

Caring for a Child with Autism

Strategies and Resource Guide



Prepared By

Kinship Caregivers
Connect

With Support of



Ohio Kinship and
Adoptive Navigators
Program



Table of Contents

AUTISM SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.....	2
EDUCATIONAL CHOICE SCHOLARSHIP (EDCHOICE) PROGRAM	2
OHIO COALITION FOR THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	3
HELP ME GROW (HMG)	4
OHIO CENTER FOR AUTISM AND LOW INCIDENCE (OCALI) AUTISM CENTER	5
MILESTONES AUTISM RESOURCES	6
NATIONWIDE CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL FAMILY ECHO: AUTISM SERIES	7
AUTISTIC SELF ADVOCACY NETWORK (ASAN)	8
NATIONAL AUTISM ASSOCIATION – AUTISM ATRIUM PROGRAM.....	9
AUTISM NOW	10
AUTISM SOCIETY	10



Autism Scholarship Program: <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Scholarships/Autism-Scholarship>

- **Purpose:** gives families the choice to send their child to a special education program other than the one operated by the school district of their residence to receive their education and the services outlined in the child's IEP
- **Highlights:**
 - Interactive Directory: shows which Ohio schools are involved in program
 - Ohio.gov's website lists eligibility and steps to apply

Educational Choice Scholarship (EdChoice) Program: <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Scholarships/EdChoice-Scholarship>

- **Purpose:** allows students in designated public schools to attend a participating private school; gives scholarships to K-12 students, depending on the household income level
- **Highlights:**
 - Interactive Directory: shows which Ohio schools are involved in program
 - Ohio.gov's website lists eligibility and steps to apply



Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities: <https://www.ocecd.org/>

- **What it is:** statewide nonprofit organization that services families with children with disabilities, educators, and agencies who provide services
- **Highlights:**

Resource Library	For Parents Page	It's My Turn
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Types of Resources: Agencies, Assistive Technology, Family Resources, Disabilities, Transition School to Community, Public Policy, Rights IDEA, Common Disability Acronyms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Includes sample letters to access various services (e.g., requesting initial evaluation for special education services, requesting an IEP or Section 504 meeting, requesting a change of placement) - Includes tip sheets (e.g., communication tips, draft IEP tips, IEP goal tips, school work sample tips) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-determination curriculum for students with disabilities in middle school and high school - Workshops assist students with self-advocacy and preparing to transition out of school - Can participate in person or online
<p>https://www.ocecd.org/ResourceList.aspx</p>	<p>https://www.ocecd.org/forparents2.aspx</p>	<p>https://www.ocecd.org/ItsMyTurn.aspx</p>



Help Me Grow (HMG): <https://www.helpmegrow.org/>

- **What it is:** system of support for families with young children with developmental delays and disabilities, pregnant women, and caregivers with new babies
- **Highlights:**

Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)	Community Resources Directory	Early Intervention Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free developmental screening for children under the age of 3 - Self-complete the screening by engaging in activities (play, move around) with your child and answer questions based on what they can do now - HMG specialist will share and discuss results with you - if any delays are identified, HMG will guide you through the next steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can search for providers in your specific area - Includes early intervention and family support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provided for families with children ages 0-3 years old with developmental delays and disabilities - Services can be provided in the home or other place your family spends time - Free services: Child Find, Evaluation and Assessment, Development of Individualized Family Service Plan, Procedural Safeguards, Service Coordination
<p>https://www.helpmegrow.org/ASQ</p>	<p>https://www.helpmegrow.org/Directories</p>	<p>https://www.helpmegrow.org/EarlyIntervention.aspx</p>



Table of Contents

Sensory Strategies	2
Self-Regulation Strategies.....	3
Visual Support Strategies	4
Behavioral Strategies	5
Thermometer Scale Example	6
Thermometer Scale Template	7
Emotions Chart Example.....	8
Emotions Chart Example.....	9
Calming Cards Example.....	10
Calming Cards Example.....	11
Rainbow Breathing Exercise	12
Box Breathing Exercise.....	13
Visual Schedule Example	14
Visual Schedule Template.....	15
Visual Schedule Template.....	16
“First, Then” Example	17
“First, Then” Template	18
Token Economy Example	19
Token Economy Board Template	20
Token Economy Tokens	21

