

CARD NEWSLETTER

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The UF-JAX CARD program provides support and assistance with the goal of optimizing the potential of people with autism spectrum disorders and related disabilities. Services are provided at no cost. The UF-JAX CARD program provides services to Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, and St. Johns counties.

Back to School: Sleep Routine

by Brett A. Walden, MPH

Almost all students have started back to school and we, as parents, know the challenges of getting our children back on schedule. Getting enough sleep is critical for a child to be

successful in school. Lack of sleep causes lack of focus and learning challenges due to mental exhaustion. According to Healthychildren.org, the optimal amount of sleep for most young children is 9-12 hours per night and adolescents should get roughly 8-10 hours of sleep.



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Upcoming Events

- Oct 5 Adult Resources & Support Group
- Oct 10 Painting with Emotion
- Jan 13-15 30th Annual CARD Conference (Orlando)

Join the CARD Weekly Update Email Newsletter.
To sign up please email Anthony.Rhodes@jax.ufl.edu.

CARD's Mission

To educate and empower individuals and families throughout the lifespan by providing support, assistance, and awareness within the community; with the goal of optimizing the potential of all individuals with autism and related disabilities.

We are going to discuss some easy strategies to get your kiddo back on a good sleep schedule.

1. Set a consistent bedtime for your child and stick to it every night.
2. Create a calming bedtime routine to help the child settle the mind. For example, bath time, reading with them, and tucking them into bed.
3. No electronics for at least two hours before bedtime.
4. Aim to have the home settling down as well so it creates a quiet environment.
5. Create a bedtime checklist for the child to know what needs to happen before bed.

The goal is to try to find strategies that work for you and your family. Think about things that your child enjoys and add them to the nighttime routine. For example, cartoon characters enjoy bedtime too so let's use them.

If you have questions or if you would like some support materials to help you create a visual bedtime routine, please reach out to your local Center for Autism and Related Disabilities center. We are also available for trainings, consultations, and additional resources.

Resources:

Healthy sleep habits: How many hours does your child need? HealthyChildren.org. (n.d.). Retrieved August 16, 2022, from <https://tinyurl.com/49w25mt7>



How to Encourage Positive Self-Talk for Children and Adolescents

By Tamima Aman, B.S.

When children experience challenging situations, they may be more likely to express strong feelings, self-doubt, fear, and may even engage in negative self-talk. Negative self-talk is an inner dialogue that limits what people believe about themselves and their abilities. When kids engage in negative self-talk, they may feel like there is something wrong with them. Negative self-talk can bring people down and make them feel unworthy. For that reason, it is important to increase awareness of negative self-talk and develop positive self-talk.

How to recognize negative self-talk:

Negative self-talk involves self-defeating statements that can affect how a person views themselves. This includes thoughts that are all-or-nothing statements, filtering, and jumping to conclusions.

Examples of negative self-talk:

“I can’t do it.”

“I’m not good enough.”

“I’m so dumb.”

“No one likes me.”

“I never get anything done.”

“I should give up. I’ll never be able to do it.”

What is positive self-talk?

Positive self-talk is an inner dialogue

a person uses to encourage and motivate themselves. Positive self-talk is a skill that can be learned with practice and repetition. When children and teens engage in positive self-talk, they are learning positive ways of expressing their frustration, anger, anxiety, and self-doubt. Teaching kids that it is okay to have different thoughts and emotions when going through challenging situations will help them move forward positively and constructively. It is also helpful to teach kids how to reframe negative self-talk so they can challenge their irrational beliefs with a more rational one. Building positive self-talk is a coping skill that can be used in various situations.

How can you encourage kids to engage in positive self-talk?

Understand the difference between positive self-talk and negative self-talk

Look for red flags of negative self-talk

How to help your kids develop positive self-talk:

Talk to kids and find out what is that is bothering them

Reassure them that it is okay to have the emotions they are experiencing

Help them reframe their negative thinking

How kids benefit from utilizing positive self-talk:

Builds better self-esteem: learning to manage one's thinking can influence how a person feels about selves and their abilities.

Increases resilience; kids can bounce back from negative experiences and handle adversity with resilience.

