

WHAT IS AUTISM?

A Child-Friendly Guide to Understanding Autism



Everyone
is unique.

Different is
wonderful.



This guide
will help you
understand
autism in a
simple and
positive way.



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MY BRAIN WORKS DIFFERENTLY

My brain works a little
differently, and that's okay.



I think,
learn, and
understand
the world
in my own
special way.

There is
nothing
wrong with
me. I am
just **unique**!



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EVERYONE THINKS DIFFERENTLY

People think, learn, and feel
in different ways.



We all solve
problems
differently.



We all learn
in our own
way.



We all have
feelings in
our own way.



We all have
our own ideas
and interests.



Our differences make the world
a more interesting and beautiful place!



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SOME THINGS ARE HARDER FOR ME

There are some things that can be more difficult for me than for others.
That's okay!



Daily tasks

Things like bathing, getting dressed, or organizing my things can take more time and support.



Motor skills

Using my hands for small tasks, like writing or buttoning, may be challenging.



Coordination

My body might have trouble with balance, climbing, or catching a ball.



Attention

It can be hard for me to focus because there are so many distractions in my brain.



I am doing my best, and with the right support, I can keep growing and learning every day!



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MY SENSES CAN FEEL DIFFERENT

Sounds, lights, touches, smells, and movement can feel stronger or different for me.

SOUNDS

Some sounds can be too loud or unexpected.



SMELLS

Certain smells can be too strong or unpleasant.



LIGHTS

Bright lights or flashing lights can be overwhelming.



MOVEMENT

Some movement can be fun, while other movement can be too much.



TOUCH

Some touches, fabrics, or textures might feel too much or uncomfortable.



TASTE

Certain tastes or food textures might be hard to eat.



Everyone's senses are unique.
What feels **too much** for me might be **just right** for you!



Things that can help me:



Headphones for loud noises



Sunglasses for bright lights



Comfortable clothes that feel good



A quiet place to take a break



Fidgets or tools to help me relax



Visual supports to help me know what's next



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SOMETIMES I MOVE OR ACT DIFFERENTLY

I might make sounds, move my body,
or do certain things over and over.
This helps me feel **calm** and **in control**.

What it can look like:



Making
sounds
(like humming)



Hand
flapping
or clapping



Rocking
back and
forth



Spinning
objects



Repeating
words or
phrases



Why I do it:



It helps me
manage big
feelings.



It helps me
feel **safe** and
comfortable.



It helps me
release **stress**
or extra
energy.



It helps me
focus and
stay on
track.



Everyone has ways to feel better.
This is how I **take care of myself**!



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IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP

I don't have to figure everything out on my own.
Asking for help is a **smart** and **brave** choice!

Who can help me?



Teachers



Coaches



Parents
or caregivers



Friends



School
counselors

Steps I can take

- 1  **Notice I need help.**
It's okay to not have all the answers.
- 2  **Ask.**
Use kind words and tell what I need.
- 3  **Listen.**
Pay attention to the advice I receive.
- 4  **Try it.**
Use the help and give it a try.
- 5  **Say thank you!**
It shows I appreciate the support.



Asking for help helps me
grow and
succeed!

Asking for help can help me...



Understand things better



Solve problems more easily



Feel less stressed or overwhelmed



Learn and grow faster



Build strong relationships



I am not alone. There are people who **care** about me and want to **help**. I am **proud** of myself!



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I CAN SHOW RESPECT EVERY DAY

I can be **kind**, use good **manners**,
and **care** about others.

Ways I can show respect:

Listen when
others talk.



Use kind
words.



Take turns
and share.



Keep my hands
and feet to
myself.



Respect
others' things
and space.



Respect looks like this:



I listen and pay attention.



I help others.



I include everyone.



When I show respect, I help make the world
a **happier** and **safer** place for everyone!



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I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF

Taking care of myself helps me feel
strong, healthy, and happy!