Sensory Strategies

- **Hideout Space/Calming Corner**
 - Purpose: provides a space to calm down
 - Can use a tent, blanket fort, large box, or corner of a room
 - Set up in an isolated, quiet, dimly lit area
 - Can include other items that help to calm (e.g., weighted blanket, fidgets)

- **Auditory Modifications**
 - Purpose: used if someone is sensitive to sound
 - Noise-canceling headphones can be good for loud environments
 - Calming strategies: melodious music, speaking slowly and softly

- **Visual Modifications**
 - Purpose: can make changes based on whether someone seeks visual stimuli or avoids it
 - May enjoy fast moving visuals (e.g., sensory rain stick) if seeking visual stimulation
 - Slow moving visuals (e.g., lava lamp) can be using to calm
 - If someone wants to avoid visual stimuli or is easily distracted, limit posters/pictures on bedroom walls or homework area

- **Oral Modifications**
 - Purpose: used if someone is seeking oral stimulation (e.g., biting, mouthing toys)
 - If biting is an issue, can use “chewies”
 - Calming: using a straw for drinks, blowing bubbles

- Alerting strategies: eating a crunchy, spicy, sour, or citrusy food

Self-Regulation Strategies

● Thermometer Scale

- Purpose: provides a visual support to help someone (1) identify how they are feeling and (2) identify which regulation strategy they can use
 - Helps with recognizing bodily signals
 - See page 6 for example
 - See page 7 for template

● Emotions Chart

- Purpose: provides a visual support so that someone can more easily identify how they are feeling and communicate that to others
 - Helpful for those who have difficult voicing their emotions or those who are nonverbal
 - See pages 8-9 for examples

● Calming Cards

- Purpose: provides a visual support so that a person can decide which regulation strategy to use when they feel dysregulated
 - Can include sensory regulation strategies
 - See pages 10-11 for examples

● Breathing Exercises

- Purpose: helps with emotional regulation and calms during times of stress
 - Sends message to the brain that the body can relax
 - Can use pictures to help guide through exercises or can demonstrate to child how to

- See pages 12-13 for examples

Visual Support Strategies

- **Visual Timers**

- Purpose: gives visual representation of how much time is left for an activity
 - Helps with managing and understanding time
 - Helps with transitioning from one activity to the next

- **Visual Schedules**

- Purpose: gives a visual representation of a series of tasks
 - Helps with knowing what will happen during the day
 - Can be pictures, words, or a combination
 - See page 14 for example
 - See pages 15-16 for templates

- **Social Stories**

- Purpose: provides a visual narrative of a social situation or an expectation
 - Shows social cues and norms, as well as appropriate behavior
 - Helps with preparing for a new experience or understanding a social interaction better



Behavioral Strategies

● Transition Routine

- Purpose: having a routine in place can help with moving from one activity/task to the next, especially if the child has difficulty moving away from an activity
 - Timers and visual schedules can help
 - Singing a song each time a transition occurs can help
 - Can use “First, Then” visual support
 - See page 17 for example
 - See page 18 for template

● Token Economy

- Purpose: using tokens and having the child work towards something they want can increase desired behavior
 - Can make token economy board a certain theme to match a special interest
 - See page 19 for example
 - See pages 20-21 for template (with board and tokens)



Thermometer Scale Example (from OCALI)