Lower anxiety: positive thinking can prevent or control anxious thoughts

Lower levels of depression: positive thinking can help kids reframe how they view themselves, others, and the world.

How to empower your kids to use positive self-talk:

Modeling: Model positive self-talk by utilizing it on your own

Visual affirmation: Utilizing boards or posters to create affirmations that they can see daily

Discuss the benefits of positive self-talk

Teach kids to recognize negative self-talk and how to reframe them

Help your child come up with positive phrases

References:

Burnett, P. C. (1994). Self-talk in upper elementary school children: Its relationship with irrational beliefs, self-esteem, and depression. *Journal of Rational-Emotive and Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 12(3), 181-188.

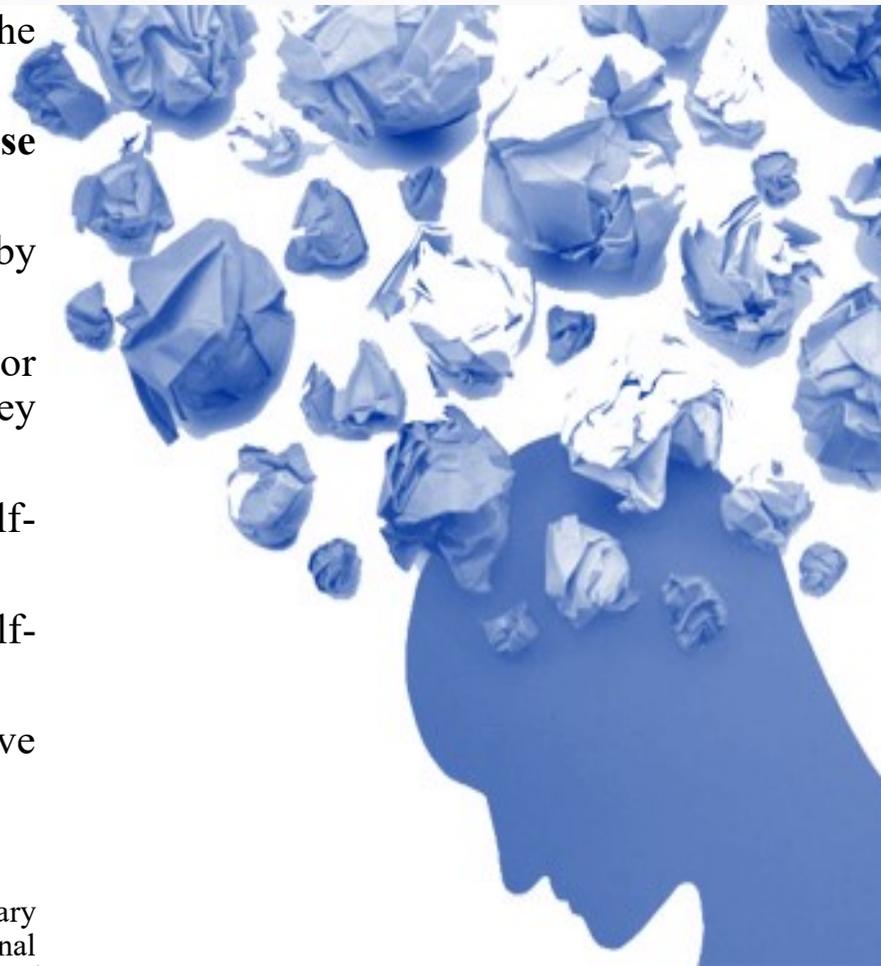
Burnett, P. C., & McCrindle, A. R. (1999). The relationship between significant others positive and negative statements, self-talk, and self-esteem. *Child Study Journal*, 29(1), 39-39.

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Kross, E., Bruehlman-Senecal, E., Park, J., Burson, A., Dougherty, A., Shablack, H., & Ayduk, O. (2014). Self-talk as a regulatory mechanism: How you do it matters. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 106(2), 304.

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Fun in the Sun: Water Safety

by Chanél Baldwin, M.Ed.

