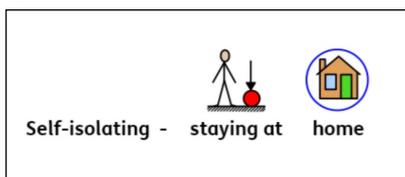
<https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Version-2-What-is-Coronavirus-Social-Story.pdf>



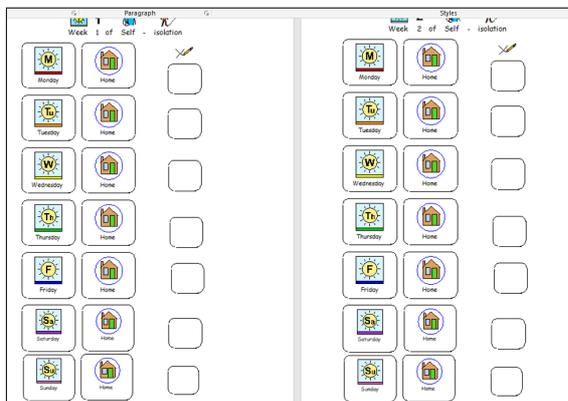
<https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Version-3-What-is-Coronavirus-Social-Story.pdf>



<https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Version-4-Story-about-Coronavirus.pdf>



<https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/speech-and-language/>



<https://www.pieldheathschool.org.uk/speech-and-language/>

## C. Looking After Yourself in Times of Uncertainty

### *'YOU CAN'T POUR FROM AN EMPTY CUP'*

#### ***PREPARING TO SELF-CARE***

Self-care is key to calming ourselves so we have the resources (brain power) to care and support others. We recommend trying to implement structure, routine, and consistency to your life as well as those you care for. For self-care to be effective it needs to be sustainable and practical for your lifestyle.

Suggestions to self-care:

#### **MINDFULNESS**

The three main principles of mindfulness are:

- Being in the present moment i.e. focus on the right here, right now and not the future or past!
- Noticing and increasing our awareness of what is going on
- Placing no judgment on our experience, i.e. no labelling of things we notice as good nor bad, right or wrong, they just are!

There are lots of Mindfulness apps and websites that you can access; we recommend <https://www.calm.com/?from=/>. Mindfulness practice does not have to take long, you can do it anywhere at any time for however long (even 30 seconds).

#### **BREATHE**

We hear it all the time. But it's true, slowing down your breathing can really help ground you and slow things down. Try imagining blowing up a balloon in your stomach and slowly releasing it.

#### **BE YOUR OWN BEST FRIEND**

If your best friend came to you upset and struggling what would you say to them? Write this down... pin it in a place you regularly look. This is how you will speak to yourself when you are struggling. Give yourself a break, be kind, you're doing your best in a difficult time. Go you!

#### **DOING SOMETHING MEANINGFUL TO YOU**

Think of an activity you enjoy. It can be ANYTHING. What is it about the activity that you value? For example, if you enjoy going out for a coffee with your friends, you may value connection with others. Although you may not be able to go for a coffee with a friend could you be creative about how you could still live your life by this value in a different way. For example, Skype your friend and sit and drink coffee together in a designated area of the house. Try to identify what you **value** about the activities you enjoy doing in your life and think about how you can still live your life by these.

## Coping with stress during the 2019-nCov outbreak



It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during a crisis.

Talking to people you trust can help. Contact your friends and family.

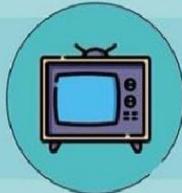
If you must stay at home, maintain a healthy lifestyle - including proper diet, sleep, exercise and social contacts with loved ones at home and by email and phone with other family and friends.



Don't use smoking, alcohol or other drugs to deal with your emotions.

If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counsellor. Have a plan, where to go to and how to seek help for physical and mental health needs if required.

Get the facts. Gather information that will help you accurately determine your risk so that you can take reasonable precautions. Find a credible source you can trust such as WHO website or, a local or state public health agency.



Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you and your family spend watching or listening to media coverage that you perceive as upsetting.

Draw on skills you have used in the past that have helped you to manage previous life's adversities and use those skills to help you manage your emotions during the challenging time of this outbreak.



## **D. Occupational Therapy: Regulating Sensory Activities**

### **1. Walking**

This is a very regulating activity as it provides rhythmical and predictable sensory inputs. Try to walk at the same pace and aim to walk for over 30 minutes. Walking up hills and/or wearing a back pack with bottles of water in will increase the resistance which will provide stronger regulating proprioceptive inputs.

