

# CENTER FOR Autism Spectrum Disorders

[www.childrensnational.org/CASD](http://www.childrensnational.org/CASD)



Children's National.

## CASD CHAT E-Newsletter

### Executive Functioning Basics for Parents: Free Resources

Dear CASD Families and friends,

It's August, so the start of school is right around the corner. This school year presents unique challenges, as many students transition from distance learning back to the classroom, it may be helpful to sit down with your child and start making a list of what will change and what will be the same as compared to their last school year. It may also be helpful to set up a schedule to put in place a couple of weeks before school starts that slowly mimics the school day, such as gradually moving your child's bedtime and wake up time to match the school day.

As you gather information on your school's plan to keep children safe, CASD is offering free videos to help your child:

- Cope with upcoming changes
- Manage disappointment and unexpected transitions
- Stay calm when faced with a challenge

As a parent, these videos can help you:

- Understand executive function problems
- Tell a can't from a won't
- Turn can'ts into cans
- Teach calming strategies to face challenges

\*Five of the videos are also available in Spanish.



Videos feature interviews with expert parents and professionals as well as engaging cartoons, and make the evidence-based techniques from the *Unstuck and on Target!* curriculum come to life. They can be used as stand alone supports or can be paired with the *Unstuck* school-based interventions.

In keeping with *Unstuck's* focus on the integration of stakeholder views in our work, PCORI support allowed us to develop these videos with input from parents, teachers, clinicians, autistic self-advocates and 98 parents who reviewed them and found them useful. We hope you will too. Please see the flyer below for the full description of the videos.

If you find these videos helpful, you may want to ask your school about implementing *Unstuck and On Target* in your school district. Virginia families can also ask their schools to participate in the *Unstuck and On Target* school implementation project ([click the link for more details](#)). Feel free to share them with your child's treatment providers, teachers, or other families or on social media.

The videos were supported by the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (DI-2019C2-17605).

**Playlist of all videos**

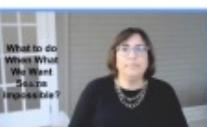
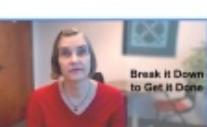
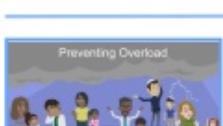
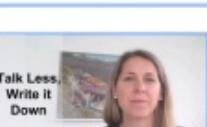
### **Básicos del Funcionamiento Ejecutivo**

Si su hijo(a) tiene problemas con el funcionamiento ejecutivo, tales como atascarse o sentirse sobrecargado o dificultades en seguir instrucciones, estos videos ofrecen estrategias que son fácil de usar inmediatamente. Estos videos y animaciones, que son cortos y divertidos, presentan situaciones de la vida real, consejos prácticos de expertos, y padres compartiendo su sabiduría y experiencia, todos hecho en una forma fácil de entender.

**Recursos para padres**

## Executive Function Basics for Parents

If you have a child with executive function challenges such as getting stuck or overwhelmed, or trouble with following directions, then these videos provide simple strategies that parents can use immediately. These short, engaging, videos and animations feature real-life situations, practical advice from experts, parents sharing their wisdom, and easy to understand explanations. (Click on each image to be taken to that video).

