

# ASSISTING EACH OTHER:

## PARENT-PROVIDED TIPS FOR COPING WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING

# ASSIST

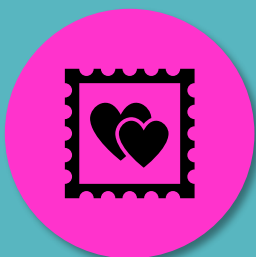
Advocating for SupportS to  
Improve Service Transitions

We asked parents of young adults on the autism spectrum how their family has been handling and making the most of this unpredictable time. Here is what they shared with us:

### DAILY CHECKLIST

	<b>Start the day with a routine in mind</b> Shower, take medication, eat breakfast, drink water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Cross a day off the calendar</b> Also consider adding events a few months from now to look forward to!	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Clean one thing</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Nourish something that is growing</b> Water a plant, feed a pet, or be mindful of your own personal growth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Talk to someone outside of your home</b> Call on the phone, do a video chat, send a text, or write a letter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Do one thing to get your heart rate up</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Do one thing you'll be glad you did later</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Do one thing just because you wanted to</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Get in at least one good laugh</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Remember...



what you are  
grateful for



to practice deep  
breathing



to spend time in  
nature



that this will  
pass



## One family's experience:

"We printed off a couple of Flat Stanley figures from the internet. John\* cut them out and colored them. Then we made small care packages (containing a fun activity like a puzzle or board game, some candy, and a roll of toilet paper) that we mailed off to relatives. When they received the packages, they started sending pictures by text of themselves with Flat Stanley so that John could see what they were up to at their houses. We also kept a Flat Stanley for ourselves and snapped and sent pictures to them of what was going on at our house."

\*all names are changed

## Families have found that now is the perfect time to...



cook together



start a garden



work on  
independent  
living skills



try photography

## Another family's experience:

"I have Emma\* journaling every day. I come up with questions written in a notebook so she isn't getting the question directly from me, and I let her respond. I try to make the questions insightful, and for the most part, I have been quite impressed with Emma's responses. I don't critique for spelling and grammar. These are hard areas for Emma, and I don't want to stifle her willingness to put thoughts on paper. Expressing herself has always been difficult when it comes to thoughts and emotions, so I am ecstatic when I can get a glimpse of what she experiences."

\*all names are changed

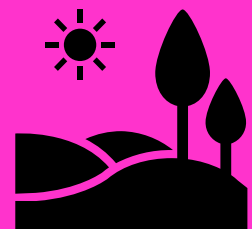


# Fun Indoor Activities



**Families agree that getting outdoors (safely) is important!**

Many families have said that going outside as much as possible has been very helpful! Whether that means taking a walk around the neighborhood, going for a drive with the windows down, or even just sitting on the porch for a bit, the fresh air and sunshine can be very calming.



# ASSIST

Advocating for SupportS to  
Improve Service Transitions

ASSIST is sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health and the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities.

ASSIST was developed through a collaboration with the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, the Waisman Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, The Arc Tennessee, and The Autism Program of Illinois.