



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



“Eliminating Social Exclusion” (EliSE)  
Nr. 2019-1-LV01-KA204-060427

## **IO4: Toolkit for Fair Traveling and Policy Recommendations**

### **TRAVELING WITH INDIVIDUALS STRUGGLING WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER**

#### **Overcoming Challenging Behaviors While Traveling**

Travel brings a unique set of challenges for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Individuals with ASD face various difficulties while traveling such as overcrowd, loud noise, waiting in long queues, heavy traffic, and increased waiting time due to delays in vehicles. Since individuals are stressed during travel, a sudden triggering noise, traffic and many other travel factors can cause individuals with autism to have problems. New sights and sounds paired with the disruption of their usual daily routine can make it difficult to travel. During travel, they may show temper tantrums, and may display problem behaviors such as crying crises or similar mood disorders.

Challenging behaviors cause inadequacies in the development of interaction and communication skills of children with autism, interrupt teaching and prevent these children from interacting with their normally developing peers, causing them to socially dissociate. For this reason, It is necessary to prevent, reduce and eliminate the changing behaviors of children with autism so that they can

effectively benefit from the prepared education program, continue their education in general education classes, and participate actively in social life.

Based on the literature, it is possible to classify the challenging behaviors displayed by children with autism as self-stimulating and stimming behaviors, self-injurious behaviors, aggressive behaviors, atypical eating behaviors and obsessive behaviors.

Self-stimulating and stimming behaviors are repetitive or unusual body movements or noises that do not serve a specific purpose in an external environment, such as clapping, rocking back and forth, rotating objects around themselves, and arranging toys in a specific order. Self-injurious behaviors are actions directed toward oneself that cause physical harm, most notably tissue damage. Head banging, hitting, biting, hair pulling and excessive self-scratching are the most common forms of these behaviors. Aggressive behaviors include yelling, swearing, hitting, pushing, biting and pulling hair, which can cause physical injury to those around the child or damage to objects. Atypical eating behaviors include limited food preferences, hypersensitivity to food textures or unwillingness to eat. Obsessive behaviors are when a child develops distinctive rituals, maintains sameness, connects to unusual objects or activities, and struggles with changes and transitions.

The challenging behaviors of children with autism cause them to have difficulties in adapting to the environment or situation changes and they adhere to certain routines. These difficulties in adapting to changes in the environment or situation often cause children to display challenging behaviours during transitions.

For individuals with autism, traveling basically involves a transitional element. It expresses the transition from one activity to another.

The concept of transition for individuals with autism is defined as situations that require ending an activity at home, school, work or social environments and starting a new activity or leaving an environment and moving to a different environment. Traveling can be considered a transition for individuals with autism. It can be said that individuals with autism who have problems with transitions are more likely to display challenging behaviors during these periods of time. Children refuse to adapt to a new environment by displaying challenging behaviors during travel, and they show resistance to switching activity or environment.

Children with autism have more difficulty in transitioning from one environment to another and adapting to routine changes than children with normal development as they want to maintain the sameness or they need predictability in environment changes, and they have limited behavioral patterns. In addition to the reasons arising from the characteristics of children with autism, excessive attention paid to these children during their travels may negatively affect children and cause them to display challenging behaviours.

Refusing or resisting travel also strains families of individuals with autism. In order for children with autism to cope with this situation, educators or parents need to make an education plan about transitions, including traveling, and ensure that children develop adequate and trouble-free behaviors about traveling. In order to ensure the effective participation of children with autism in this type of inclusion practices, it is important to prevent the challenging behaviors that may occur during travel and to provide them with appropriate transitional behaviors. Bringing the ability to travel to children with autism at an early age will contribute to them being more independent in such environments and will enable the inclusion practices to be carried out successfully. In this context, one of the aims of the education programs to be prepared for the benefit of children with autism should be arranged in such a way that they can gain the freedom to travel and prevent the challenging behaviors they may display .

Transition strategies can be supportive in planning to prevent challenging behaviors that may occur during travel as traveling is also accepted as an element within the concept of transition. These strategies consist of strategies used to facilitate transitions and create a positive transition atmosphere by increasing predictability for children who feel discomfort due to changes of activities, environment or routine. In this context, preparing children for travel are strategies that can be used before or during travel to facilitate travel.

When strategies suitable for the characteristics of children and travel (air, land or sea) are used, the time spent on challenging behaviours decreases, appropriate behaviors increase during travel, and participation in social life becomes easier with less need for adult cues .

In order to prevent challenging behaviors that may arise during travel, it is necessary to identify problematic transitions, to choose the appropriate transition strategy in order to facilitate the transition, to apply the chosen transition strategy and to determine whether the strategy is effective.

One of the first things to be done to provide support to children with autism during travel is to determine when, in which seat and with whom they have problems while traveling . It is important to carefully observe children in order to detect problems experienced during travel and reveal problematic transitions .

