

Top 10 Tips to Support an Autistic Child or Young Person at Home

1. Create predictable routines

- Consistency reduces anxiety and helps children feel secure.
- Use visual schedules, checklists, or simple “now and next” boards.
- Keep morning, after-school, and bedtime routines steady.



2. Use clear, concrete communication

- Say exactly what you mean using short, direct sentences.
- Avoid idioms or sarcasm unless you know they understand them.
- Visuals, gestures, or written prompts can really help.

3. Build a calm, sensory-friendly space

- A small corner with soft lighting, cushions, or sensory tools can help with regulation.
- Reduce overwhelming noise or clutter where possible.



4. Support emotional regulation

- Teach simple strategies like deep breathing, counting, or using a calm-down box.
- Model calm behaviour and name emotions gently.
- Validate feelings before offering solutions.

5. Follow their interests

- Special interests are powerful motivators and sources of joy.
- Use them to connect, communicate, and build confidence.
- Incorporate interests into learning or routines where appropriate.

6. Offer choices to build independence

- Simple choices reduce overwhelm and increase cooperation.
- “Blue cup or red cup” works better than open-ended questions.

7. Prepare for changes in advance

- Transitions can be hard.
- Use countdowns, timers, or visual warnings.
- Explain changes early and repeat information calmly.



8. Encourage communication in all forms

- Speech, gestures, AAC, writing, Makaton — all communication is valid.
- Follow their lead and respond to their attempts warmly.

9. Work as a team with school

- Share what works well at home and ask what helps in class.
- Consistency across environments supports regulation and confidence.



10. Look after yourself

- Supporting an autistic child can be joyful and demanding.
- Take breaks, seek support, and connect with other families.
- Your wellbeing directly supports theirs.