

Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders

www.childrensnational.org/CASD



Children's National: CASD CHAT

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Dear CASD Families,

I hope this finds your family well in the midst of Coronavirus (COVID-19). I think it is safe to say that no one was ready for this, but the one thing I have learned about the autism community is that we are resilient.

I would like for you to pause for a moment, close your eyes and take three deep breaths. It may seem like a simple thing, but you will be surprised how many of us hold our breath when we are overwhelmed.

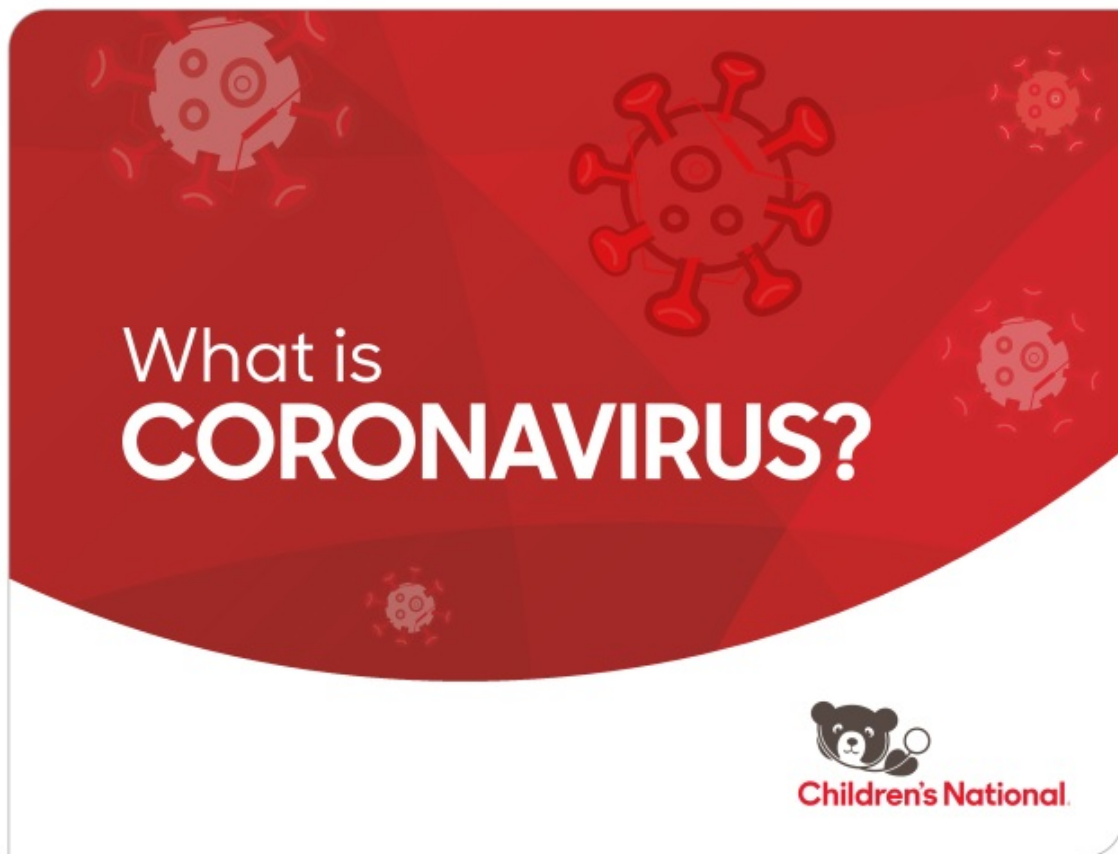
As with the autism spectrum, there are a myriad of situations happening for your individual family. I know many families are trying to navigate school closures for the rest of the school year in Virginia, an additional four weeks of school closures and the possibilities of distance learning in various counties across the state of Maryland, and distance learning in the District of Columbia. I am sure some of you may be asking what does this mean for your child's education. What will I do for the rest of the school year when my child receives all of their services in school? How will my child participate in distance learning when they cannot sit still and attend? I have to work from home, how can I keep my child engaged?

There are resources in the community to assist you. As I shared in the December 2019 CASD Chat, the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) provides funding for each state to have at least one Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center. PTIs provide free training and support to families of children with disabilities. The PTI for the District of Columbia is [Advocates for Justice and Education](#), in Maryland the [Parents' Place of Maryland](#), and in Virginia the [Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center](#). These organizations should be able to provide guidance about your school questions.

Additionally, I urge families to connect with local [autism support organizations](#) for support. (Please note that the list is not all inclusive.) Many of these groups are sharing COVID-19 related resources, as well as information about home schooling and activities to do at home with their children.

Please remember, you are not alone and do your self-care!

Be well,
Yetta Myrick
Community Engagement and ECHO Autism Manager



Children's National Hospital is updating their page of COVID-19 resources on a daily basis: <https://childrensnational.org/visit/resources-for-families/wellness-resources/coronavirus>

Visual supports like picture-based booklets help children with autism manage new or unfamiliar experiences. The Children's National Hospital's Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders, Pediatric Health Network and Beyond the Spectrum program have put together "[What is Coronavirus?](#)" to help children understand some of the changes we have made in our daily lives due to COVID-19. You can also download the PDF version [here](#).

On the Children's National, Rise & Shine website, you will find expert advice on everything from boosting your teen's sleep to planning healthy meals. Check out the coronavirus specific web page: <https://riseandshine.childrensnational.org/coronavirus/>

Coronavirus Resources

NEW!!! Autism Specific Resources

[Autism Society of America COVID-19 Toolkit](#)

[Easterseals School Closure Toolkit](#)

[University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill COVID-19 Toolkit](#)

NEW!!! Self-Care Resource

[Headspace](#) is offering free meditations:

NEW!!! Other Resources

[LUNCH DOODLES with Mo Willems](#)

[CREATE Arts Center Stay-At-Home Art Activities](#)

[Kids in Action At Home](#)

National and Local Government Resources

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Handwashing Tools](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[DC Department of Health](#)

[Maryland Department of Health](#)

[Virginia Department of Health](#)

[U.S. Department of Education's Questions and Answers on Providing Services to Children with Disabilities during COVID-19](#)

NEW!!! [U.S. Department of Education's Supplementary Fact Sheet](#)

Autism Prevalence Now 1 in 54

About 1 in 54 eight-year-old children in 11 communities across the United States were identified as having autism in 2016, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s newest report from the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network. For the first time, ADDM Network data found no overall difference in the number of black children identified with ASD compared to white children but Hispanic children remain identified at lower rates. Further, the percentage of 4-year-old children with ASD who received a developmental evaluation by 36 months of age increased from 74% in 2014 to 84% in 2016. Check out the [ADDM Network Community Report!](#)