Traveling defines transitions that require switching the environment, such as moving from one place to another for individuals with autism.

Transition strategies that can be used to facilitate the travel of children with autism . In order to decide on the appropriate transition strategy, it is necessary to consider the interests and needs of children, what strategies practitioners have knowledge of, and available resources (hardware, software, etc.). After deciding on the appropriate transition strategy, the next step is to plan and implement by whom, when and how it will be used.

The chosen transition strategy can be applied by children's parents, teachers or other individuals working with children. The characteristics and attitudes of the individuals who will take part in the implementation process (being patient and encouraging, etc.) are the factors that increase the effectiveness of the strategy. After determining who will implement the strategy, it is necessary to plan the implementation time. Making the strategy a part of children's daily routines and using it in all transitions other than travel during the day is very important for the strategy to be effective and powerful.

It is necessary to decide how to implement the chosen transition strategy, taking into account the ages, needs and learning characteristics of children.

The final step in the process to prevent challenging behaviors that may arise during travel is to regularly collect data to determine whether the strategy implemented is effective. In order to determine the effectiveness of the strategy, first of all, it is necessary to create data collection forms and to share them with all individuals working with children.

The next thing to do is to collect data on the behavior of children during travels by making observations and to decide whether the chosen strategy has an effect on their travel behavior.

The transition strategies which can be applied to prevent challenging behaviours of children with autism and to ensure that they do not have troubles while traveling are as follows:

## **1. Priming Strategies**

Priming strategies are the ways that make the transitions predictable and enable children with autism to understand what the following activity is before it starts. The purpose of priming strategies is to make children ready or conscious of what to expect before they make a transition into a new environment and thus to prevent possible challenging behaviors that may be displayed during transitions.

Priming strategies can be especially used for children who display challenging behaviors such as refusing or resisting travel. Priming strategies include video priming, print priming, and visual priming.

- **Video Priming**

Video Priming includes video images that can be used effectively to prepare children with autism for transitions and provide children with travel skills . Video priming is a strategy in which children watch video images showing the environment or activity/situation to be transitioned and the behaviors to be displayed during the transition period in order to prepare children for stressful situations that occur during travel and to prevent challenging behaviors caused by anxiety in children due to environmental changes .

The purpose of video priming is to increase the predictability of travel, thus preventing challenging behaviors that may be displayed during travel. Video Priming can be used easily at home or in a school environment and is more effective when made a part of the child's daily routine.

- **Print Priming**

Print priming is illustrated and written stories that describe travel or places to be visited, showing the behaviors to be displayed during the travel and revealing what is expected from the child for travel . Print priming can be used to describe the travel transition focused on and the steps required for this transition, as well as to increase predictability by informing about changes in environment, activities or routines .

When it is decided to use print priming, first of all, it is necessary to prepare stories that include the troubles experienced by children with autism during travel and that describe these transitions in accordance with the level of children. It is important that the stories prepared properly describe the travel environment and the content of the travel, clearly reveal the behaviors expected from

children, that the pictures or photographs used reflect the behaviors correctly and that the expressions used are suitable for their developmental characteristics of children. After the print priming is created, stories can be read to children before the travel in which the children have problems and the children are expected to participate in the travel without displaying any challenging behaviors.

- **Visual Priming**

Visual priming is a strategy in which images such as photographs, pictures, drawings, signs, symbols are used that enable children with autism to understand what travel is, to comprehend the relationship between travel and destination, and to increase the predictability of travel situations. Activity charts and before-after cards are some of the visual priming used to support children with autism before transitions .

## **2. Behavioral Reminders**

Behavioral reminders are strategies which enable transition between settings or activities without displaying challenging behaviors. They are useful especially for children who have trouble with recognizing an upcoming transition or who have difficulties with switching activities or setting on their own.

Using behavioral reminders can help children with autism travel more easily, offering clues and reminding them that the time to travel is approaching. These strategies can be used to help children who have difficulty in recognizing that travel is approaching, have difficulty in traveling on their own, and need tips for travel, to make the transition to travel without displaying challenging behaviors. Behavioral reminders can be classified as auditory reminders and visual reminders.

- **Auditory Reminders**

Auditory reminders are auditory cues or alerts that let children know when travel is approaching. While alarms, clapping, bells, music, and songs are some of the auditory reminders to choose from, the most commonly used auditory reminders are verbal instructions. When auditory reminders are used, the factors that children have problems with while traveling should be determined first, and then auditory reminders should be selected according to the travel-related characteristics of the children.

- **Visual Reminders**

Visual reminders are visual cues that can be used to prepare children for the upcoming trip and also tell them what behaviors are expected of them during travel. Examples of visual reminders are transition cards or power cards.

