

Parent Tip #25

Be Aware of Changing Behaviors

- **Individuals with autism or other "learning differences" may not be able to verbally express their fear, frustration, and anxiety about the many changes and/or their health, so these expressions may be demonstrated through other means. Parents should be aware of the behavior of their children during these uncertain times and be alert for signs of anxiety and depression.**
- **These may include a change in sleeping or eating patterns, increases in repetitive behaviors, excessive worry or rumination, increased agitation or irritability, or decreases in self-care (Hedges, White, & Smith, 2014, 2015). If these behavior changes are observed, additional support from mental health and/or medical providers such as a family doctor, therapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist may be warranted. The individual may require more support or different types of support (e.g., regular therapy, regular exercise, medication).**
- **Most mental health providers and non-urgent care medical providers are offering services via telehealth, and emergency legislation has expanded insurance coverage (including Medicaid) for these options.**

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

