

I'M A PARENT, GET ME OUT OF HERE!

THE WEEKLY SCHOOL CLOSURE NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS/CARERS OF CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE WITH AUTISM

This Looks Easy?!!

Claire Nunn – Autism Advisory Teacher Service

As an adult, it's easy to get frustrated when a child seems unable to just follow instructions or copy what we do. As a teacher and parent, I have thought "Why can't they do this?" and then repeated the instruction again until still they don't succeed. Especially with our own children, we can sometimes be harsher as we know they need to be able to do it. It can become a mission to achieve it quickly and so we practice it more and more. This can lead to resentment building up between you and your child and instead of spending time with them in a supportive way, it becomes a battle.

Be kind

In the current situation, it's important to be kind to your child and yourself when they don't get what you're teaching them. My advice would be to give yourselves a break including from each other and then make sure you do something nice with your child. Nobody likes to be criticised and reminded that they haven't achieved something, so give them a hug, spend time watching YouTube, building or playing together. Your relationship with your child is more important than the task they are struggling with. Believe me, over time you'll forget the task.

Nobody knows everything

I have to confess that admitting to your child or teenager that you don't know the answer to something is quite liberating for everyone and Google is always handy! In many ways we are building confidence in our children and young people that as adults we are not able to do everything and that we all have different talents – mine is certainly not G.C.S.E. Spanish or Physics! A parent who admits that they aren't as good as the child at something is raising their child's self-confidence and isn't that what we all want to do?



When things don't according to plan...

Going back to following instructions to get a task done, like many other people in the last few weeks, I bought some seeds. My husband has planted most of them, which are generally growing as they should. He gave me the supposedly "very easy and quick to grow" mustard seeds. I dutifully found a plate, soaked four layers of kitchen roll, scattered it with seeds, covered it with a plastic bag and watered them daily on the windowsill. The picture on the packet shows lovely green leaves in plentiful supply, my result was very different to what I expected? Isn't that often the case when we step out of our comfort zone and try something new? Experiences like these help us understand how frustrated and unfair our youngsters feel when their peers just seem to do things with no effort and yet when they try really hard and follow the instructions, things don't always turn out as they hoped.

So what should we do? Teach them to be kind to themselves if things don't go according to plan. Reflect and the think of what we could do differently, make a plan and try again. With this in mind, I am watering my husband's plants and not wishing slugs upon them and have planted some wildflower seeds. Let's wait and see.....

SENSORY SOLUTIONS



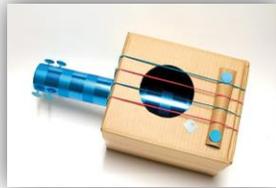
Ice Play



Freezing small toys or objects in a block of ice can provide a simple sensory challenge. Can you free the toys? You can flavour the water with cordial to make this an oral sensory experience too.



Homemade Band



If you save your boxes, milk bottles and elastic bands you can create some homemade instruments for an auditory sensory activity.



Shadow Play



Use cardboard tubes, cover the end in cling film and then place cut out shapes on the film. When you shine a torch through you will create shadows. Have fun experimenting with shapes.

Parent Top Tips

In this section we want to share your tips and advice. Have you got a great activity? Found a brilliant resource? We'd like to hear about it! Please share your top tips at:

SENandInclusion@Peterborough.gov.uk

"My son and I have done lots of cooking and baking in the afternoons and I have found this to really help. He has always been very tactile so I try to make the cooking as sensory as possible. Any recipe where you get your hands messy, kneading dough or mixing. It's been a really good activity for us and he is used to it as part of his routine now."

Graeme – Father of Lucas (14)

Check out our other weekly newsletters:

Cosy Crew – A newsletter for Primary Aged Children with Autism.

Lockdown Lift Up – A newsletter for teenagers and young people with Autism.

Available from our [Local Offer Page](#) each week.

Boredom Bashers

Resource:

NASA's 'Space Place' has lots of activities and resources for budding astronomers.

spaceplace.nasa.gov



Activity:



This is a simple threading activity that supports fine motor skill development. Thread the cereal hoops onto string or a pipe cleaner to make a caterpillar.

Something for me:

If you want to try something new or re-learn an old skill, Fender are offering three months of their 'Fender Play' video guitar tuition for free. www.fender.com/play