Transition cards are reminder cards that can be used to prepare children for travel and that show the behaviors to be displayed during the trip in a clear and understandable way, along with photographs, pictures and drawings, and sometimes written explanations. Power cards are business card-sized, personalized cards that can be moved to different environments, developed by taking into account the interests and characteristics of children, in order to help perform an action or facilitate the understanding of a situation. On the cards, there may be an image of a person, animal, hero or character that children like, as well as simple explanations written by the child about the action or situation .

### **3. Timers**

Timers are strategies in which audio-visual tools are used to show children with autism how much time is left before switching to another activity or setting . These strategies enable the abstract concept of time to be made more understandable by concretizing it with visuals . Timers strategies include visual timers and visual countdown. Timers are well-suited strategies for children who need more predictability of transitions between activities or environments and need more time for transitions.

- **Visual Timers**

Timers are analog or digital time counters/clocks that operate with countdown logic and are used to show the remaining time to the following event or environment. When using timers, first of all, the duration of being in the event or environment is determined and the timer to be used is adjusted considering this duration. In this countdown process, children can easily see how much time is left for the transition by looking at the timer and hearing the warning tone that indicates the time is up.

- **Visual Countdown**

Visual countdown enables children to understand how much time is left for transitions. Visual countdown are hourglasses, numbered Legos and numbered picture cards, which are used to give an approximate idea about the remaining time for the next activity or transition to the environment, and are prepared by taking into account the characteristics of children. The main difference between countdown visuals and timers is that there is no clear time interval to be in the event or environment. Countdown visuals are especially preferred by children who need to be more flexible about time during transitions.

## 2. Resource Materials for Fair Traveling

### General Autism Information and Tips

Resource	Description	Link
Information by topic	Providing the autism community with resources by different topics	<a href="https://www.autismspeaks.org/information-topic">https://www.autismspeaks.org/information-topic</a>
Templates for Personalized Teaching Stories	Tips on how to use the Personalized Stories Templates	<a href="https://www.autismspeaks.org/templates-personalized-teaching-stories">https://www.autismspeaks.org/templates-personalized-teaching-stories</a>

### Communication (General)

Resource	Description	Link
Visual Schedule for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder	Strategies you can use to improve your communication with your child	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9UtEaEoAiU&amp;t=1s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9UtEaEoAiU&amp;t=1s</a>
First-Then Boards for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder	Strategies you can use to improve your communication with your child.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E26taIXybjM&amp;t=2s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E26taIXybjM&amp;t=2s</a>
Visual Support	help to reinforce information that is given verbally and can help a child understand, make choices and know what to expected in a given situation	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xh_ooF8PDhM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xh_ooF8PDhM</a>
Visual Support&Autism	introduces parents, caregivers, and professionals to visual supports and provides instruction on how to use them effectively	<a href="https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/SC_ATN%20Visual%20Schedule%20Topic%20Flyer_083120_v6.pdf">https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/SC_ATN%20Visual%20Schedule%20Topic%20Flyer_083120_v6.pdf</a>

### Behavioral Traveling

Resource	Description	Link
----------	-------------	------

Taking an airplane: A guide for people with autism	A teaching story that can help explain a new social situation or behavior.	<a href="https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/Jet%20Blue%20teaching%20story%20final%209-23-19.pdf">https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/Jet%20Blue%20teaching%20story%20final%209-23-19.pdf</a>
Holiday travel & autism: Five tips for success on the road visual supports	Strategies to help maintain toilet training when traveling with autistic children	<a href="https://www.autismspeaks.org/expert-opinion/holiday-travel-autism-five-tips-success-road">https://www.autismspeaks.org/expert-opinion/holiday-travel-autism-five-tips-success-road</a>

### Additional Resources

#### Articles and Books

Toilet Training for Individuals with Autism or other Developmental Issues: A Comprehensive Guide for Parents and Teachers by Wheeler, M. (2007).

Self-help Skills for People with Autism: A Systematic Teaching Approach by Anderson, S.R., Jablonski, A.L., Thomeer, M.S., & Knapp, M. (2007).

Starbrite Traveler: A Travel Resource for Parents of Children with Special Needs Starbrite Traveler by Ida Keiper, I. & Jones, J. (2013)

Autism & Travel: STRATEGIES FOR KIDS TO ENJOY AN AWESOME EXPERIENCE! by Ida Keiper, I. & Jones, J. (2014)

#### Platforms

Wandering Prevention Resources <https://www.autismspeaks.org/wandering-prevention-resources>

Using the Autism Speaks Personalized Stories Templates

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/how-to-use-personalized-stories.pdf>

Magnusmode Promotes Independence For People With Cognitive Disabilities:

<https://beyondthewaitingroom.com/magnusmode-promotes-independence-for-people-with-cognitive-disabilities/>

Accessible Travel:23 of the Best Apps and Resources <https://www.oliverstravels.com/blog/accessible-travel/>