It's blazing outside and what better way to keep cool with family and friends and stay active? Water play! Our area has various locations for inclusive water play at local splash pads, neighborhood pools, and the beaches for no cost. Staying active is great for families. Water play allows families to be interactive and stay cool. It is so important to be prepared and cautious during all water activities. Here are some tips to consider when including water play with your summer activities.

1. No child left behind

It may be tempting but never leave children unsupervised.

2. Vigilance during gatherings with a lot of adults.

It is best practice to take turns supervising.

3. Do not depend on pool floats or water wings

It is important to remember that floats can be helpful and fun; they are not life-saving devices.

4. Staying near the lifeguard

When at the beach or lake, try to be close by the guard station. Children should only enter the water with an adult to avoid being overtaken by the depth of water or waves.

5. Prepare the pool for kids

If you have a pool, take extra



precautions such as a pool alarm, secured fence or barricade.

6. Swim Lessons

Remember no matter how many lessons your kids have had, being in water can challenge their skills and become overwhelming at a moment's notice. Always stay nearby.

7. Learn CPR.

Being able to perform CPR properly saves lives.

8. Be attentive.

If you are feeling overwhelmed by an upcoming trip that includes water remember that preparation and attentiveness are key to keeping everyone safe while they are having fun. Relax, do not multitask. Focus on making fun summer memories with the family.

Helpful Links:

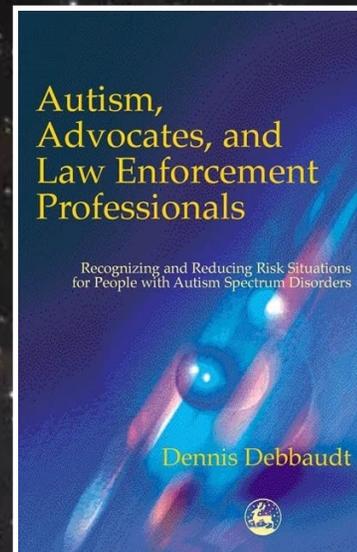
Splash pads, swim lessons or free activities please visit: <https://jax4kids.com>

Water safety tips and CPR certification please visit: <https://www.redcross.org/>

Now available in the CARD Lending Library:

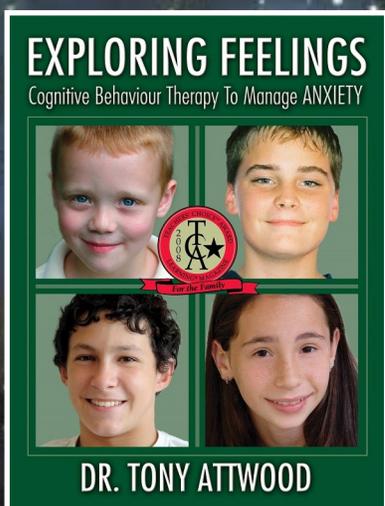
Autism, Advocates, and Law Enforcement Professionals by *Dennis Debbaudt*

In this book, private investigator and autism advocate Dennis Debbaudt provides essential information for both groups. He explains how typical manifestations of autism spectrum disorders, such as running away, unsteadiness, impulsive behavior or failure to respond, may be misunderstood by law enforcement professionals, with serious consequences. For individuals with ASDs, he offers advice on how to behave in encounters with police and other law enforcement professionals.



Exploring Feelings (Anxiety) by *Tony Attwood*

Winner of a 2008 Teachers' Choice Award! Anxiety can be debilitating for anyone, but it can be especially confusing for a child. Learning about emotions helps children recognize connections between thinking and feeling, and the physiological effects of anxiety on the body (sweating, increased heart rate, crying, etc.). This book provides a guide for caregivers along with a workbook section that allows children to identify anxiety-provoking situations, and teaches them how to perceive them differently.



Autism Spectrum Disorder and the Transition Into Secondary School by *Marianna Murin, Josselyn Hellriegel, & Will Mandy*

An effective evidence-based program, this practical handbook provides everything schools need to make the transition from primary to secondary school as smooth and successful as possible for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Developed and trialed extensively by the Social Communication Disorders Clinic at Great Ormond Street Hospital, this handbook will be an invaluable resource for SENCOs, teachers, autism support workers, educational psychologists and other professionals working with pupils with ASD.

