

## Preparing a Child for Covid Testing

With winter approaching, it is to be expected that children will be getting more coughs, colds, and sniffles. During this unprecedented year, these cold and flu-like symptoms may lead to children requiring a Covid-19 test. This procedure is unfamiliar and thus scary for many children. That being said, preparing children for what to expect during this procedure can help to lessen fears and minimize the stress of having to go to a clinic for a Covid test. The following video features Dr. Plotnick, Director of Pediatric Emergency Medicine at the Montreal Children's Hospital. The two-minute clip informs children on the steps to expect when going for a Covid-19 test.



In addition, here are some other tips that may facilitate Covid testing for your child:

- Go to a pediatric hospital for testing. All of the staff are specialized in treating children.
- Allow children to bring a favourite blanket or stuffed animal for comfort and to hold during the procedure.
- Encourage children to wear headphones with either their favourite music playing or a guided meditation sequence.
- Avoid telling children not to cry during the procedure. This expectation increases the pressure and stress that a child may feel when they go for Covid testing.
- Provide a special treat for the child after the procedure. It can be helpful when the child is involved in picking out the treat beforehand. Regardless of how the child behaves during the procedure, offer the child a small treat (e.g., a special snack, or small toy) to reward them for having gone through the test.

**Click here for a social script  
to help prepare your child  
for getting tested for Covid:**



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# Online Social Skills Program: The Social Express



The *Social Express* is an animated, interactive social skills program that allows children from elementary to secondary school to develop and practice the skills necessary to both engage more meaningfully in social interactions and navigate more successfully within the social world. During a time when children are learning online from home, this program provides review of the essential social skills that will be required when the child returns the classroom. The program is intended for use at home or at school, and aligns well with best practices for teaching social skills to students with ASD because of its effective use of video modelling. The format of the Social Express is interactive with a social situation playing out on screen that is then paused at a key point so that the student can be prompted to choose a response. Once chosen, the student can see how the interaction plays out in reaction to their decision. After seeing how the scenario unfolds, the student can then consider whether they want to make a different or better choice. Unlike other social skills programs, the Social Express provides direct and immediate feedback to the student so they know in real time how a social situation can change in response to the choices they make. The program also provides a teacher-student linked account, so that the teacher can get feedback on how the student is progressing, as well as on the areas of social functioning where additional training and support is still needed. This is a great program that can be embedded into a comprehensive and engaging daily online learning schedule.

## Staying Connected with Virtual Resource Rooms

During the lockdown, resource teams had to become creative in engaging students with exceptionalities within the online platform. One of the key ways that this engagement was facilitated was by individualizing the learning environment and emphasizing the pre-existing interests of exceptional students. Miriam Silverberg, the special education technician at Westpark Elementary, created a virtual support room to mimic the resource room the students normally go to on-site when they needed support in regulating their emotions, to feel more connected, or to simply reboot their frame of mind. Miriam created the virtual rooms using Google slides and the *zones of regulation* check-in within Google forms. Please check out the video capsules to see how this came to life.

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# A Resource Guide:

## Supporting Online Learning for Students with Autism

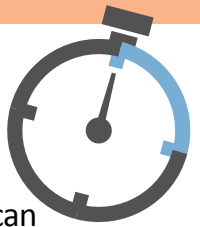
The University of North Carolina Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute has created a comprehensive document focused on supporting online learning for students with Autism. It is a valuable resource that specifically shares useful tools and strategies, as well as great references for teachers who are working with students who have various types of exceptionalities. On this site you can access tips and information on supporting students in setting up a home workspace, implementing visual supports and educational resources that are available online, and incorporating these tools into asynchronous learning times.

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Online-learning-resources

### VISUAL TIMER

There are many benefits to using a visual timer with all students but especially with those who have special needs. The timer creates a clear beginning and end to a task that may not actually have a built-in temporal structure (e.g., circle time or work alone time). Visual timers are also very helpful in facilitating transitions because students can see time elapse and therefore be better prepared for the end of one activity and the switch to a new one. In addition, timers promote and support independence by helping students to stay on task. They can also reduce anxiety and make unpreferred activities more manageable by giving students a clear indication of how long they must persist. There are many different visual timers that can be used with your students. Here is a link to some online options that can be integrated into a remote learning classroom.



<https://www.online-stopwatch.com/classroom-timers/>

### ASD TEAM MEMBERS



**Patricia Assouad** (On leave)  
Consultant for Autism

**Andrew Bennett**  
CoE Coordinator/Psychologist

**Jennifer Booth**  
Consultant for Autism

**Patty Cloran**  
CoE Coordinator/Consultant for Autism

**Katie Cohene**  
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**Jessica Davies**  
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**Natalie Mongeau**  
Consultant for Autism

**Helene Packman**  
Speech-Language Pathologist

**Kim Segal**  
Consultant for Autism

### Upcoming Webinar on April 26, 2021: Dr. Amy Laurent

#### Addressing Emotional Regulation in Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Dr. Amy Laurent will be providing professional development via her workshop entitled *Addressing Emotional Regulation in Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder*. The maintenance of emotional states and energy is a significant challenge for many individuals on the spectrum. Difficulties staying well regulated can impact relationships, learning, daily activities, and fun! Practical guidelines for prioritizing the support of emotional regulation for individuals with autism across a wide developmental range will be discussed. Emphasis will be placed on supports that can be used proactively and reactively. Amy Laurent, Ph.D., OTR/L is a developmental psychologist, a registered pediatric occupational therapist, and a coauthor of The SCERTS Model. This full day conference is accredited by l'Ordre des Psychologues du Quebec (OPQ) and approved to offer 6 hours of continuing education credits for psychologists.

For more information and to register please visit <http://coeasd.lbpsb.qc.ca/>