### **2. Local parks and outdoor gyms**

Hanging from monkey bars provide strong regulating proprioceptive inputs which quickly has a calming effect. If your child can't hang independently support them to hold on to the bars as they will still be getting some proprioceptive input.

Swings are regulating as they provide rhythmical and predictable linear vestibular and proprioceptive inputs. Encourage your child to swing themselves as much as possible as this will increase the calming proprioceptive inputs and help reduce the stimulating effect of the vestibular inputs.

Use roundabouts with caution as these provide strong rotational vestibular inputs which could quickly cause over stimulation. Spin the roundabout 10 times then stop it and ask your child to look at you and count to ten and repeat. This also applies to other playground equipment that spins.

Older children can use outdoor gym programme.

For older children and teenagers outdoor gyms provide strong regulating proprioceptive inputs. Refer to the attached program for ideas how to use the equipment.

### **3. Trampoline**

These provide strong vestibular input which can cause rapid overstimulation. You can increase the regulating proprioceptive inputs by standing /sitting on the edge of the trampoline as will increase the amount of effort your child uses to bounce. This should reduce the stimulating effects of the vestibular inputs. You could also reduce the possibility of overstimulation by controlling the amount of bouncing by counting the number of bounces to 20 then say stop. Ask your child to stand still like a soldier and look at you while you count to 10 and repeat.

#### **4. Den building**

Use blankets, throws, tarps etc to build as these create a regulating environment and reduce the amount of sensory input your child has to process. You could have a picnic in the den with crunchy and crisp foods which are regulating. Or play regulating games like colouring or connect 4.

#### **5. Hot Dogs Game**

Please refer to attached programme.

#### **6. Obstacle Courses**

These provide great regulating sensory experiences. Encourage your child to carry/punch objects to make the obstacle course. Try to include things that will allow your child to crawl and have different body positions.

#### **7. Cosmic Kids Yoga**

There are lots of fun and child friendly You Tube clips that include simple yoga poses which are regulating and you and your child could do them together. To slow YouTube clips down:

1. Open the video in You Tube.
2. Click the three dots in right hand corner or settings icon on the bottom right.
3. Select 'playback speed' to 0.5x or less.

#### **8. Heavy Work Activities**

Any activities that involves pulling, pushing, carry heavy objects provide regulating proprioceptive inputs. Some ideas include: gardening activities – digging and pushing a wheelbarrow, tug of war, cycling, helping with house work, row row your boat song, door pull up bars, wall press offs

Some websites for further information around proprioceptive regulatory strategies and activities include:

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/sensory-processing-issues/heavy-work-activities>

<https://lemonlimeadventures.com/100-sensory-activities/>

<https://www.andnextcomesl.com/2015/06/heavy-work-activities-for-kids.html>

## **Occupational Therapy: Hot Dog Rolls**

**Hot Dog Rolls Programme:** This deep touch pressure of this activity is relaxing and calming.

### **What you will need:**

- Foam mat or flexible gym mat
- Large beach ball or therapy ball
- Various textured household items such as a washcloth, sponge, pot scrubber, vegetable brush, basting brush or large paintbrush, wooden foot massager and fabric swatches

### **Preparation:**

- Spread the mat on the floor or bed
- Have the child lie tummy down on the mat, near one end. The child's head should be off the mat

### **What you can do:**

- With consistent, firm pressure roll and press the ball up and down all over the child's body
- Say "I am making sure this hot dog is really well packed."
- Crouch next to your child and roll them gently and tightly in the mat toward the other end. Put one hand on their shoulder and the other had on their hip, rock them to and fro for a movement

### **Benefits of the activity:**

- Deep touch pressure from the mat and textured materials provides input to your child's somatosensory (tactile/proprioceptive) system
- The rotary action of rolling organises the vestibular system.

## Occupational Therapy: Oral Motor Activities

### Adaptations to everyday activities

- When drinking encourage the use of a straw or water bottle that's opening requires sucking.
- *For alerting sensory inputs:* during snack/meal times try to include food items that are crunchy (such as dry cereal, bread sticks, apples and raw carrots), cold (ice cream, frozen fruits and cold water) and sour (lemon, lime, and grapefruit).
- *For calming sensory inputs:* during snack/meal times try to include food items that would require greater chewing (such as baguettes, dried fruit and granola bars) and items that have a sweet taste.

### Oral Motor Activities

#### **20 Seconds**

Using raisins and a straw see how many you can suck up and move within twenty seconds.

