

# COVID-19 Family Resource Guide

Marcus Autism Center has developed this document to help provide you and your family with resources to support you through this ever-changing situation. Our hope is that this guide is informative and useful for the unique needs of all families. It includes:

- Information about COVID-19 and individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- Educational resources
- Social stories and visual supports
- Care coordination resources

## Information about COVID-19 and individuals with autism

- Autism Focused Intervention Resources and Modules (AFIRM) – [COVID-19 Toolkit](#) provides information about supporting individuals with autism through uncertain times.
- Autism Speaks resources
  - [Coping with Disrupted Family Routines](#)
  - [How to Handle School Closures and Services for Children with Autism](#)
- Autism Society of America – [COVID-19 Toolkit](#) addresses mental health and respite, education, modifying routines, public policy and lifestyle supports, and includes:
  - [Autism Society of Minnesota Guide to Managing Self-Quarantine and Social Distancing](#)
  - Facebook Live coronavirus information series
- [How to Explain a Global Crisis to Children with Autism](#)
- Child Mind Institute – [Supporting Families During COVID-19](#)
  - Tips about daily structure, behavior management and self-care are emailed daily.

## Educational resources for children with disabilities

- U.S. Department of Education – [Questions and Answers on Providing Services to Children with Disabilities During the Coronavirus](#)
- Family Network on Disabilities – [Services during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- Vanderbilt Kennedy Center – [Families First Online Education Series](#)
  - Web-based educational opportunities for caregivers of young children with autism
  - Every Thursday from 2 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. (EST)

## Social stories and visual supports

Changes in routine resulting from the current health crisis can be difficult for children with ASD. Social stories and visual supports can be helpful in easing transitions and changes. Social stories are simple stories with pictures that can be read to children or by children to help them better understand and adjust to changes, such as in the environment or with a routine. A social story can also help children learn about what others may be thinking or feeling related to situations described in the story. Visual supports are often used to assist in teaching new skills, increasing engagement or decreasing challenging behavior. They often include pictures, symbols and/or words that provide information to children about events.

- University of Miami – [Social Narrative Video about COVID-19](#) (two-minute video)
- National Autism Association – [Social Story: What is COVID-19?](#) (18-page document)
- National Autism Association – [Handwashing Visual](#)

## Care coordination resources

- [Marcus Autism Center](#) has numerous resources for caregivers, including general autism information and tips, communication and social development, feeding resources, school supports, behavioral tips and seasonal resources.
- The [Autism Science Foundation](#) provides information on how telehealth can be useful during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- [Resources for non-English speaking families](#) are available through Autism Speaks.
- 11Alive – [Food Resource Guide](#)
- Crisis support
  - [Georgia Crisis Access Line](#) – call 1-800-715-4225, 24 hours a day, seven days a week
  - [Crisis Text Line](#) – text “HOME” to 741741 for support in a crisis