Stress Thermometer

Anger Example

Most Stressed Ever

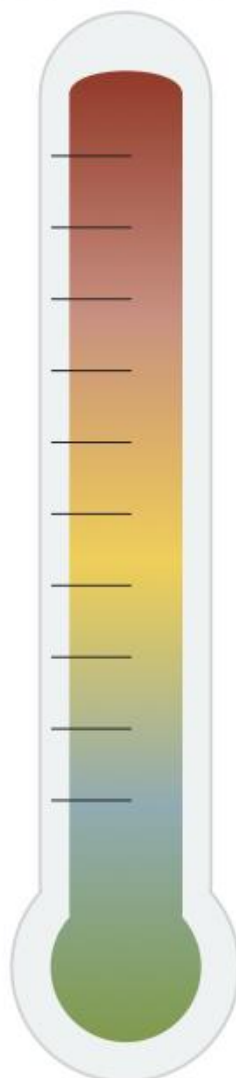
What I Look Like

When I start screaming and hitting myself

When I start throwing items

When I start to make grunting noises

When I start sighing loudly



What I Can Do

I can go to my home base area

I can use my break card

I can use my four-square breathing card

I can get a drink of water

No Stress

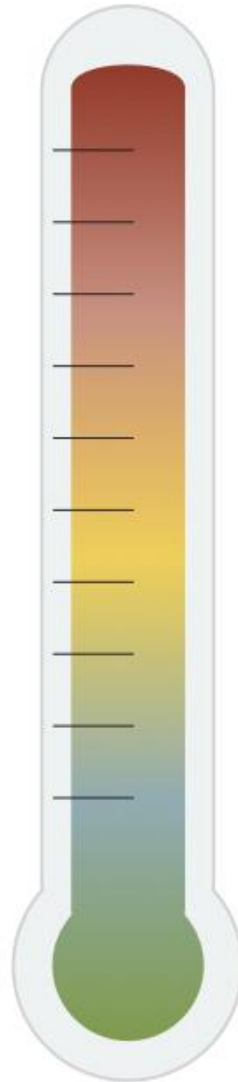
Thermometer Scale Template (from OCALI)

Stress Thermometer

— **Most Stressed Ever** —

What I Look Like

Blank writing area for 'What I Look Like' with four sets of horizontal lines.




What I Can Do

Blank writing area for 'What I Can Do' with four sets of horizontal lines.

— **No Stress** —

Emotions Chart Example (from printablee.com)


How Do I Feel?




nervous



upset



shy



sad



surprised



happy



excited



angry



scared

Emotions Chart Example (from printablee.com)

Feeling Faces Chart



grieving



excited



nervous



confident



frightened



regretful



surprised



hurt



proud



calm



enraged



happy



angry



guilty



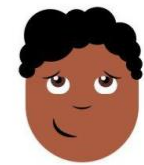
peaceful



aggressive



impatient



hopeful



disappointed



determined



joyful



ashamed



humiliated



withdrawn



apologetic



grateful



hopeless



lonely












annoyed



jealous

Calming Cards Example (from The Contented Child)

Calming Cards

 <p>Draw a picture</p>	 <p>Take deep breaths</p>	 <p>Do 5 star jumps</p>
 <p>Take a walk</p>	 <p>Stretch</p>	 <p>Go for a bike ride</p>
 <p>Do 10 pushups</p>	 <p>Squeeze a stress ball</p>	 <p>Jump</p>