#### **Table Football (to be played in pairs)**

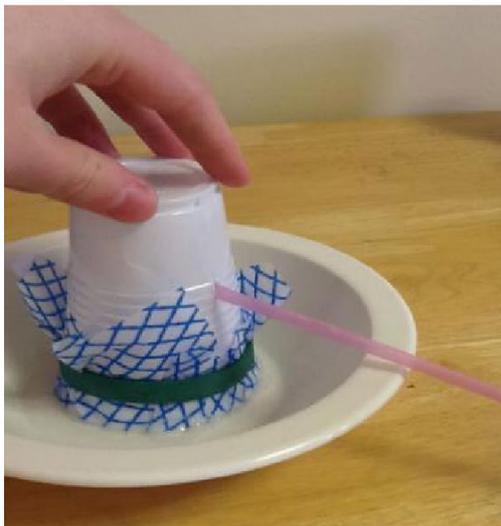
For this you will need straws and a ping pong ball or foam ball. Set up barriers on the table to form sidelines to keep the balls flying over. Then by blowing through straws only, see who can force the ball off the opponent's end of the table.



For this football pitch we used two pieces of green felt stuck together with masking tape to form halfway line. We then used masking tape to form the goals

### ***Blowing bubbles***

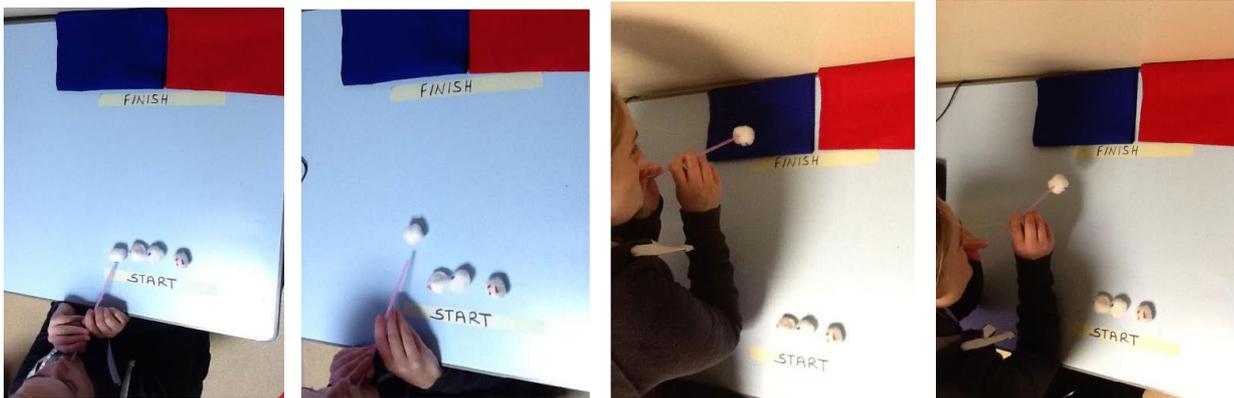
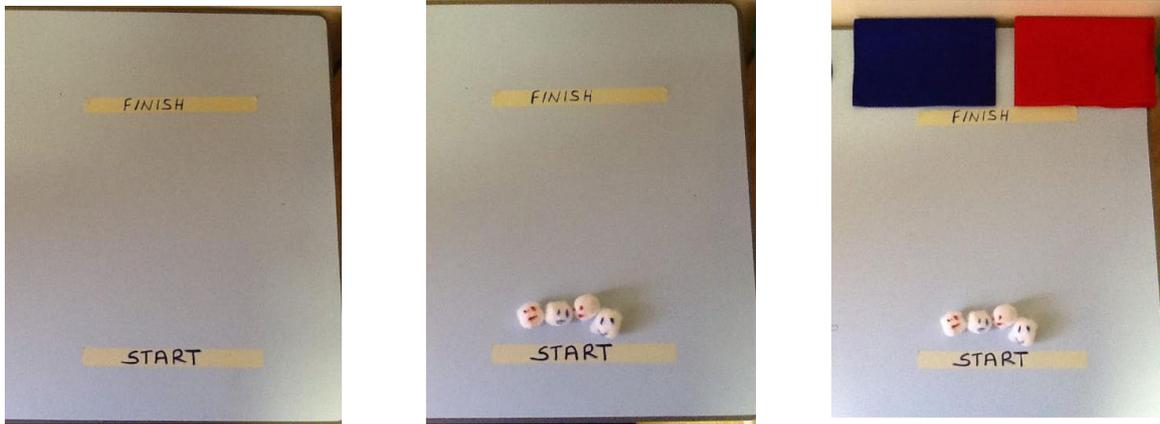
For this, you will need a plastic cup, washing up liquid, elastic band, cloth, small dish, something sharp to pierce the cup and a straw.



