

5 TIPS FOR DEALING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

1. Much of the time when we are faced with behaviour that challenges us as supporter can stem from the individual's sensory processing skills being out of balance. We can help to support them when we are fully aware of this.
2. Look for periods of increased self regulating behaviour, colloquially referred to as 'Stimming' by those within the autistic spectrum. Hand flapping, rocking, finger, flicking, slapping heads and other body parts. These behaviours are attempts to block out sensory input that overloads them.
3. Look for periods of unusual calm, especially when these are not the norm for the individual you are supporting. This may mean their sensory system is under stimulated, they are not responding to environmental clues and are not relating well to their environment and people within.
4. When over stimulated provide a range of activities to calm. Swings, leaf chairs provide movement with a calming influence, appropriate calming music, reduced environmental challenge, maybe use a safe space such as a pop up tent, or large umbrella to shelter behind. Use slow changing LED lights, favourite soft toys to handle.
5. When under stimulated and this can occur, give the senses a workout. Toys that flash, such as the Star Satellite, Hand fans with LED's, disco balls, soft balls that light up when bounced. Provide lively music. Increase appropriate movement, balance boards, space hoppers, swings or simply room outside to move. This way you will start to create a personalized activity plan that provides the sensory input a person needs to stay focused and organized throughout the day.

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