

## WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION OF OUR AUTISM TEAM NEWSLETTER 😊

We hope you are all keeping safe and well during this time of change and difference – something we know can be very tricky to manage.

We have produced this newsletter to try and support you with ideas, signpost you to useful resources and websites, as well as answering queries you may have.

### Your Questions

#### Eating

This week we have been asked about supporting children with autism who struggle with eating and drinking. Try the top tips on the SISS Autism team fact sheet and links to other resources on the local offer if you are having difficulty encouraging your child to drink or try new foods. <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/children-and-young-peoples-send-service/siss-2/the-autism-team/>

#### Hand washing

Washing our hands regularly is now more important than ever, but some children with autism find this difficult.

|  Washing hands |                     |
|---|---------------------|
|                | Water on            |
|                | Hands wet           |
|                | Rub hands with soap |
|                | Rinse               |
|                | Water off           |
|                | Dry                 |

- Model when and how to wash your hands and prompt your child to remind them when to do this – consider a visual reminder in the bathroom
- Try breaking down handwashing into smaller, more manageable steps, using this visual example as a guide.
- These sesame street daily routine cards also have a step by step guide on daily tasks, including hand washing:  
<http://autism.sesamestreet.org/daily-routine-cards/>
- Follow this link for handwashing tips for people with sensory difficulties:  
<https://www.sensoryintegration.org.uk/News/8821506>
- A fun, child friendly guide for washing hands from the NHS:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9VjeIWLnEg>

## Routines

We all know routine is important for children with autism, so here are a few tips and links to help you put this in place at home.

- Have a schedule for the day that children can remove items from as they are completed – try using a list of post its and let your child decide what order they would like to complete their activities if they are finding staying at home difficult
- Include lots of physical breaks and opportunities for children to do things they enjoy – knowing that these are happening regularly will help them stay motivated during activities they may not enjoy so much
- Take a look at Autism West Midlands for ideas on creating your own visual resources, including timetables and reward charts

<https://www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk/online-resources/visual-resources/>

- Use the below examples as a guide for creating your own morning schedules

|   |   |  |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| <br>brush teeth | <br>wash face | <br>brush hair   | <br>get dressed | <br>breakfast | <br>my time  |
| <br>breakfast  | <br>exercise | <br>school work | <br>lego       | <br>lunch    | <br>my time |

- Use the First Then app to create your own now/next board on your mobile – use your own pictures or visuals you find online



## SIGNPOSTING TO USEFUL WEBSITES:

- Autism West Midlands helpline **0121 4507575** or email [info@autismwestmidlands.org.uk](mailto:info@autismwestmidlands.org.uk)
- National Autistic Society - Resources, Tips and Family experiences for Autistic people and families during lockdown:  
<https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/coronavirus.aspx>
- NAS – Spectrum Live is back with a Coronavirus Series:  
<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/spectrum-live.aspx>
- Solihull Local Offer: <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/>
- SISS Autism team on the Local Offer:  
<https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/children-and-young-peoples-send-service/siss-2/the-autism-team/>
- SISS twitter feed: [https://twitter.com/SISS\\_Solihull](https://twitter.com/SISS_Solihull)