 <p>This animation introduces parents to what executive functions are and what problems with executive functioning look like. It introduces simple steps parents can take to help their children.</p>	 <p>In this webinar, an expert explains how children and parents can both get more of what they want through motivating strategies.</p>
 <p>Compromising helps everyone get what they want. This animation explains the different types of compromise and how they can be used so that both parents and their children can walk away with something positive.</p>	 <p>Sometimes what we want is not possible. This webinar features an expert explaining what to do in these situations to help your child.</p>
 <p>This animation shows parents how then can help their children manage disappointment when things don't go as planned by "expecting the unexpected."</p>	 <p>Children with executive function challenges can easily get overwhelmed. In this video, an expert gives simple tips for breaking tasks down into steps in order to get things done.</p>
 <p>Coming up with multiple plans helps to keep your child thinking flexibly and calling events a 'big deal' or a 'little deal' helps them manage disappointment. We explain how to effectively use both strategies in this animation.</p>	 <p>In this interview, parents Troy and Vanessa reflect on how children sometimes <i>can't</i> do something when it appears that they <i>won't</i> do it. They break down how to turn those <i>can't</i>s into <i>cans</i>.</p>
 <p>This animation offers parents tips on helping to prevent your child from getting overwhelmed, such as identifying possible triggers and preparing for them in advance.</p>	 <p>Creating and working towards goals is a critical life skill. In this webinar, we discuss how to help your child make goals, understand why that goal is important, and how to create a plan to achieve that goal.</p>
 <p>In this animation, we cover how to identify the intensity of feelings as well as the different strategies available to manage those feelings and get your child back to feeling "on target."</p>	 <p>In this webinar an expert explains how taking the time to write things down can help your child process their feelings when talking to them either makes it worse or seems to go nowhere.</p>

### Comments from parents:

"The videos helped remind me of my child's perspective—and how often his struggles are a sign of something else—something deeper. That he's not trying to be difficult."

"The videos made me feel less alone. They reminded me that my son's behavior is "normal" within the spectrum and hopeful that there are more things I can try to help him."

"Very good information on material we as parents can use with our children at home. The strategies were very well explained."

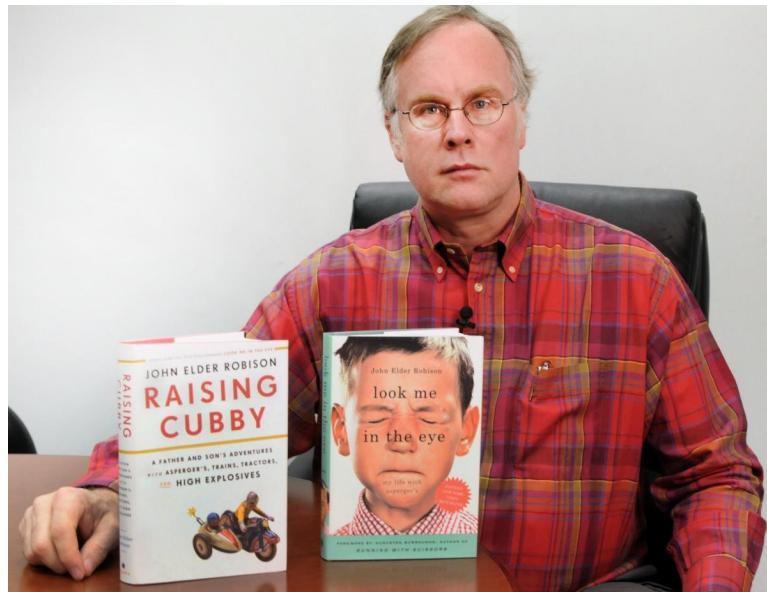
 Scan the QR code to the left to be taken to our YouTube playlist with all of the videos. Each video can also be downloaded using the link included in the description as well as information sheets to support you when trying new things at home.

These videos were supported by the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (DI-2019C2-17605).



## Profiles Celebrating Neurodiversity

John Elder Robison would go on to write the introduction to the *Unstuck and On Target!* curriculum; however, as a kid, the bestselling author grew up at a time when few people had ever heard of Asperger's Syndrome. As a kid, Robison was often punished for "misbehaving" and "laziness," a situation that is all too familiar to individuals with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). It wasn't until adulthood that a doctor suggested to him that he might have Asperger's. "The knowledge," said Robison, "changed my life forever. It took some time, and a lot of hard work, but the knowledge of how and



In 2007, Robison published his heartfelt memoir, *Look Me in the Eye*, which describes his challenges during childhood and young adulthood as he struggles to navigate social challenges, learning from his experiences, before he was diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome. He also describes how his interests led to career successes in unexpected ways! A great read and first-hand account from an individual with ASD, the book instantly became a massive bestseller. Today, Robison continues to write about his experiences with Asperger's Syndrome, while remaining a tireless advocate for those on the Autism Spectrum. He is co-chair of the Neurodiversity Working Group at William & Mary University (<https://www.wm.edu/sites/neurodiversity/johnelderrobison/index.php>).

