

Managing anxiety

Tips for families



Model calmness

You can show others there is no need to panic by acting and behaving calmly. Monitoring your own feelings will reassure autistic loved ones.



Share balanced information

News coverage can heighten people's fears of the worst-case scenario, but this isn't necessarily true and can be damaging. Seek fact-based information from reliable sources and take care not to present your fears as facts.



Share positive news

Focus on society's many positive responses to this crisis and take time to appreciate and share how each family member positively contributes to family life during this difficult time.



Validate feelings

Don't dismiss or reject feelings, instead let others know it's fine to feel anxious or angry. Helping people feeling calm and understood is very powerful and lets them process their feelings in a healthy way.



Listen actively

Listen to family members' feelings and fears and ask questions without judgement. Many people are worried about what will happen and knowing you are available to listen will make things easier.



Don't ignore anxiety

We can't always ignore bad feelings and allowing time to deal with these emotions can prevent family members from becoming overburdened by them. If anxiety comes over in waves, schedule 'worry sessions' where time is set aside to address anxieties.