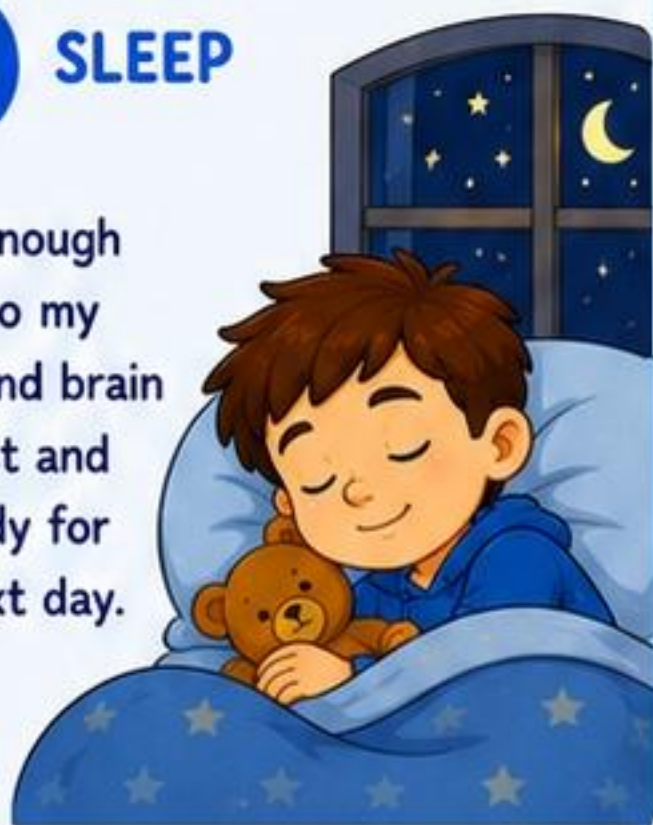


Ways I can take care of myself



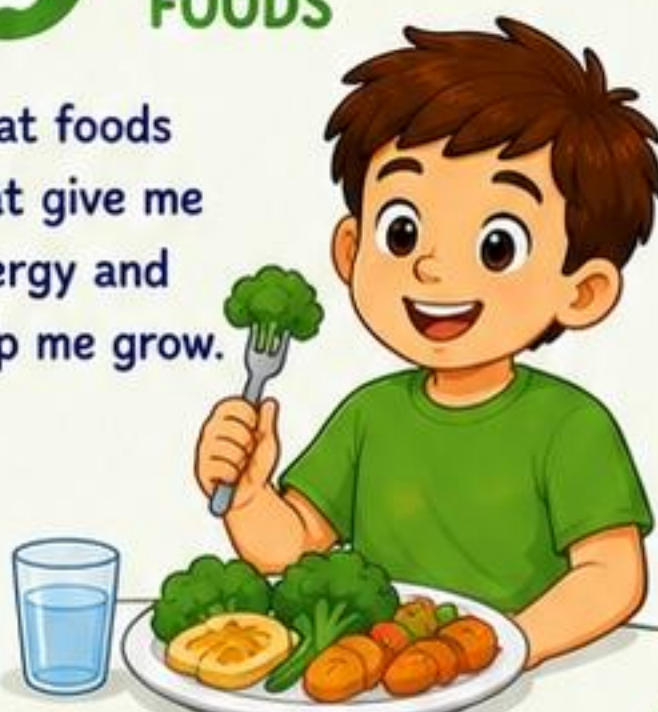
SLEEP

I get enough sleep so my body and brain can rest and be ready for the next day.



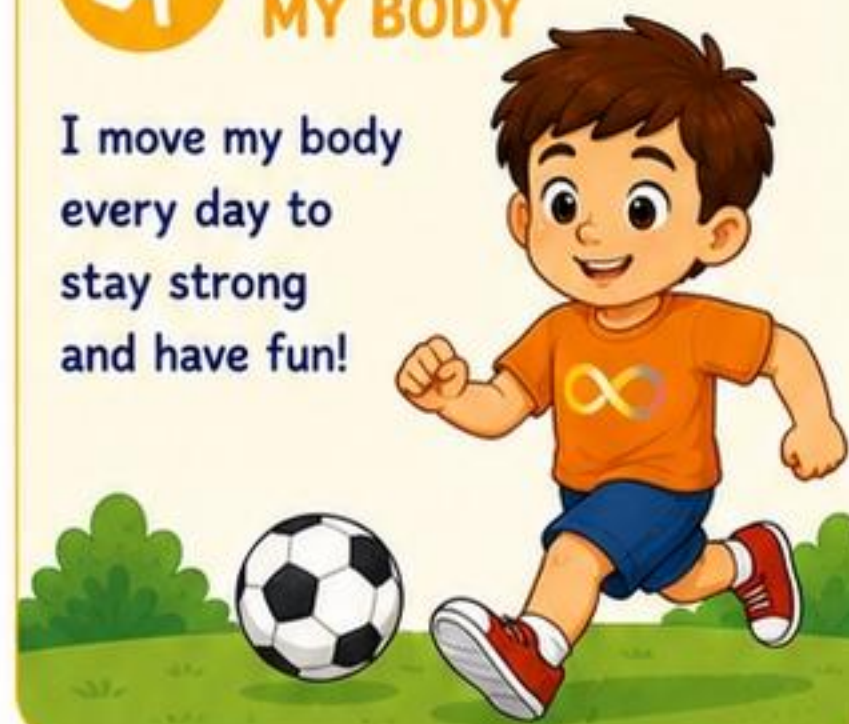
EAT HEALTHY FOODS

I eat foods that give me energy and help me grow.



