

INDEPENDENCE TOGETHER

Resources for Parents of Children with Autism



The Autism Therapy Group



How to Support Parents of Children with Autism

Receiving an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis for your child or the child of a friend or relative can feel overwhelming. But the journey to ensuring a happy, healthy, and fulfilling life for children with autism and their families, support for parents is crucial. Navigating the waters of a newly diagnosed child will be easier for parents of children with autism when they feel the support of loved ones.

But how can you provide the support families and parents of children with autism need? Or, if you have children with autism, what do you need from your support network?

We've put together a list of five things you can do to support parents of children with autism spectrum disorder. Feel free to share this list with your family and friends if you are looking for support. There's no shame in asking for help!





Five Ways to Support Parents of Children with Autism

- **Educate yourself about ASD:** There is a ton of information out there about autism, and it's right there at your fingertips. It's important to understand as much as you can about ASD and the many ways it manifests itself so you can provide the best support for parents of children with autism. Take the time to understand better its challenges, treatment options, and what your friends or loved ones may be experiencing as they raise their child or children with autism.

With that said, it's essential you get your information about autism from credible sources. Check out Autism Speaks, The Autism Society, and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIH) for starters.

- **Include them:** Unfortunately, many times, children with autism and their families may be excluded from participating in activities neuro-typical children may join in. If someone you love, whether it be a family member or friend, has children with autism, a great way to support the parents and families of these beautiful kids is to include them! Don't be afraid to invite them to birthday parties or playdates.

Often, children with autism and their parents need to engage in social situations with peers to practice the skills they learn in autism therapies like ABA therapy. It's always nice to get an invitation. If the parents of children with autism spectrum disorder don't feel comfortable bringing their child to the event, they will still feel your support just by your invitation.

**It's also important to note that big social gatherings can be overwhelming and difficult for some children with autism, so don't be offended if they decline. Just don't stop inviting them!*



- **Offer to babysit or run errands:** Of course, this one depends on how comfortable the parents are with you watching their precious child with autism. But if you are a trusted member of your friend or family member's support network, giving them a break can be an invaluable way to support parents of children with autism.

Even if it's just a matter of minutes so they can take a walk around the block, or if it's an evening for the parents of children with autism to invest in their marriage and go on a much-needed date night, it's a monumental way to support them.

Or perhaps your friend or a family member has other children to attend to or errands to run. Offer to pick up their groceries or drive their other kids to commitments. Trust us. It'll mean the world to them!

- **Encourage them:** It can be difficult to ask for help, but there are so many resources available to support parents of children with autism. Encourage your friend or family member to work with the services available to them, including medical, educational, and social services.

But don't stop there. Make sure you support your loved ones in advocating for their children with autism. Unfortunately, some medical and school professionals focus on what children with autism can't do. This isn't what they need to focus on. They need to focus on the incredible things their child with autism can do. Sometimes, the parents and their support system are the ones to get things done in terms of helping children with autism.



- **Listen confidentially:** It's no secret parents of children with autism experience plenty of challenges. If you are a member of their support system, make sure you are there when they need a shoulder to cry or vent. Parents of children with autism spectrum disorder deserve just as much privacy as anyone else, so if they confide in you, make sure you remain respectful and keep things between you. (Obviously, if there is nothing dangerous going on.)

Sometimes, parents of children with autism find it difficult to confide in others for fear they or their children will be judged. Do your best to support your friend or family member without judgment – especially if you have no firsthand experience.



Be a True Friend to Parents of Children with Autism

In the end, the best thing you can do to give support for parents of children with autism is to love and accept them and be there to listen. Children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder are still children, after all. They want to have fun, learn, grow, and thrive. Whether they are high-functioning or need to rely heavily on support staff, they can benefit from your support, love, and acceptance.

If you are looking for ways to support parents of children with autism, contact us at The Autism Therapy Group. Our team of experts is happy to help you better understand ASD and how you can effectively give the best support for parents of children with autism.

Together, we can help the world better understand, accept, and help children with autism spectrum disorder live happy and fulfilling lives. After all, here at ATG, we aim to help children with autism, and their families, live their lives to their best potential.

**Get Started at
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