

Parent Tip # 11

Support Understanding

Individuals with autism and ADHD may have varied levels of understanding about the COVID-19 virus, how it spreads, and how to reduce risk of exposure. Here are several strategies to use to provide additional meaning to this complex scenario.

Describe the virus and current situation (e.g. closures, social distancing) in concrete language and terms and avoid flowery or abstract phrasing. The understanding of abstract phrases and metaphors such as “she is under the weather”, “she caught the virus”, and “he is scared stiff about this” can be difficult for individuals with autism and can create confusion (Lipsky, 2013).

Using direct and clear language is recommended. Though stark-sounding, phrases like “The coronavirus is a type of germ. These germs are very tiny, and when they get inside your body, they can make you sick”

**But tomorrow is a new day, so stay positive,
healthy and focused.**

Adapted from (AFIRM) is an extension of the National Professional Development Center (NPDC) on ASD