Parent's Guide to Toilet Training Children with Autism

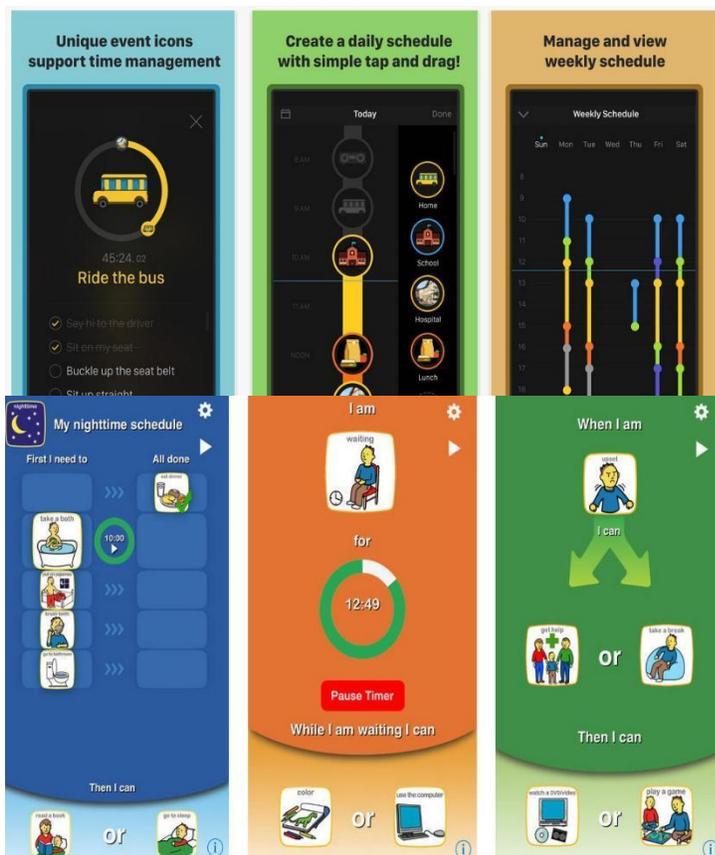
<https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/Toilet%20Training%20Guide.pdf>

Best Autism Apps for iPad, iPhone and Android <https://www.educationalappstore.com/best-apps/best-autism-apps-ipad-android>

### TOOLS:

#### Children With Autism: A Visual Schedule

This picture-based scheduler, created with the autistic population in mind, helps users to keep track of scheduled activities. The scheduler assists users in anticipating and planning for changes



in their daily routine, making days more predictable. It can also provide step-by-step guidance for daily activities, allowing users to be more self-sufficient.

### Chiceworks

This autism app gives autistic children and teenagers more control over their daily routines. The app is based on the theory surrounding the benefits of schedules and sequences to people with Autism.

The app is especially beneficial for assisting the family routine because of the engaging, visual template that can be altered to chart a personalized daily routine. For autistic children, this

makes the process more predictable and hence less stressful. It promotes a child’s independence, positive behaviour and emotional management both at home and in the community. Each task can be marked as ‘completed’, and schedules can be improved by including a timer. Interpersonal skills can also be improved by using the ‘feeling’ and ‘waiting’ boards.

Chiceworks helps users to organize their daily routines by categorizing tasks in sequential order, and highlighting which tasks have been completed and which still need to be completed. The app also assists users in dealing with situations that might be irritating and overwhelming. Chiceworks is particularly beneficial in situations when users must wait for something, as it allows them to fill in the time while waiting.

**First Then Visual Schedule:** <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/first-then-visual-schedule/id355527801>

This is a communication app for individuals who have difficulty in communication. The users can include images, record audio and plan a schedule with this app. It can also be used iCloud to

backup the created schedule . Through the use of visual schedules, the app can help a child gain independence and reduce anxiety.

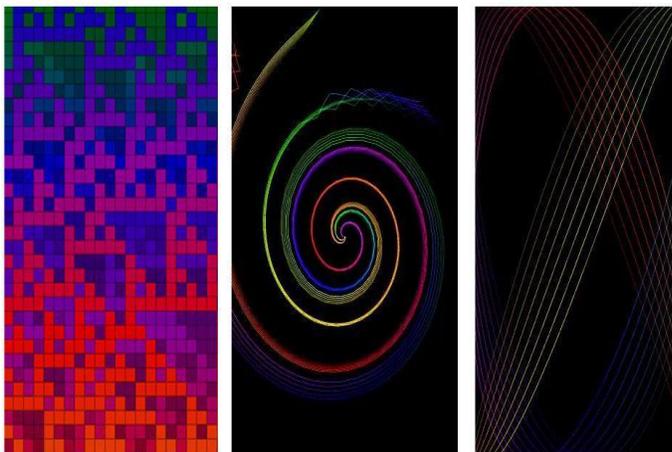
**AutisMate** <https://learningworksforkids.com/apps/autismate/>



AutisMate is a unique AAC app that allows users to create and tagging of real-world “Scenes.” Users can take photos of their surroundings and tag “hotspots,” which when touched bring up a menu with common phrases linked with the area. Users can also create “visual schedules” which are made up of visuals that represent daily tasks and routines, and are displayed in chronological order.

