

CENTER FOR Autism Spectrum Disorders

www.childrensnational.org/CASD



Children's National.

CASD CHAT E-Newsletter

Back to School

Dear CASD families and friends,

August's CASD Chat (by Srishti Rau, PhD with the support of research assistant Andrea Lopez, BS) focuses on helping families prepare to go back to school.



The new school year can mean excitement and new beginnings for many students. However, for some youth on the autism spectrum, aspects of a new school year can also be stressful and lead to feeling overwhelmed. There are several ways families can **prepare for this change to reduce anxiety and promote a successful transition to a new school year.**

1. **Before the start of the school year, talk to your child's teachers about how they learn best.** Consider creating and providing teachers with a one page profile on your child's strengths, skills they are working on, and strategies that do and do not work for promoting their engagement and availability for learning. The following blogpost guides parents in how to create such a page: [How to Make a One Page Profile](#) Older students can generate their own letter to their teachers; it will help engage their teachers and make a positive impact.
2. **Take a tour of the school and your child's classroom before the first day of school,** during a time when it is calm and other students are not present. If possible, request a 1:1 meeting with your child's teacher(s), as well as walking around the school to point out important locations (e.g., locker, bathrooms, main office, cafeteria, gym). If helpful, take pictures of these locations and teachers to create a social story for your child. Older students benefit from learning how to navigate the school to change classes and practice opening their locker.
3. **Practice the morning routine** in the days (or weeks) leading up to the first day of school to build predictability and reduce anxiety about the upcoming change. As many children's sleep and wake schedules may be different during summer vacation, slowly work to putting your child to bed and waking them up closer to their bedtime and wake up time during the school year (e.g., modifying each end of the schedule by 5 or 10 minutes a night). Don't forget to practice the walk to the bus stop if your child will be taking the bus, including reminding them where to get off on the way home!

4. **Talk to your child about what to expect in the new school year**, identifying what will be similar to the prior school year (they still get lunch break) and what will differ (changing classes, more students...). Brainstorm possible challenges and how to problem solve these obstacles (e.g., using role play). Identify safe adults your child can seek support from.

Additional details on preparing for the new school year can be found at:

- [Back to School: 17 Tips to Help Autistic Kids](#)
- [5 Tips for a Smooth Start of the School Year for Your Child with Autism](#)
- [How to Get Your Child with ASD Ready for a New School Year Using Visual Information](#)

Additional CHATS can be found on the Children's National CASD website.

Profiles Celebrating Neurodiversity



Continuing with CASD Chat's new feature, "Profiles Celebrating Neurodiversity," this month we feature Susan Boyle, singer and previous contestant on Britain's Got Talent. Susan was raised in Blackburn, West Lothian. When she was a child her family felt she had a learning disability due to being deprived of oxygen during her birth. It was not until 2012, when she was an adult, that Susan was told she was misdiagnosed and was in fact on the Autism spectrum. Susan described learning about her autism diagnosis as a relief and helping her develop a clearer understanding of herself.

In interviews, Susan has described she comes from a musical family, and singing is something she has always done, participating in school productions and shows. She attended Edinburgh Acting School and has appeared in the Edinburgh Fringe. Susan took some time away from singing to care for her ill mother, who passed away in 2007 at the age of 91. Following her mother's death, Susan auditioned for Britain's Got Talent and went on to win second place in the finale in May 2009. Her performance in the finale drew a record of 17.3 million viewers! Since her performance, Susan has put out several albums, won multiple awards for her singing, and gone on several tours.

2022 Calendar of Events

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](#).

Dr. Shapiro is offering new courses for parents of different age groups. To learn more about these courses, please visit his website:

<http://www.parentchildjourney.com/>

Dr. Shapiro also offers parent-child excursions: stand-alone courses on common topics in developmental and behavioral pediatrics: ADHD, anxiety, autism, social success, sibling relationships, eating, sleeping, violence, adolescence, gender, sexuality, and more.

These in-depth seminars are for parents of children with challenging temperaments or developmental differences. Each Excursion starts with a review of background concepts then dives deep into specific strategies. As with all Parent Child Journey courses, the emphasis here is on individualizing the approach for each child. Choose the topics that interest you. Real-life challenges. Real-life solutions.

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; Transitioning services and Job skills; Baby and Family Navigator programs, and new this month, Autism from the Autistic Perspective and free Pediatric Occupational Therapy Screening and more!

NEW VIDEOS ADDED!



The *Unstuck* author team has created short videos to help parents of children with executive functioning difficulties. Please click the playlists below to view the videos in both English and Spanish! **We have added new videos to address feedback from parents. Please click on our playlist to view our new 3-part video series on "troubleshooting."**

[Playlist of all videos](#)

[Recursos para padres](#)

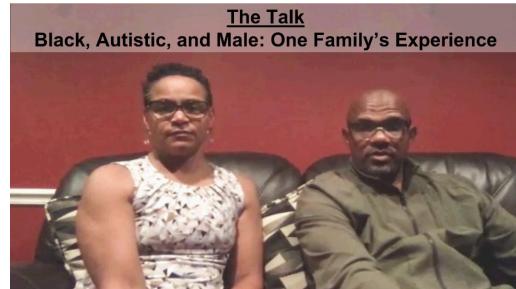
The Talk—Black, Autistic, and Male:

We would like to share an interview with a family of a college-bound autistic young adult and an

One Family's Experience

accompanying reflection by Tawara Goode, Director of the National Center for Cultural Competence and Director of the Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities.

Click here for the video



ASD Studies of Interest

Please see below for a flyer regarding a study of brain development and autism. If you're interested, please contact Chelsea Armour, aarmour@childrensnational.org.

THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC

GEORGE
MASON
UNIVERSITY



Website



Do you want to help us study brain development and learn about autism?

Earn up to \$90 in our developmental studies at The George Washington University!

Is your child between 5-17 years old and has an autism diagnosis?
Have a fun family day!
We would like to invite you and your child to play child-friendly computer games while we track their gaze and their brain function.

Andi Lab	andi lab@email.gwu.edu

Announcements and Resources

We want to highlight *Ivymount School Resource Guide* which provides information on a wide range of resources in the community including **Summer Camps** (since it is that time of year to schedule)
www.ivymount.org/resourceguide2022

20+ free resources available to view anytime, anywhere!

Enjoy these information-packed free webinars on your own or make them a powerful group learning event with your colleagues, friends, and family members. Topics include:

- Working/learning in groups
- Face-to-face communication
- Social anxiety
- Executive functions
- Children's stress
- Self-regulation
- Individual webinars on 10 core Social Thinking Vocabulary

Hosted by Social Thinking.

Advocacy Resources

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

Resources on Anti-Racism

[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