

Accepting the Spectrum

A monthly newsletter sharing information and support for families, caregivers, and friends of children on the Autism Spectrum

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For many of us, Independence Day is a holiday that we look forward to. We spend a long weekend surrounded by friends, family, parties, cookouts, and of course, fireworks! The smell of the grill, large crowds gathered together, and ending with a spectacular firework show are just some of the reasons many love this holiday. However, some individuals with autism may struggle with some of these activities and can make this holiday weekend challenging.



Individuals with autism see and experience the world in many different ways. Fireworks may be thrilling to some but they may be extremely overwhelming for an individual with autism due to difficulty processing sensory information. Here are several things that you can do to help you and your loved one have a safe and enjoyable holiday.

- The more your child knows about what to expect, the better they will respond to the situation. It can even be ideal to prepare your child for this event by showing them a firework “demonstration”. Find a movie or an online video with a firework scene and observe how your child reacts.
- Prepare your child for what is expected. Talk to your child about what will be going on during the event from getting into the car, what to expect during a firework show, and getting home. There may be traffic when leaving a firework show, so having highly preferred toys or activities may help to make the transition of waiting for traffic easier for your child.



- Bring noise cancelling headphones to the firework show. The headphones may be helpful to quiet any loud or unwanted sound. Wearing sunglasses while watching fireworks may help alleviate visual discomfort experienced by a child with autism
- Bring familiar items to the event. Getting outside of your child's everyday routine can bring challenges. Does your child have a favorite toy or a favorite snack? Bringing these items to a firework show can provide comfort and keep part of their daily routine intact.
- A social story can be another great way to prepare your child for a firework show! For some individuals with autism, they may not understand why things are different than usual. Social stories can help to prepare individuals for new events by offering visuals and descriptions on what to expect. Additionally, it allows you to directly address some thoughts and feelings that might come up. You can write your own social story, show pictures of what to expect to your child, or speak with your child's BCBA who would be happy to help in creating a social story for your child.



This is a free social story and can be downloaded to help prepare your child:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VTxmeskJEnyP25VCSopRO5CqZM0f1wV/view>

Agency News:



Please welcome our new staff that have come onboard at
Collaborative ABA Services:

- Louis Whitney, Behavior Technician
- Alison Lachapelle, Behavior Technician/BCBA Student
- We have a monthly Parent/Caregiver Support Group that takes place every second Wednesday of every month. As the name indicates, this is a support group and what better way to know how to support our parents/caregivers than to hear it from you! We value your feedback and want to hear from you! Let us know what topics you are interested in.
- Families currently receiving services are encouraged to discuss the contents of this newsletter with their supervisor for further support on planning and interventions . If you or someone you know is in need of ABA services, Evaluations for Autism, Parent Training and Support, or Consultations, please contact our team for further information on appointments and services:

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