**Miracle Modus**

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.seebs.apps.modus&hl=en&gl=US>



Many of us could get a little help getting back into a calm state in a world that can often be overwhelming. Miracle Modus seeks to address some of these issues by employing lights, sounds and colors in a variety of patterns and configurations to assist users in finding calm in emotionally overwhelming situations.

**Pictello** <https://www.assistiveware.com/products/pictello>

Pictello is a creative app developed by AssistiveWare , enabling users to create customized photo albums and a picture book, with each



page containing audio that allows users to record themselves. The app is especially helpful for preparing autistic individuals for unfamiliar or stressful situations, such as doctor's appointments or travels to new places.

### The Dreampad

<https://dreampadsleep.com/pages/autism-and-sleep>



The Dreampad is a therapeutic pillow that vibrates gently to play music. The vibration has a relaxing effect on the nervous system, which is especially beneficial for autism-related hyperarousal and anxiety. The Dreampad has been shown to help people fall asleep, stay asleep, and improve their daytime behavior in studies. It is beneficial to both children and adults on and off the spectrum. Another advantage is that the music can only be heard by the user.



**AngelSense Guardian <https://www.angelsense.com/help/devices-supported-by-app/>**

A monitoring app that assists parents in protecting and improving the well-being of their special needs children. The app is compatible with your existing AngelSense Guardian GPS wearable device and requires the account user and password that you received when you purchased an AngelSense subscription.

AngelSense is a one-of-a-kind location and voice monitoring system created specifically to make the world a safer place for children with special needs and to give their families peace of mind.

Special children and their families use the AngelSense Guardian GPS wearable device on a daily basis, allowing parents to monitor their child's location, surrounding voices and potential threats in real-time and at all times.

The AngelSense wearable device is safely attached to the child's clothing in a suitable place that does not obstruct or distract the child's daily activities.

Use the AngelSense smartphone app to:

- Keep track of where your child is.

On your smartphone, you can see your child's current schedule. On a daily basis, the schedule is generated automatically.

- 2. Receive real-time alerts regarding potential threats.

If your child deviates from their planned path, you should be notified immediately and take appropriate action.

- Pay attention to your child's environment.

Listen to your child and the voices around them whenever you want to relax and assure their safety.



**ICE4Autism in Case of Emergency Mobile App <https://www.ice4autism.com/>**

ICE4Autism is the only Autism-specific In Case of Emergency (ICE) app. It keeps critical information about your individual needs, sensitivities and behaviors on your iPhone or iPad.

## ICE4Autism Special Features:

- My Autism - share how you communicate and how you want to be communicated with; your unique behaviors and triggers and how to respond to them; and other unique treatment information
- Alert My Emergency Contacts - when selected, an emergency alert message is sent to your designated emergency contacts, including your GPS location and a link to your location pinned on Google Maps
- \*Special Instructions - inform first responders about you and your specific needs. Assist them in getting you better.
- ICE Audio - ICE4Autism has the ability to “talk” on your behalf. If you are unable to communicate or incapacitated due to injury, this feature can play your pre-recorded message with the most important information about you.
- ICE4Autism Lock Screen - when your device is locked, the special Lock Screen option displays your most critical emergency information, such as your photo, name, birth date, blood type, emergency contact names and phone numbers as well as your individual, user- entered password. Special Instructions
- Lock Option – allows you to password-protect the data you enter in the app guaranteeing that nothing changes without your permission. In the locked position, data can be viewed but not modified.
- ICE4Autism also saves information about your:
  - Health conditions
  - Allergies and sensitivities
  - Medications
  - Insurance for doctors and other providers

## **Recommendations for Fair-travelling**

### **Making Travel Arrangements**

Autism affected children require as much routine and structure as possible. Vacations are, by definition, a break from everyday activities. While the idea of traveling can be daunting, a little planning can go a long way. You can make your child's adventure of traveling more enjoyable and set them up for success planning beforehand.

The key before departing is to simulate the vacation as closely as possible in as many ways as possible. Parents can show their children photos or videos of the location, or they can search the Internet together. Prepare a picture book about the trip two weeks ahead of time and teach your child what to expect. Include information on where you are going, who you are going with and what you are going to do. Make a calendar as well so you can count down the days until your trip. Also, once a destination is established, it also helps to return to the same vacation spot or to videotape family trips and replay them throughout the year after a destination has been established.

