

Sybil Elgar School | Our Transdisciplinary Team Newsletter

Christmas

Christmas can be a fun and exciting time of year.

However, can also be quite overwhelming for some as there can be more and different sensory stimulation than usual.

Vision - Extra visual stimulation to process such as lights and decorations.

Smell - Different and often more intense smells such as incense, perfumes, cooking, rich food to smell and taste.

Touch - can be affected by new clothes, adornments, decorations and crowds.

Sound - New and multiple layered sounds to process such as crowds, background music, excited children, carol singers and brass bands.



An autism friendly Christmas

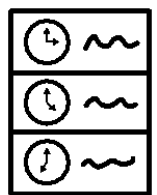
Preparation –

- Think about what has previously worked for your family and draw upon this experience, don't feel pressured to do things just because that's what others do.
- Ensure your child is aware of what is happening in relation to Christmas and the holiday period–visual aids like calendars and social stories might help



Schedules – many autistic people have a strong need for routine.

- Keeping your daily schedule, the same as much as possible during the Christmas period including Christmas day.



Decorations – they are lovely however for some they can be overwhelming to the senses

- Consider decorating gradually to allow time for your child to get used to the changes
- Create Christmas- free areas of the home without decorations
- Be aware of the impact of flashing lights – for some it can be enjoyable, for others they can be distressing and dysregulating.



Presents- these too can be overwhelming: the number of them, the wrapping and unwrapping

- Limit the number of presents out at one time
- If wrapping paper is too overwhelming consider using gift bags as an alternative





Website:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/services/nas-schools/sybil-elgar>



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