## 2021 Calendar of Events

### Ivymount IvyMoves Club

**Where:** Ivymount School

**When:** Thursdays 4-4:45 pm

Featuring a mix of stretches, beginner's yoga, and fitness exercises along with music to get you moving and shaking at home. Ivymount's own Adapted Physical Education teacher, Mr. M, will be leading the fun! During each class, participants will engage in upper body, lower body, cardio or strength training movements. Fitness challenges and rewards will be celebrated throughout the session. [Register here.](#)

### Free Parent Support Group

**Where:** Virtual

**When:** every Monday at 1 PM EST

Dr. Dan Shapiro, friend of CASD, will be offering a free parent support group, every Monday at 1 PM EST. To register, [click here](#).

### TGIF Yoga Series

**Where:** Virtual

**When:** Once a Month every Friday at 4:30p

Pathfinders for Autism and [Child's Heart Yoga](#) are teaming up for a series of FREE yoga classes to try and provide a much needed mental health break for everyone during this hectic time.

Starting on Friday, March 12th at 4:30 p.m. and continuing once a month until

September, please join us for a free, virtual, all ages, family friendly yoga class taught by Bridget Strama of [Child's Heart Yoga](#).

The event(s) are free, but a one-time registration is required. Please register below. A Zoom link will be sent out before each class to join in. You only need to register once to sign up for the series. Feel free to attend one or all of the classes! For more details, [please see here](#).

**Mass General Introduction to Sexuality Considerations for Individuals on the Autism Spectrum**

**Where:** Virtual

**When:** Thursday, August 12th, 12-1 EST

This introductory webinar will discuss how the features and associated features of an Asperger/autism profile can impact sexuality. An overview of challenges and interventions will be explored through multiple profile lenses (e.g. social, communication, special interests, sensory, motor, cognitive, and emotional). Registration costs 35 dollars. Call 781-860-1900 to register.

**Mass General Introduction to Post-Secondary Transition Planning**

**Where:** Virtual

**When:** Tuesday, August 17th, 12-1 EST

This webinar will provide an overview of an ASD-specific transition planning process. Teens and parents will receive an orientation about how to work collaboratively toward the shared goal of a successful transition from high school to adulthood. Teen participants will learn how to share the "case manager" role with their parents, increasing their skills and knowledge, toward a goal of independence in their post-secondary life. Registration costs 35 dollars. Call 781-860-1900 to register.

**Pathfinders for Autism**

(<https://pathfindersforautism.org/calendar/>) provides a list of programs for all ages including video group for spouses/partners of adults with Asperger's; Social clubs divided by ages ranging from 6 years to adult on July 10; Baby Navigator - what every parent needs to know on July 15 and more!

## Wrightslaw Special Education Law & Advocacy Conference



**WHEN**

**October 12-13, 2021**

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

This training will be virtual and held on Zoom.

Cost:  
\$160 for Families\*  
\$210 for Professionals\*  
\*The increased cost includes the set of books mailed to you

[Purchase your family ticket here.](#)

[Purchase your professional ticket here.](#)

Join us for a 2 day virtual conference on special education and advocacy. Topics that will be covered are:

- Special education law, rights, and responsibilities;
- Tests and measurements to measure progress and regression;
- Smart IEPs (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time Limited) and;
- Introduction to tactics and strategies for effective advocacy.



[ppmd.org](http://ppmd.org)

We recommend checking out [an interview with Dr. Sarah Combs of Children's National Hospital](#) regarding the safety of children returning to school.