- Pierce the side of the cup so that there is room for the straw to go through. ○
- Cover the top of the cup with the cloth and secure with elastic band.
- Fill a shallow dish/bowl with washing up liquid and small amount of water; rub the top of the cloth into the mixture.
- Blow down the straw to see bubbles appear out of the cup.

## Shepherds

For this you will need a large open floor or table space, masking tape, cotton straws, different coloured pens (dependent on how many players) and containers/material to mark out the 'sheep pens'.



- Put a strip of masking tape at each end of the space to mark a start and finish line.
- Take a handful of cotton ball sheep and place them on the floor by the start line. The 'sheep' can be marked with different coloured pens to make them identifiable.
- Place two containers 'sheep pens' by the finish line (depending on number of players). Here we used two different coloured pieces of felt.
- Take a straw and sitting by the start line, blow through the straw to herd the sheep towards the sheep pens
- Once at the finish line, suck through the straw to drop them into the correct coloured pen.

### ***Bubble snake***

For this, you will need a plastic bottle, scissors, washing up liquid, dish cloth and elastic band.

- Cut bottom off water bottle.
- Cover with dish cloth, securing with elastic band.
- Fill shallow dish with water and washing up liquid. Dip cloth covered end into mixture.
- Blow the top of the bottle to make bubbles.

See how long you can make your snake before it falls.



### ***Adaptations***

Add food colouring drops to the cloth-covered end of the bottle to make colourful bubble snakes.

### ***Cup Races (activity for pairs)***

For this you will need string, 2 plastic cups, 2 chairs (or places to tie string at each end), scissors.

- Pierce a hole in the bottom of the cup.
- Cut 2 lengths of string (same size) and thread a cup on to each.
- Attach ends to the chairs ensuring that there is a gap between the two strings.
- Move the cups so they are at the 'start' line.
- Race to see who can blow their cup to the finish line the fastest.

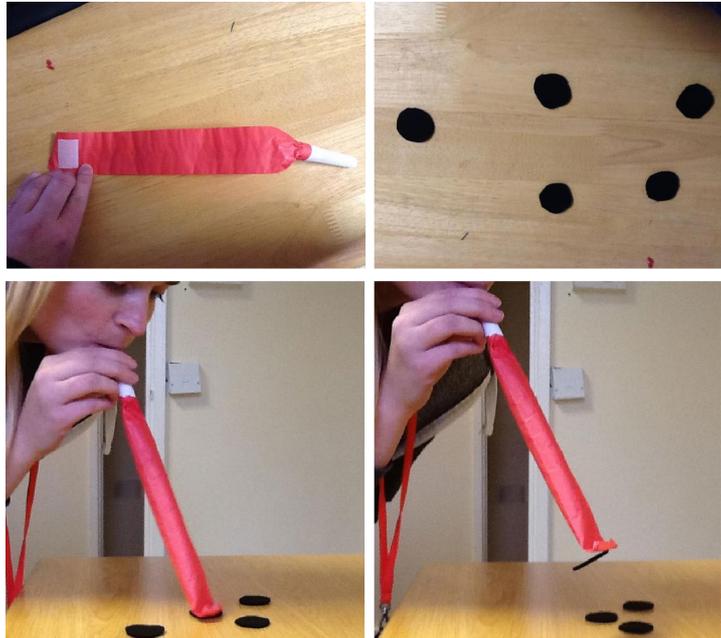


### ***Catching Flies***

For this you will need a party blower, pieces of felt to form the 'flies', piece of Velcro.