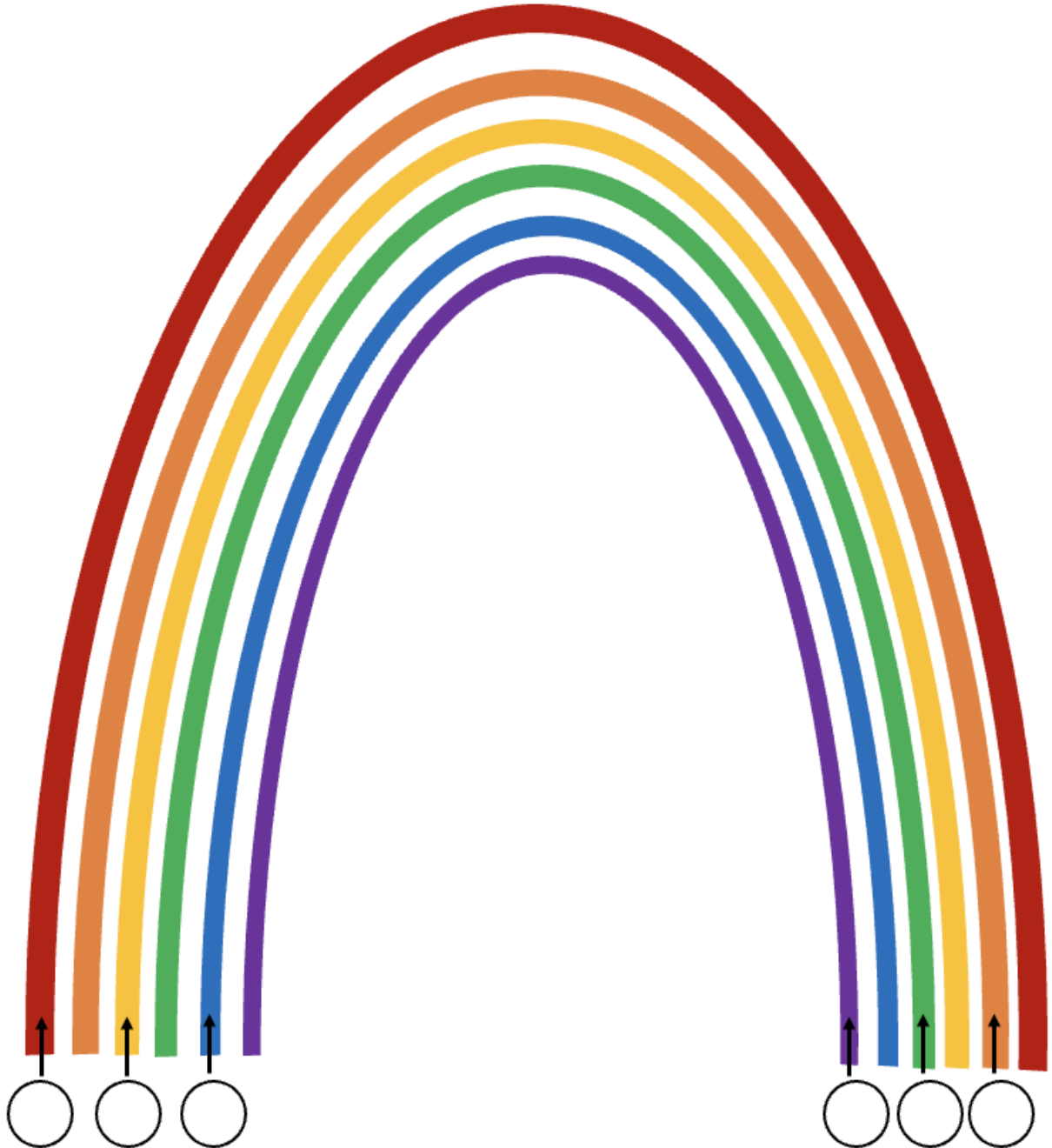
Calming Cards Example (from The Contented Child)