**CASD is currently recruiting for a new online study in collaboration with Georgetown University. Eligible participants are adolescents 14-18 years old with or without autism spectrum disorder. The study takes place entirely over Zoom and involves completing a few tasks and answering some questionnaires with a member of the research team. Parents will also be asked to report on their child's behavior. Parents and children will be compensated up to \$80.**

**If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about our study please contact Rebecca Handsman at [rhandsman@childrensnational.org](mailto:rhandsman@childrensnational.org).**

Allysa Ware, Ph.D. Candidate at Catholic University of America is recruiting for her dissertation study, exploring African American parents' views and opinions on parenting a child with autism. The purpose of this survey is to find out your views on different areas of parenting a child with autism, or ASD, and parenting experiences. The survey takes around 15-20 minutes to complete. To qualify to participate in the survey you must be 18 years of age or older, identify as Black or African American, and be the parent or parenting caregiver of an African American child with autism or ASD (age 17 or younger). If you meet these qualifications, and would like to participate, please be assured that your individual responses are completely anonymous and therefore completely confidential. Your participation is also completely voluntary, and there are no penalties for not participating.

As an incentive for completing the survey, you will receive a \$20 Amazon gift card for a completed survey. Please note that if you have further questions about the survey, or its results, you are welcome to contact Ms. Ware directly at her email: [66ware@cua.edu](mailto:66ware@cua.edu), or her supervising major professor, Dr. Michaela L. Z-Farber, PhD, LCSW-C at [farber@cua.edu](mailto:farber@cua.edu) (office phone 202-319-5465). The Institutional Review

Board (IRB) at the Catholic University has approved the conduct of this survey. You can also call The Catholic University of America's Office of Sponsored Programs at (202) 319-5218.

If you are interested in participating in the study, please complete the survey by clicking the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/childrensnationalautism>

## Community Resources & Events

The Drexel Autism Institute is seeking youth **ages 13-29 on the autism spectrum** who are transitioning to adulthood. They are also looking for these youths' **caregivers and providers** to participate in a study about **Team Trestle, an application for transition planning and coordination**. This virtual tool is designed to help autistic individuals meet their life goals by engaging autistic youth/young adults, their parents/legal guardians, and providers in the collaborative process of **implementing and achieving goals during the transition to adulthood**. For more information, check out the flyer. If you're interested, fill out the Interest Form at <https://tinyurl.com/TrestleInterest> [tinyurl.com] or email our team at [sodi@drexel.edu](mailto:sodi@drexel.edu).

The Autism Institute at Drexel University is seeking parents/caregivers OR preschool/daycare providers of autistic children aged 24-60 months who have trouble speaking and use a communication tool (i.e., PECS, AAC device). We want **to better understand the use of communication tools** and how collaboration occurs about communication tool use in home/school settings **for minimally verbal preschool students with autism**. During a 90-minute focus group or interview we want to learn how teams work together to support children who use communication tools. If you are interested, please fill out the Interest Form

### Advocacy Resources

[Autistic Self Advocacy Network-Navigating College: A Handbook on Self Advocacy](#)

### Resources on Racism/Supporting Black People

[Spectrum Support's Social Stories on Racism](#)  
[ASAN's What is Police Violence?: A Plain Language Booklet](#)  
[@TheMorganCruise Worksheets for Black Children](#)

### COVID-19 Safety Resources

[Behavioral Directions LLC's Safety Teaching Protocol](#)

### COVID-19 National and Local Government Resources

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)  
[World Health Organization](#)  
[DC Department of Health](#)  
[Maryland Department of Health](#)  
[Virginia Department of Health](#)  
[U.S Department of Education's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) Part C Dispute Resolution Procedures](#)  
[U.S Department of Education's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) Part B Dispute Resolution Procedures](#)

Visit Children's National Hospital's COVID-19 Resources



Visit Ivymount 2021 Special Needs Resource Guide: Highlighting 70+ Local OrganizationsFind Information about Behavioral Services, ABA Therapy, Assessment & Treatment; Schools Educational Programs, Advocacy; Social, Recreational, Fitness;Transitioning Youth &

at <https://tinyurl.com/EPICfocus> [tinyurl.com] or email [sodi@drexel.edu](mailto:sodi@drexel.edu) and we will contact you.

**Young Adults; Accessibility, Inclusion, Safety, Health; Therapeutic Services; Camps; Financial Planning, Insurance**