



## Educating and Including Family and Friends

### Tips for talking with family

#### **Is this the right time?**

If you haven't had time to process how the diagnosis will affect your family life, consider whether it is the right time to talk with family. For some, the answer will be a resounding "yes;" you know that your family will immediately be with you on the journey. For others, the answer could be "not yet." If you aren't sure of the level of family support, it might be good to give yourself some time.

#### **Focus on your child.**

You want to help your family understand *your* child. Use things that they may have noticed (for example, only eats certain foods or doesn't like loud noises) to begin the conversation. It is helpful to relate autism to what they see in *your* child. Of course, your close family will most likely want to know more about autism, in general. You can share basic information about autism and guide them to other resources.

#### **Stay positive.**

You know that your child's autism diagnosis means that you will need to make adjustments in your family life in order to help your child learn and develop. Share with your family the ways that makes you and your family stronger and healthier. If you have learned to be more organized (or more flexible or to pay more attention to your world around you), for example, isn't that a fantastic thing!

#### **Learn together.**

Be ready to answer questions, but if you don't know an answer, be honest. And suggest learning the answer together.

#### **Anticipate "misunderstandings and myths."**

For many people the word "autism" brings to mind images of "Rain Man" or some other media image. Based on limited information, your family may have a general misunderstanding of autism or believe "myths." Be prepared to explain that autism looks different in every individual and dispel popular or cultural myths.

#### **Share trusted sources.**

Don't be surprised if a concerned family member wants to immediately begin an internet search about autism and "autism treatment." Caution your family that there is a lot of disinformation on the internet and unproven "treatments" making claims of "curing autism." Share the sources that *you* trust.

**The following page contains resources you can share with family and friends!**



## **Resources for Learning More About Autism and Applied Behavior Analysis**

### **To Learn About Autism**

#### Internet Site/Resources

- [Association for Science in Autism Treatment](#)
- [Autism Society](#)
- [Autism Speaks, 100 Day Tool Kit](#)
- [VCU Autism Center](#)
- [UVA's Autism Drive](#)

#### Books

- *The Official Autism 101 Manual* by Karen L. Simmons
- *The Reason I Jump: The Inner Voice of a 13-Year Old Boy with Autism* by Naoki Higashida
- *Uniquely Human: A Different Way of Seeing Autism* by Barry M. Prizant
- *Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew* by Ellen Notbohm
- *Look Me in the Eye: My Life with Asperger's* by John Elder Robison
- *A Full Life with Autism: From Learning to Forming Relationships to Achieving Independence* by Chantal Sicile-Kira and Jeremy Sicile-Kira
- *Friend's and Relative's Guide to Supporting the Family with Autism: How Can I Help?* by Ann Palmer

#### Videos

- [Amazing Things Project](#)
- [Special Books by Special Kids](#)

### **To Learn About Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)**

- [Applied Behavior Analysis – Psychology Today](#)
- [What is Applied Behavior Analysis? by Autism Speaks](#)
- [Autism Speaks Parent's Guide to ABA](#)

### **Green Box ABA**

- Green Box ABA

- [Website](#)
- [YouTube Channel](#)