MOVE MY BODY

I move my body every day to stay strong and have fun!



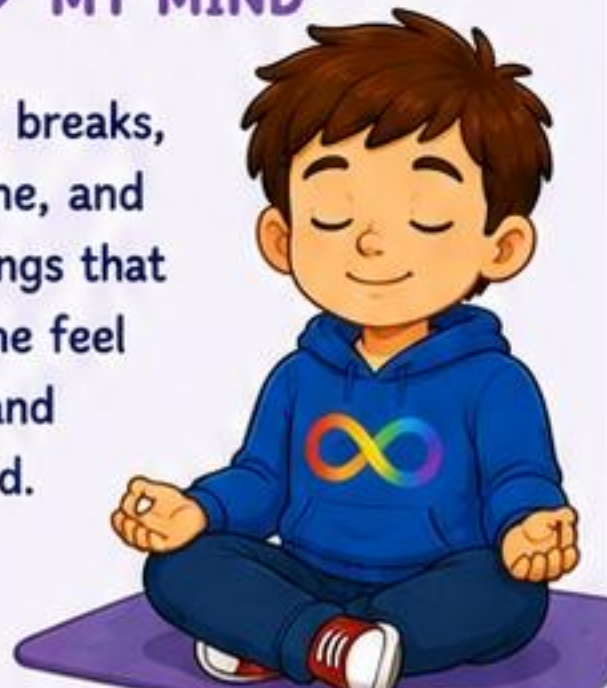
STAY HYDRATED

I drink plenty of water to help my body work its best.



CALM MY MIND

I take breaks, breathe, and do things that help me feel calm and relaxed.



ASK FOR HELP

I know it's okay to ask for help when I need it. I don't have to do everything alone.



When I take care of myself,
I can do my best and **enjoy life!**



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I CAN HANDLE BIG FEELINGS

Everyone feels lots of emotions.
It's **okay** to feel them.
The important thing is how I **handle** them.

Some feelings I might have:

HAPPY



I feel good and enjoy things.

SAD



I feel down or disappointed.

ANGRY



I feel mad or frustrated.

WORRIED



I feel nervous or unsure.

SCARED



I feel afraid or unsafe.

EXCITED



I feel thrilled and full of energy.

Things that can help me handle big feelings:

TAKE DEEP BREATHS



Breathe in slowly through my nose and out through my mouth.

COUNT TO 10



Counting can help me calm down and think.

TALK ABOUT IT



Talking to someone I trust can help me feel better.

TAKE A BREAK



A quiet break can help me relax and reset.

DRAW OR WRITE



Drawing or writing about how I feel can help a lot.

MOVE MY BODY



Exercise can help me release stress and feel better.

USE POSITIVE SELF-TALK



I can use kind words with myself.

FOCUS ON GOOD THINGS



Thinking about good things can help me feel happier.



Big feelings are **normal**. I can handle them in **healthy** ways and keep **growing**!



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I CAN SOLVE PROBLEMS IN POSITIVE WAYS

Problems happen to everyone.
I can stay **calm**, **think**, and choose **kind** solutions.
This helps me get along and feel better!

Steps I can take:

- 1  **Stop and think.**
What is the problem?
- 2  **Look at my choices.**
What can I do?
- 3  **Think about others.**
How will my choice affect them?
- 4  **Choose the best solution.**
Pick the kind and safe choice.
- 5  **Try my plan.**
Do it and see what happens.
- 6  **Check and learn.**
Did it work? What can I do better next time?



Positive solutions can look like:

-  **Talk it out calmly.**
-  **Listen and try to understand.**
-  **Take turns or share.**
-  **Walk away and take a break.**
-  **Apologize and make it right.**

I can remember:

It's not about being perfect.
It's about **trying** my **best** and **learning**!



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I CAN KEEP GROWING EVERY DAY!

I may not be perfect, and that's okay!
I can keep **trying**, keep **learning**,
and keep becoming the **best version** of myself.

Ways I can keep growing:



Keep learning.
I ask questions and try new things.



Set goals.
I work hard and don't give up.



Learn from mistakes.
I try again and do better next time.



Be kind to myself.
I talk to myself with kind and positive words.



Surround myself with positive people.
They encourage and support me.



Celebrate progress.
I am proud of how far I've come!



Some positive things I can say to myself:



I can do hard things.



I am learning and improving.



I do my best every day.



I am proud of myself.



I can make good choices.



The future is bright, and I can grow!

I Can Make the World a Better Place!



Be kind.



Take care of our planet.



Treat animals with kindness.



Include everyone and be respectful.



Do good and make a difference!



I am **amazing**. I am **growing**. I can do **great things**!
The best is yet to come!



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