An individual with autism can lessen anxiety by being accustomed with the sights and sounds to expect during a new experience. Teaching stories are a great approach to help your child with autism prepare for and feel comfortable with the notion of traveling. Teaching stories are short, personalized stories that can be used to assist in explaining a new social situation or behavior. If at all possible, having your child participate in a realistic "dress rehearsal" will help them get acquainted with the sights and sounds they can expect, as well as give them a chance to walk through their upcoming travel experience.

Many families are unaware that they can seek assistance from guest services at airports, train stations, and hotels. Many travel-related businesses offer a variety of services such as advanced boarding times, special meals, rental equipment, travel companions, and pre-registering service animals.

Unfamiliar noises might be annoying when traveling, but ear plugs, noise canceling headphones, or music players can assist. If your child has trouble dealing with crowds or standing in lines, ask the gate attendant if you can board early to get settled in a seat quickly, or board last to spend less time waiting before departure. Also, when flying or boarding the bus, try to get seats in the front, where your child will be less cramped and crowded than in the back.

### **Accommodation**

Before taking a longer vacation, try a night out at a nearby hotel or plan an overnight stay at a friend's house. You may have to do this several times. It's also important to call ahead and request adjoining rooms or anything special you may need. In addition to taking your child's familiar bedding and blankets with you, get extra mattress pads for nighttime accidents. Requesting a room at the end of one floor will help relieve your concerns about noise pollution. It may be worth the extra money to stay in a rental apartment so you can prepare your own meals.

When staying in a hotel, it is a good idea to call ahead and ask for a quiet room and request a room with a refrigerator if your child follows a specific diet. You also might want to explain your child's particular needs in advance of arrival to see if there are any additional accommodations the hotel can provide. This will also give you an opportunity to discuss safety precautions such as door alarms and access to pools and bodies of water. If your child tends to wander from safety, provide copies of your family wandering emergency plan to hotel staff. The same goes if you're staying with a friend or a relative.

Be sure your child is wearing identification. Changing routines and new environments during travel make having a safety plan even more important. If your child tends to wander from safety, make sure to have copies of your family wandering emergency plan. Consider additional safety products such as wearable ID tags to make sure your child has a form of ID on him at all times. You can pin it to the back of his shirt or attach it to his shoelaces if he is the kind of child who won't tolerate wearing it. Include the child's name and diagnosis and your cell number and anything that a person might need to keep him safe and calm until you are reunited. Also, carry a recent photo of your child to show police in case he or she wanders off.

## **Traveling by Plane**

Air travel can be thrilling and enjoyable, but it can also be challenging for autistic children and their families owing to routine disruptions, novel locations, and sensory stimulation. It's important to remember that ASD is a spectrum disorder, which means that each autistic child's abilities and preferences are unique.

### **❖ Preparation before traveling by plane:**

**Create a story:** Create a picture for your child that summarizes the entire air-travel process several weeks before your trip. You can include images, videos, simulations, and process descriptions. You can also include sensory experiences your child might have, such as "ear-popping" during takeoff and landing. This may help your child become more predictable and familiar with an unfamiliar process.

**Make a practice flight:** You can check with your local airport to find out if you can pass through airport security with your child. This can help your child learn about the safety process before your departure date.

If you can't make a practice flight, role-play the process. If your local airport doesn't allow real practice runs or photo or video shooting at the airport facility, you can try the home role-playing alternative. This step will also help your child become familiar with airport security procedures, and be as specific as possible.

**Make a note of it in your calendar:** Hang a calendar with the departure dates marked a few weeks before your flight, and have your child check it off each day until your flight. You will solidify your child's awareness of time and may be able to visibly assist your child in anticipating changes in their routine by doing so.

**Before traveling, avoid washing any comfort toys or objects:** Any traveler, especially autistic children, can experience sensory overload when flying. Carrying a beloved toy or object that smells like your home can help to calm them down and reduce sensory overload.

**Provide alternatives:** Anyone, especially someone with autism can fear a new environment. One way to reduce your child's anxiety is to give him a sense of control. One option is to have them bring their own backpacks. During the trip, they can bring a few favorite items with them, such as comforting toys, books, iPads (or other electronic devices), and food. This phase gives your child a responsibility and allows them to choose which comfort items to bring with them on their new adventure. These familiar items will help relieve stress and boredom in moments of waiting.

**Prepare Meals and Travel Bags:** Limited food options are available in airport terminals or on airplanes, which can be inconvenient if your child has dietary restrictions or is a picky eater. As a result, pre-packaged food items are essential for providing your child with a variety of snacks and mini-meals. Pack chewy foods, such as fruit gummies or a bagel, for children who can be soothed through oral sensory stimulation. Travel bags are also useful because they can contain digital devices, headphones, and tactile items that can help with sensory overload.