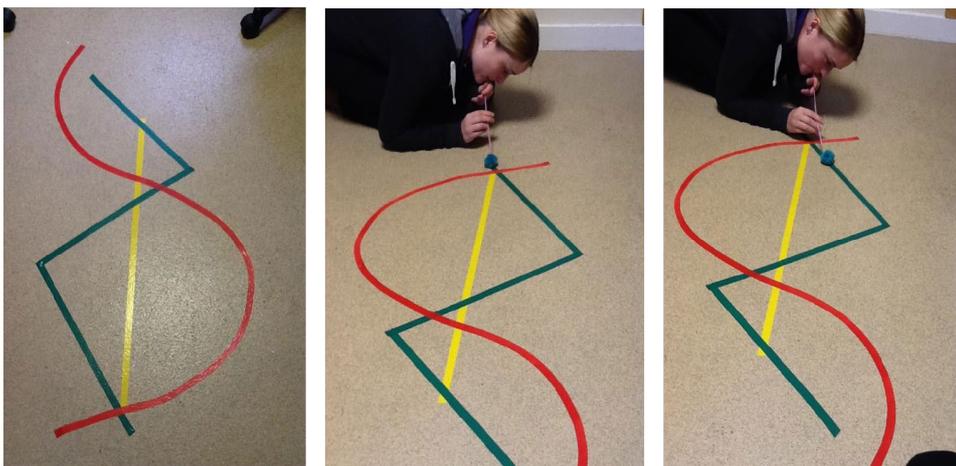
- Attach piece of Velcro to end of party blower.
- Lay out the 'flies' on to table or floor.

Use the party blower to pick up as many flies as you can



### ***Coloured Lines***

For these you will need 3 different coloured masking tapes with matching coloured pompoms and some straws



- Stick the tape on the floor forming different shaped lines e.g. curvy, jagged, and straight.
- Place the matching pompom at the start of the line.
- Using the straw, blow the pompom along the line, trying to keep it as close to the line as possible.

### ***How Heavy?***

For this you will need straws, masking tape and objects with different weights and structures:

Lightweight	Cotton balls, feathers, tissues, balloon.
Cylindrical	Empty cans, paper cups, paper towel/toilet paper rolls, wooden dowels.
Spherical	Golf balls, marbles, ping-pong balls.
Flat	Lollypop sticks, plastic container lids.
Bumpy	Wooden beads, pebbles, small blocks

- Clear a large floor space, putting strips of masking tape down to mark start and finish lines.
- Take a straw, choose an object and see if you can blow the object across the floor, from start to finish.
- Decide which objects are easy to move, not easy and which do not move at all.

### ***Adaptations***

- Hold up a lightweight object (tissue, feather, balloon) and blow underneath to keep it aloft. Pass it back and forth in pairs, keeping it from touching the floor.
- Races: everyone choose a similar object and see who can blow their object across the floor to the finish line first.
- Build a miniature obstacle course with blocks, train tunnels, cardboard tubes, and other items to blow items: over, around, under, and through.

## E. Maintaining a Sleep Routine

There are a number of reasons as to why a child may struggle with sleep especially at the moment when routines have all changed. These can include things such as an inability to self-settle, waking problems behavioural issues or sensory issues to name just a few. If you are worried about your child's sleep, keeping a sleep diary will help you get an accurate picture of your child's sleep patterns. This can be helpful in identifying possible reasons to why your child is having difficulties sleeping.

Some possible reasons for troubled sleep:

**An over-stimulating room** – does your child get out of bed to play with their toys. Distractions in a child's room can delay them from settling.

**Noise** – are there any noises inside or outside the home that may be disturbing your child. Some children with sensory issues are particularly sensitive to noise therefore what may seem like a really quiet sound to us may appear rather loud to the child and affect their ability to settle and fall asleep. Masking sounds in your home with something like a white noise app can help if noise is an issue for your child.

**Light** – is the room dark enough? Melatonin (our sleep hormone) is produced when it's dark. Black-out blinds can be purchased to help keep the room dark at bedtime.

**Bedding** – is your child kicking the bedding off during the night and getting cold. If so you could consider a sleep suit for your child or tucking a double duvet under a single mattress to stop it coming off during the night

### **Strategies to support sleep:**

**Settling:** Many children with additional needs struggle to settle themselves to sleep.

- If you stay with your child until they go to sleep you may need to gradually distance yourself to enable them to settle alone. For example if you currently lie in bed with them until they sleep, try sitting next to the bed for a few nights then gradually move your chair further away each night until they no longer need you in the room.
- Once you have turned the lights out and said goodnight do not engage in conversation with your child. Try using a 'broken record' phrase such as "It's bedtime, go to sleep" if your child tries to continue to interact with you after this. By engaging in conversation with your child after bedtime has been established they are being rewarded for remaining awake.