Calming Cards

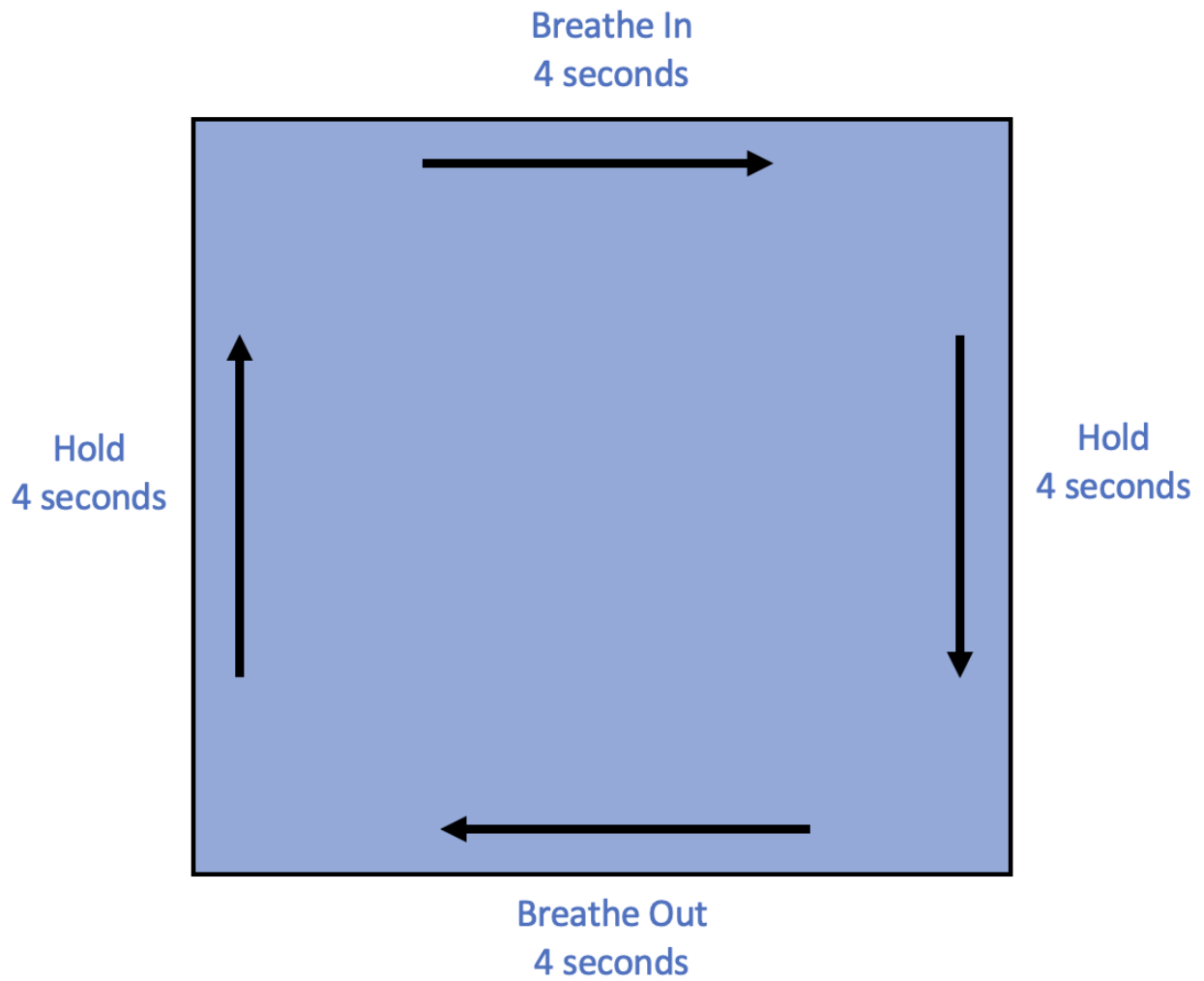
 <p>Meditate</p>	 <p>Figure of 8 breathing</p>	 <p>Push against the wall</p>
 <p>Think of 3 Good Things</p>	 <p>Smile at someone</p>	 <p>Build with bricks</p>
 <p>Think about my happy place</p>	 <p>Sing a song</p>	 <p>Rainbow breathing</p> <p><small>Trace the colours with your finger. breathe in and out</small></p>

Rainbow Breathing Exercise

- Trace rainbow lines as breathing in and out















Box Breathing Exercise



Visual Schedule Example (from Habitat Mom)

Daily Schedule

 Morning		 Evening	
 GET DRESSED	<input type="checkbox"/>	 GET A BATH	<input type="checkbox"/>
 BRUSH TEETH	<input type="checkbox"/>	 BRUSH TEETH	<input type="checkbox"/>
 PUT SHOES & COAT ON	<input type="checkbox"/>	 PUT ON PAJAMAS	<input type="checkbox"/>
 GET BACKPACK	<input type="checkbox"/>	 READ A BOOK	<input type="checkbox"/>
 GO TO SCHOOL	<input type="checkbox"/>	 GO TO BED	<input type="checkbox"/>

Visual Schedule Template (from speechfun.com)

Today's Schedule



Visual Schedule Template

Today's Schedule

“First, Then” Example (from OCALI)



Do your homework



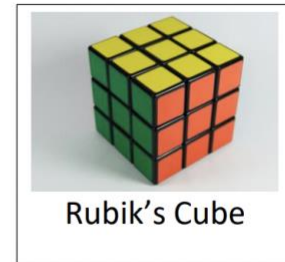
Play a game

“First, Then” Template (from OCALI)

	First
Then	

Token Economy Example (from OCALI)

I Am Working For:





Token Economy Board Template (from OCALI)

I Am Working For:

Token Economy Tokens (from OCALI)