**Before your flight, do some exercise:** Air travel requires sitting quietly for long periods of time. Exercising before setting off for the flight will help your child release any pent-up energy before arriving at the airport. Running or trampoline jumping for about 20 minutes would be ideal activities to help release bottled-up energy. You can always improvise and walk around the terminal to get some exercise before your flight.

### ❖ On Board

Notify gate attendants right away that you are flying with an autistic child and inquire whether you can board first or last. It may be a matter of personal preference. The benefits of early and late boarding include avoiding having to wait in line at the gate or on the plane while other passengers take their seats. It may be a matter of personal preference.

During flight takeoff and landing, ear-popping can occur. You could persuade your child to eat a piece of candy or chew a piece of gum. If your child is unable to do so safely, a chew toy can be an effective alternative to alleviate the discomfort of ear-popping.

A count-down timer can help your child figure out how long they will be in the air for.

Travel bags are essential since they hold your child's digital or tactile items, such as tablets, play dough, toys, books, coloring materials, and other stuff that may help them self-soothe while flying.

## **During Holiday**

**Make your child's trip special by tailoring it to his or her interests:** Remember to personalize your child's vacation to his or her hobbies, even if it seems apparent. Fill the agenda with activities that will pique your interest. Also, remember that having more activities isn't always a good thing: "Days spent on the go may not be what your child wants." To minimize meltdowns, limit the number of activities you perform each day and schedule plenty of relaxation at the hotel. With appropriate planning, vacations can even become your friend.

**Maintain your routine:** Changing your routine can be challenging and distressing for someone with autism. When your child is traveling, try to maintain as normal a routine as possible. If your child prefers to do certain activities in the morning and then have quiet time in the afternoon, you should try to stick to that schedule, even if you are on the road. Consider your child's daily routine and the items they like or require for it, and bring them with you to make it feel more like home.

**Create a schedule:** Because sticking to your regular routine during a trip can be difficult, making a schedule will allow your child to develop a sense of a new routine for your trip. Your child will be able to predict what will happen next, relieving some of the stress of being in a completely new environment. This can be as simple as 8 a.m.-9 a.m. breakfast, 9 a.m.-9:30 a.m. bus ride, 9:30-12:30 sightseeing, 12:30 lunch, 1:30 break, and so on.

**Set up a family watch system:** Another method to plan for a safe vacation is to set up a family watch system, which can help relieve stress and anxiety for parents and other family members. One person providing one-on-one supervision for your child at a time and rotating that task during the journey will assist keep your child secure and provide you peace of mind. This form of cooperation will allow everyone to travel easily and stress-free for the duration of the trip.

**Reinforce positive behavior:** Reinforce the positive behavior with a modest reward of praise, a sticker, a small toy or anything else that your child finds motivating. Consider rewarding your child with a special reward at the end of a successful drive, flight, or cruise! Remember to try and notice the times when your child is performing a good job and motivate them with a reward. Positive behaviors could include wearing a seat belt, reading quietly or sharing.

## REFERENCES

- American Psychiatric Association, (2013). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders-5 [DSM-5]. Arlington: American Psychiatric Association
- Angell, M. E., Nicholson, J. K., Watts, E. H., & Blum, C. (2011). "Using a Multicomponent Adapted Power Card Strategy to Decrease Latency During Interactivity Transitions for Three Children with Developmental Disabilities." *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 20(10): 1-12.
- Ayres K. M. (2005). Comparison of Video Priming Techniques for Children with Autism. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Georgia, Georgia.
- Bainbridge, N., & Myles, B. S. (1999). "The Use of Priming to Introduce Toilet Training to a Child with Autism." *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 14(2): 106-109.
- Bakkaloğlu, H. (2009). Geçiş. Zihin Engelliler ve Eğitimleri. Ankara: Kök Yayıncılık.
- Banda, D. R., & Grimmer, E. (2008). "Enhancing Social and Transition Behaviors of Persons with Autism through Activity Schedules: A Review." *Education and Training in Developmental Disabilities*, 43(3): 324-333.
- Banda, D. R., & Kubina Jr, R. M. (2006). "The Effects of a High-Probability Request Sequencing Technique in Enhancing Transition Behaviors." *Education and Treatment of Children*, 29(3): 507-516.
- Berger, D. (2016). Teaching independent behavior with activity schedule to children with autism. on 01.06.2016 <http://www.bergerlearning>.
- Berkson, B., & Tupa, M. (2000). "Early Development of Stereotyped and Self-Injurious Behaviors." *Journal of Early Intervention*, 23(1): 1-19.
- Birkan, B. (2011). "Otizmli Çocuklara Konuşma Becerilerinin Öğretimi: Replikli Öğretim." *Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Özel Eğitim Dergisi*, 12(01): 57-69.
- Bishop, S. L., Richler, J., & Lord, C. (2006). "Restricted and Repetitive Behaviors and Nonverbal IQ in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders." *Child Neuropsychology*, 12(4-5): 247-267.