- **Bedtime routines:** Routine is very important at bedtime. We tend to thrive on routines and children with additional needs especially will respond positively to having structure at bedtime. Once a routine has been established it must be kept consistent throughout the week even if your child is staying elsewhere for the night. When constructing a routine it is helpful to decide what time you would like your child to be in bed and work back from this (despite not going to school). If bath-time is incorporated into this routine ideally it should occur at least half an hour before your child goes to sleep so their body temperature has time to regulate as a warm bath can increase body temperature and lead to difficulty sleeping. The child should have quiet time up to an hour before bedtime so the house becomes a quiet sleepy place. This time can incorporate doing a relaxing activity such as reading a book or having a gentle foot/hand massage. Avoid watching the TV or using tablets in this time as the light can stop the body from releasing melatonin.

**Visual Timetables:** A visual timetable is a way of demonstrating to a child what they can expect to happen in the lead up to bedtime using pictures and symbols. It may be useful to display the routine that you will be using at bedtime to help them to become familiar with the order of events.

**Explaining sleep:** Some children can have difficulty understanding the need for sleep. A social story could be used to explain this and help them settle, for example; *'All people sleep... They wake up each morning. I sleep in a bed. Usually Mum or Dad says, "Time to go to bed." This means it is time to get into bed and go to sleep'*.

**Rewarding your child:** It is important to remain positive with your child about bedtime so as to reduce any anxiety associated with it. Give your child praise at bedtime for what they are doing well and give consistent rewards until the behaviour is firmly established.

## F. Ideas for Indoor Activities

Many of the following ideas are around sensory play. Sensory play is aimed to include activities that stimulate your child's senses by engaging one or more of the senses: touch, smell, taste, sight and hearing.

**Cloud Dough:** Pour 4 cups flour into the centre of a large tub. Create a crater in the middle of the flour and pour the ½ cup oil into the crater and mix it all together. You can add glitter or food colouring or essential oils.

**Goop:** Mix the 2 cups of cornflour with 1 cup of water. Add food colouring if you like. You can also make the goop dance by placing a bass speaker next to it and playing something really 'bassy'.

**Sensory bins/bags:** This simply involves filling various containers with dried beans, lentils or rice and allowing your child to scoop, stir and transfer them between pots etc. You could try making a beach or treasure island out of rice. The same concept can be used using zip-lock freezer bags. For example you could try filling them with shaving foam, or jelly etc.

**Fizzing fun:** By adding vinegar to bicarbonate of soda it makes the powder fizz and bubble. You can play with this idea by either filling mugs/pots with bicarbonate of soda and adding vinegar and food colouring to them to create a 'fizzing tea party' or by filling a tray with bicarbonate of soda and putting the vinegar into a water pistol which your child can then squirt into the tray and watch the powder bubble up when the vinegar hits it.

**Marbled painting:** Squirt a layer of shaving cream onto a tray and let your child spread it about with their hands. Dribble some of the paint (watered down enough to pour) onto the shaving cream. Allow your child to swirl the paint around either using the back of a paintbrush or their fingers to make a marbled effect (make sure to stop before the colours mix together too much). You can print the marbled effect onto paper by placing a sheet of paper/card onto the foam. Gently lift the paper off the shaving foam and set aside. Then use a credit card or a cardboard square to scrape the shaving foam off the paper. The swirled/marbled pattern should remain on the paper. Set aside to dry.

**3D Paint:** Mix roughly equal amounts of PVA glue and white shaving cream together. Add little bits of food colouring or paint and stir into the mix. Your 3D paint is then ready to use. It works best to dab the paint onto the paper or card rather than smear, as you want it to be quite thick. Try finger painting with the paint. The paint will have a puffy, 3D texture when dry and will feel squishy like foam to the touch.

**Play Spaghetti:** Cook as much spaghetti as you wish to use then divide it up into separate containers – one container for each colour that you are making. Add a few drops of food colouring to each container and mix. Add a little cooking oil to the coloured spaghetti to stop it from becoming too sticky. Your coloured spaghetti is now ready. Allow your child to play with it!

**Raised salt painting:** Place a piece of paper onto a tray (e.g. a baking tray) and pour PVA glue onto the page. You can use the glue to draw a picture or create patterns. Then pour table salt onto the page, ensuring it covers all areas of glue. Once all the glue is covered in salt shake off the excess. Using a paintbrush drip watercolour paint onto the patches of salt. The colour will spread out and run along the lines of salt. Try and engage your child in watching the process of the paint spreading along the salt.

**Water-play:** Water is familiar to children and can provide an easy, safe and free form of sensory play. Fill a large container with water and provide your child with some simple toys such as funnels, various sized pots or containers, marbles, cloths or sponges, bubbles or foam etc and simply allow your child to experiment and play. A tray/container of water can be used for play both indoors and outdoors.

