

# ***AUTISM FRIENDLY GUIDE***

**GUIDE TO PLAYDATES**



# Guide to playdates

***As a parent of a child with autism, you want to ensure that playdates are successful and fun. Playdates can provide opportunities for your child to strengthen their friendships, get active, and develop social skills. They're also a lot of fun, of course.***

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Here are some tips to help you prepare your child for a playdate:

- Prepare your child ahead of time: Let your child know about the playdate a few days in advance so that they have time to process the information. Explain who they will be playing with, where they will be playing, and what activities they will be doing. Use simple and clear language, and consider using visuals or social stories to help them understand.
- Practice social skills: Before the playdate, practice social skills such as taking turns, sharing, and appropriate physical touch with your child. Role-play different social scenarios, such as greeting someone, asking to play, and saying goodbye.
- Establish routines and expectations: Children with autism often thrive on routine and structure. Establish routines for playdates, such as what they should do when they arrive, how long the playdate will last, and what the end of the playdate will look like. This can help reduce anxiety and make the experience more predictable for your child.
- Consider sensory needs: Children with autism may have sensory sensitivities, such as being sensitive to noise or light. If this is the case for your child, consider asking the host if they can make any accommodations, such as turning off bright lights or reducing background noise.
- Provide comfort items: If your child has a comfort item, such as a stuffed animal or blanket, consider bringing it with them to the playdate. This can provide a sense of security and help them feel more comfortable in a new environment.
- Have open communication: Stay in touch with the other parent during the playdate to ensure that everything is going well. If your child is having a difficult time, be open to ending the playdate early. It's important to prioritize your child's comfort and well-being.

In conclusion, playdates can be a great opportunity for children with autism to make new friends, develop social skills, and have fun. By following these tips, you can help ensure that the experience is enjoyable and successful for your child.

**A smile  
with every  
step forward.**

