

## PARENTAL COPING OF INDIVIDUAL WITH AUTISM DURING COVID- 19 PANDEMIC

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### ABSTRACT

“our sincere hope is that you and your loved ones are ‘staying safe and healthy’”. Autism is spectrum condition. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a range of complex neuron development disorders, characterized by social impairment’s, communication difficulties and restricted repetitive, and stereo typed patterns of behavior. There is an ongoing pandemic of COVID-19 the disease caused by the novel corona virus. Since there is still no cure or vaccine for this disease, it is important to take preventive measures. These measures are the same for all people including people with autism; However, we should have it in mind that children’s with autism may also have some specific needs for support. The worldwide population prevalence of autism is about 1% (Lai etal 2019).The count panorama that we are experiencing with the COVID-19 pandemic makes it difficult for many people to understand and assimilate everything what is happening .In persons with autism, this difficulty become extreme, both the children and adults. To live and be able to carry this, parents and other family members must establish and maintain a lifestyle at home that works well enough for everyone.<sup>[1]</sup>

**KEYWORDS:** Coping, Autism, COVID-19, Pandemic.

### INTRODUCTION

“Life with an Autistic child can be difficult during pandemic it can be grueling”

Children with Autism, abound in affection and they give it freely without discrimination, without bias, without nationality, they are the citizens of the world.

Children in India under age 10 have Autism nearly 1 in 8 have at least one hemo development condition 1.3 present reported in India 2011 census. Early identification of (ASD) is a prerequisite for access to early interventions. Although parents often note developmental typicality’s during the first parental concerns and diagnosis is often frustrating and accompanied by uncertainty and worry.<sup>[3]</sup> The corona virus pandemic has disrupted daily life for most people around the world It has completely upended it for people with autism and their families. Autistic children their on routines and strongly dislike uncertainty and restrictions.<sup>[4]</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic is stressful enough, but for children and adults with ASD and their families the crisis can be specifically difficult, people

with Autism are at higher risk for COVID-19 complications According to CDC this is because they tend to have immune disorders and other co-morbidities.<sup>[5,10]</sup>

### What is AUTISM?

Autism is a brain disorder that starts early in life. It affects social communication and interaction and is accompanied by repeating and narrow patterns of behavior or interests.<sup>[1]</sup>

Children with autism often have problems with;

- Body language and Eye contact.
- Social interactions
- Building and maintaining relationships
- Sensory input
- Rigid behavior
- Intense and unusual interests.

No two people with Autism have the same signs and symptoms, many things can play a role, such as language delays, thinking and learning problems, and behavioral

challenges, for this reason, Autism is described as a 'Spectrum'.

Exact cause of Autism is unknown. The strongest evidence supports the role of a person's genes. Other things such as problems during pregnancy or birth might play a role. Many children with Autism also have an intellectual disability.<sup>[1]</sup>

All children and young adults require support from parents during times of stress and uncertainty, such as those we are facing now with the spread of the coronavirus (COVID- 19). Coping with the unknown and navigating school closures, abrupt changes in routines, loss of connections with teachers and friends, and fear around contracting the virus are burdens for all, and parents play an important role in helping children and young adults understand the changes and process their related feelings. Individuals with Autism may need additional support to process the news and adapt to the many changes. Autistic children may face additional challenges related to comprehension, communication, difficulty understanding abstract language, an insistence on sameness, and a greater likelihood of anxiety and depression during this stressful period.

Following 7 support strategies are designed to meet the unique needs of individuals with Autism during this period of uncertainty.<sup>[2]</sup>

1. Support understanding.
2. Offer opportunities for expression.
3. Prioritize coping and calming skills
4. Maintain routines.
5. Build new routines
6. Foster connections (from a distance)
7. Be aware of changing behaviors.

### Helping Kids with Autism Cope

The coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak is keeping parents and kid's home-and anyway from others-to help stop the spread of the virus. It has changed many of our everyday routines. Adjusting to a new routine is stressful for everyone, but especially for children with Autism who have trouble with change.

#### 1. Support Understanding with Visual aids and social narratives

**SOCIAL STORIES;** Are stories that teach kids what happens in some situations, use social stories, pictures, or other rituals to help your child know the steps for;

- Washing hands, wearing a mask, and other ways to stay healthy and safe.
- Staying at least 6 feet away from others who don't live with you.
- Distance learning.
- New routines at home.

#### 2. Explain expectations and new social rules for covid-19

Kids with Autism may not know what is going on, or

might not be able to express their fears and frustrations.

Go over important rules, and help your child to;

- Wash hands well and often (for at least 20 seconds).
- Try not to touch their Nose, Mouth and Eyes.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from people who don't live with you.
- Wear a mask or cloth face covering in public places.

Kids with Autism may need extra support to understand what's going on around them in some situations.

#### 3. Provide structure and routine

Routines are comforting for kids with Autism, so do your best to keep as many of them as you can.

- Stick to regular bed and wake –up times, meal and snack times, screen time, chores, and other household routines.
- Build in new routines to include school work, breaks and exercise.
- Visual schedules.
- Having a set routines and clear expectations will help lower the anxiety that can help when things change.

#### 4. Facilitate positive coping and strategies

Find ways for your child to express feelings,

- Talking together
- Doing crafts
- Writing
- Playing or acting out fears
- For kids who are Non-verbal, using augmented (or alternatives) communication devices.
- Calming activities; such as deep breathing exercise, music or watching favorite video thought the day.
- Limit the time of kids spends on social media or watching scary or upsetting news reports.

#### 5. Monitor changes in behavior

In the wake of the coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, it can be difficult to wade through what will be an effective tool to cope with widespread disruptions to the daily lives of Autistic children, teens and adults.

Children with Autism often have difficulties expressing their emotions including fear, frustrations and anxiety. Difficulties in expressive communication delays, limited verbal and nonverbal skills and social communication deficits. They may communicate heightened emotions through changes in behavior including increased repetitive behaviors, tantrums and behavioral outbursts, difficulty following directions and lower frustration tolerance. Provide opportunities for your child to engage in coping in coping and calming strategies that they find helpful.<sup>[3]</sup>

### CONCLUSION

This article describes how parents' home educate their children with Autism during the COVID- 19, Because of the COVID-19, most educational systems worldwide

have temporarily closed The United Nations Human Rights (2020) has expressed concern persons with disabilities including those with Autism, are disproportionately affected due to ecological constraints that are replicated in the pandemic reaction. Parents may need to design and implement new routines at home and help the child maintain social skills virtually. The National Rights Network (2020) has compiled accessible resources of online instructional strategies amid school interruptions. It is hoped to assist parents as they educate their children with disabilities while safely staying at home.

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