**Coloured rice:** By simply mixing dried rice with food colouring you can create brightly coloured rice grains that your child can use for sensory play. Simple mix approximately a cup of dried rice with a teaspoon of food colouring by placing both in a screw-top container and shaking until the rice is adequately covered and then setting aside to dry on paper towels. Once the rice is dried your child engage with it by passing it between containers or playing with it with their hands.

**Sand foam:** By simply mixing clean sand with shaving foam in a large tray/container it will create a fluffy, textured mixture that provides a material kids can use for sensory play. Engage your child in mixing the two materials together. Once the sand and foam are mixed you can hide objects such as shells or plastic toys in the sand-foam for your child to find. You can also draw and write in the sand foam using your fingers.

**Bottle-tops and bubbles:** Simply fill a large tub/container with water and washing up liquid to create a container of bubbles. You can then hide bottle-tops and ask your child to find them. See if they can do it by colour, (i.e. pick out all the red bottle tops). Your child could also try using different utensils to make more bubbles such as a whisk.

**Jelly play:** When making up the jelly try hiding objects that are similar in colour to the jelly you are hiding them in. This will help disguise them better. Allow the jelly to set in various containers/pots/jugs. Your child can try building things with the jelly, making pictures or words out of it. Again this is a great activity to do with your child if they have a tendency to put toys/materials in their mouths.

**Rock Monsters:** For this you will need googly eyes, paint, and glue. Make a bunch of rock characters, give them names, you could even give them personalities!



*Some ideas suggested in this section have been sourced from Learning For Kids – List of Sensory Play Activities’*

<http://www.learning4kids.net/list-of-sensory-play-ideas/>

## G. Physical activity

Maintaining physical activity when stuck indoors is a huge challenge for both you and your children. Mr Motivator recommends setting an alarm every 45 minutes as a reminder to stand up and move. Children with a Learning Disability or ASD may rely on physical movement to regulate. They may also have physical needs that require regular stretching and moving (in this case, you may already have physiotherapy advice on exercises to do at home). Physical activity is also very important for emotional wellbeing. It alerts the nervous system, increases focus, releases stress chemicals from the nervous system and better organises the neurochemistry. Exercise reduces anxiety and enhances mood. The greater the anxiety the more important the physical exercise.

### Activities to try with your child

- Star-jumps/ jumping jacks
- Bear- crawls or Crab-walks
- Balancing on one leg
- Touching your toes and reaching the sky
- Catching and throwing a ball
- Wallsits
- Hoovering and mopping
- The following home exercise programmes aimed at children are available on our website
  - Joe Wicks <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rN0h6EZd6TM>
  - Yotism [https://www.facebook.com/pg/yotismyoga/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/yotismyoga/videos/?ref=page_internal)

The following video is also recommended to supports exercise in the home:

- Harry Potter Yoga <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=R-BS87NTV5I&vl=en>

Also please refer to the [Live session](#) section on the schools e-learning resources for parents.

## H. Managing Meltdowns in the House

This is a stressful time for us all, people with learning disabilities will be confused and may find altered routines and changes difficult to cope with.

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) seeks to understand the reasons for behaviour so that unmet needs can be met. It is important that the core principles of Positive Behaviour Support person-centred support are maintained when everyday lives are affected by national restrictions.