- Bryan, L. C., & Gast, D. L. (2000). "Teaching On-Task And On-Schedule Behaviors to High-Functioning Children With Autism via Picture Activity Schedules." *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 30(6): 553-567.
- Cihak, D. F. (2011). "Comparing Pictorial and Video Modeling Activity Schedules During Transitions for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders." *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, 5(1): 433-441.
- Erbaş, D., & Yücesoy-Özkan, Ş. (2010). *Problem davranışları azaltmada olumlu davranışsal destek uygulamaları: Aile ve öğretmen eğitimi el kitabı*. Ankara: Maya Akademi.
- Ergin, E. (2016). *Kaynaştırma Uygulamaları Yürütülen Okul Öncesi Sınıflarda Sınıf İçi Geçişlerin Kolaylaştırılması*. Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi, Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Ankara.
- Gengoux, G. W. (2015). "Priming for Social Activities: Effects on Interactions between Children with Autism and Typically Developing Peers." *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 17(3): 181-192.
- Graber-Juhnke, A. (2015). *The Effect of a Transition Song on the Length of Transitions among Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Kansas, Kansas.
- Hume, K. (2008). *Transitioning between Activities: Online Training Module*. In Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI), *Autism Internet Modules*, [www.autisminternetmodules.org](http://www.autisminternetmodules.org). Columbus, OH: OCALI.
- Hume, K. (2013). *Visual Supports (VS) Fact Sheet*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- Hume, K., Sreckovic, M., Snyder, K., & Carnahan, C. R. (2014). "Smooth Transitions: Helping Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder Navigate the School Day." *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 47(1): 35-45.
- Hume, K., Wong, C., Plavnick, J., & Schultz, T. (2014). *Use of Visual Supports with Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder*. *Handbook of Early Intervention for Autism Spectrum Disorders: Research, Policy, and Practice*. New York. Springer

Krantz, P. J., & McClannahan, L. E. (2014). Picture Activity Schedules. Handbook of Early Intervention for Autism Spectrum Disorders: Research, Policy, and Practice. New York: Springer

Lequia, J., Wilkerson, K. L., Kim, S., & Lyons, G. L. (2015). "Improving Transition Behaviors in Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders a Comprehensive Evaluation of Interventions in Educational Settings." Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 17(3): 146-158.

Murdock, L. C., & Hobbs, J. Q. (2011). "Tell Me What You Did Today: A Visual Cueing Strategy for Children with ASD." Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 26(3): 162-172.

<https://www.timetimer.com/blogs/news/using-visual-schedules-to-support-students-with-autism>

<https://www.timetimer.com/pages/autism>

<https://www.autismparentingmagazine.com/visual-timer-benefits/>

<https://suelarkey.com.au/using-time-timers-for-students-with-autism/>

<https://tacanow.org/family-resources/traveling-with-your-children-with-asd/>

<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/482019>

<https://www.nymetroparents.com/article/autismate-app-for-kids-and-adults-with-autism>

<https://venturebeat.com/2013/01/29/autismate-ipad-app-therapy/>

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/ice4autism/id969601780#?platform=ipad>

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/ice4autism-mobile-app-can-improve-emergency-care-people-wanda-refaely>

[https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/201808/family\\_wandering\\_emergency\\_plan\\_0.pdf](https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/201808/family_wandering_emergency_plan_0.pdf)

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/wandering-prevention-resources>

<https://autismtravel.com/2022/01/19/lets-fly-air-travel-tips/>

<https://mashable.com/article/autism-apps>

[https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/SC\\_ATN%20Visual%20Schedule%20Topic%20Flyer\\_083120\\_v6.pdf](https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/SC_ATN%20Visual%20Schedule%20Topic%20Flyer_083120_v6.pdf)

<https://autismtravel.com/category/tips/>

<https://autismtravel.com/2019/10/04/holiday-travel/>

[https://autismtravel.com/wpcontent/uploads/sites/2/2019/04/WhatToExpect\\_AutismAwarenessApr2019.pdf](https://autismtravel.com/wpcontent/uploads/sites/2/2019/04/WhatToExpect_AutismAwarenessApr2019.pdf)

<https://autismtravel.com/2022/01/19/lets-fly-air-travel-tips/>

<https://www.oliverstravels.com/blog/accessible-travel/>

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/blog/tips-holiday-travel>

<https://www.autismparentingmagazine.com/best-autism-apps/>

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/traveling-autism>

[http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1893554\\_1893556\\_1893538,00.html](http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1893554_1893556_1893538,00.html)

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/expert-opinion/holiday-travel-autism-five-tips-success-road>

<http://card.ufl.edu/resources/visual-supports/>

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/atnair-p-toilet-training-guide>

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/Toilet%20Training%20Guide.pdf>

<https://tacanow.org/family-resources/traveling-with-your-children-with-asd/>

---