

ACCEPTING THE SPECTRUM

A monthly newsletter sharing information and support for families, caregivers, and friends of children on the Autism Spectrum

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With each new year comes more necessary doctor appointments. Many children with autism can have a difficult time getting used to new people, new places, and new routines. Doctor appointments can be especially challenging being these visits are not frequent enough for children to remember what to expect. Here are some ways you can help prepare your child for an upcoming doctor appointment.



1. Ease your child into new surroundings. For many children with autism, it's easier to embrace a new setting when they are gradually introduced to it. Talk with your child about their upcoming appointment and what to expect. To get your child familiar with the new setting, you can show them pictures of the building, exam room, and clinician.

2. Practice at home. You and your child can pretend that the doctor's appointment is happening. By using a toy medical kit or your imagination, this is a great way that your child can get comfortable with the steps that might occur during the visit. To make this more fun, you can also have your child switch roles with you so that they can be the doctor.



3. Create a social story and read it with your child. A social story is a great tool that breaks down situations into smaller, understandable steps that can help make the experience more predictable. Below is a free social story you can print online to prepare your child for their upcoming visit.

<https://educationandbehavior.com/story-about-going-to-the-doctor/>

4. Reinforce your child for conquering something out of their normal routine that may have been scary for them. Offering them their favorite toy, a favorite treat, or praising them for how good they did during their visit. Be specific about what aspects of the appointment you are proud of your child for. Being specific about what you are praising them for will increase the likelihood that they will do the same actions the next time they have an appointment.

Agency News:

Families currently receiving services from Collaborative ABA Services LLC are encouraged to discuss the contents of this newsletter with their supervisor for further support on planning.