### Core Principles (PBS Tips for Parents/Guardians)

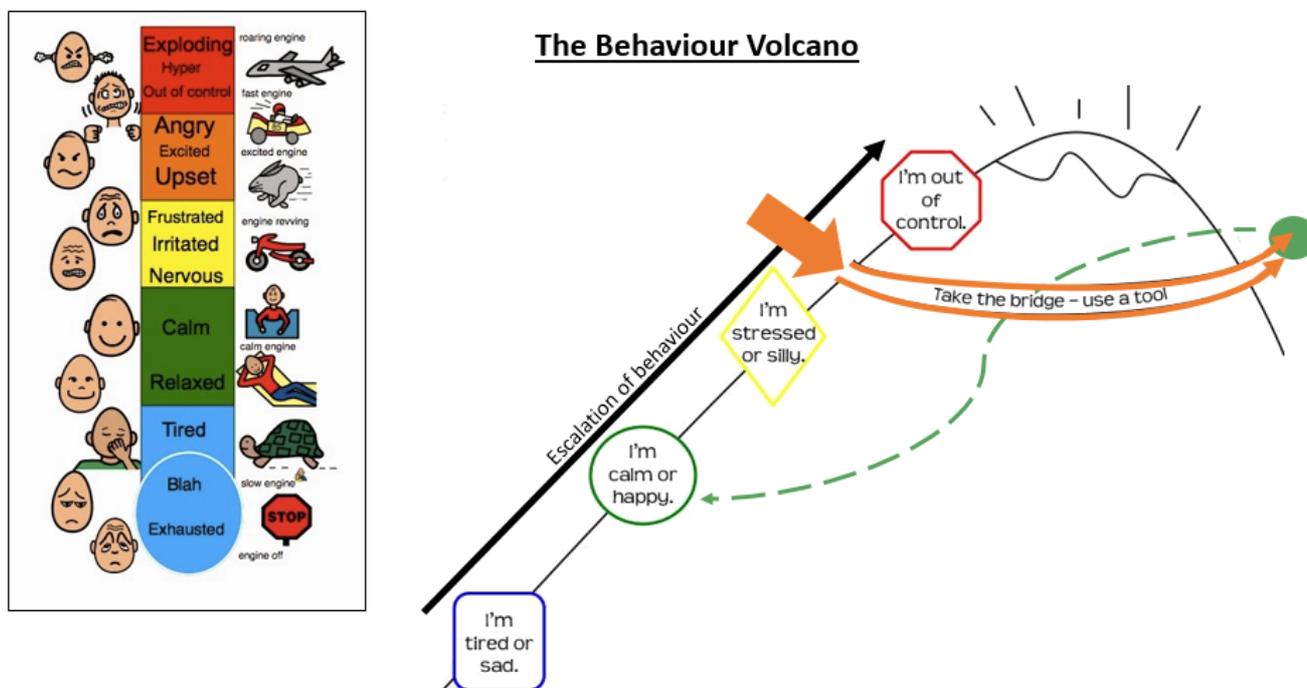
- Identify your child's preferred methods of communication, as effective communication can help to reduce their anxiety about any changes that need to happen.
- Communicate and try to explain changes to their day-day activities and plans and why.
- Try not to unnecessarily alarm or worry them.
- Enable your child to exercise choice and control over decisions that affect them, seek their views and input about sudden changes to their activities.
- Suggest alternative things to do instead and develop different strategies and approaches.
- Share information about adjustments and changes that may happen because of medical isolation and/or due to the closure of services.

### PBS Tips for your child

- Consider the known triggers that may result in behaviours of concern and put in place strategies to mitigate these. Some common triggers are boredom, sudden changes to routines, missing friends or families, and communication difficulties.
- Take into account your child's preferences when preparing activities or indoor recreational activities that may be used for time in isolation at home.
- Ask what they wish to do or offer alternatives that are consistent with the Government and NHS advice.
- At home, for example, most every day domestic tasks can be fun—if you make them enjoyable, create opportunities for your child to participate in them and give the right level of help and reinforcement.
- Try cooking or baking together, cleaning, doing dishes, laundry, gardening, crafts etc.
- It is ok to go out every day to exercise as long as social distancing requirements e.g. staying two metres away from people you don't live with, are adhered to - so going for walks etc can be a big help.

## Understanding Behaviour

The Behaviour Volcano shows how your child is feeling can contribute to behaviours. To help manage behaviours, you have special tools called strategies. These help you to keep our children positively engaged whilst monitoring any escalations of behaviour.



**I'm calm and happy** – during each day, these are the strategies you use consistently to keep you child reasonably calm and happy. Just because behaviours are minimal, you do not take strategies away. Its evidence that the strategies used are working and required. *Examples: Structured timetable – so child know what to expect for the day, opportunities for active play, Promote independence – chores or getting changes, brushing teeth, positive engagement, choice – chosen activities scheduled in for the day, like cooking.*

**I'm Stressed or Silly and I'm sad, tired or bored** – slightly amend the strategies you are already using Have a reserve of Active Strategies that you can implement. These should be the tools that you use to help your child return back to a calm or happy mood. *Examples: relaxation-music, family party/dance time, quiet time. Sensory activities – flour, rice, playdough, movement.*

**Take the bridge** – These should be a few strategies that can redirect your child back to a positive mind set. *Examples: address needs – snack or if it's attention, play a game. Redirect to an activity, distract your child with something they really likes.*

**I'm Out of Control** - These are your Reactive Strategies that you use when all other strategies have been exhausted or when a student has hit crisis point and you have to act quickly, in order to deescalate. They are your back pocket tricks that you don't do often. *Examples: lower demands, give space, go for a walk, change of environment – garden or bedroom, more or minimal interaction, make area/space safe, offer a preferred activity.*