



# Being an Autistic parent

## Your unique journey as an Autistic parent

As parents, we rely on our knowledge, strengths and wisdom to guide us through the highs and lows (and in between) of raising children. In this fact sheet, we draw from a wealth of Autistic experiences and research to offer strategies that not only address challenges, but also highlight your inherent strengths as an Autistic individual.

### Our purpose a different brilliant®

Understanding, engaging  
and celebrating the strengths,  
interests and aspirations of people  
on the autism spectrum.

## Embracing a support network: How can you connect and grow?

- **Connecting with peers:** Join Autistic parent support groups where shared experiences and diverse strategies are celebrated. Whether online or in the local community, these spaces can be empowering.
- **Finding professionals who understand:** Seek out healthcare providers, therapists, and counsellors who value and understand the Autistic experience. They can offer advice that resonates with each individual's unique parenting style and life situation.
- **Advocating through education:** Share resources and personal insights about autism with family, friends and professionals. Highlight the strengths of Autistic parenting and clarify communication preferences.

## Communicating with your child(ren): What are some effective approaches?

- **Using personal understanding:** Engage in discussions about autism with your child(ren) using insights from your own experiences. This can foster a deeply relatable and meaningful connection.
- **Creating a sensory-supportive home:** Tailor your home environment to meet sensory needs, like using calming lighting or comfortable textures, ensuring a safe and nurturing space for both you and your child(ren).



## Balancing parenting, work, and self-care: What are some key strategies?

- **Prioritising self-care:** Engage in activities that nourish your wellbeing, such as mindful practices or hobbies that bring joy and relaxation.
- **Advocating for flexible work:** Discuss options like flexible working hours or remote work with your employer to create a balance that respects your role as an Autistic parent. (Check out our Workplace Accommodations fact sheet for more on this.)
- **Establishing supportive routines:** Craft routines that provide predictability and structure, essential for navigating parenting with ease and confidence.

## Mental health considerations: What should you be aware of?

- **Being proactive with mental health:** Regularly check in on your mental health with providers who appreciate the Autistic perspective, especially during significant life stages like pregnancy and after childbirth.
- **Seeking specialised support:** Look for healthcare professionals who specialise in supporting Autistic parents, offering understanding and guidance tailored to your experience.

## Reflecting on childhood experiences: How can they influence your parenting?

- **Exploring trauma-informed support:** If past experiences influence your parenting, consider therapists who specialise in understanding the intersection of trauma and autism, offering strategies to integrate and heal these experiences.

## Celebrating your parenting journey: How can you acknowledge your successes?

- **Recognising every achievement:** Regularly take time to acknowledge and celebrate your successes in parenting, embracing both the small and significant milestones.

## Navigating parenting in challenging times: What are effective approaches?

- **Flexibility during change:** Adapt and create new routines that accommodate any changing circumstances to maintain balance and wellbeing.
- **Accessing support when needed:** Don't hesitate to seek additional support from your network or professionals during challenging times, recognising the importance of community and expert guidance.

## Useful Resources

### Web

[reframingautism.org.au/service/i-am-a-parent](https://reframingautism.org.au/service/i-am-a-parent)

[verywellhealth.com/autistic-adults-as-parents-4147325](https://verywellhealth.com/autistic-adults-as-parents-4147325)

[laconciergepsychologist.com/blog/strengths-struggles-autistic-parent](https://laconciergepsychologist.com/blog/strengths-struggles-autistic-parent)

[autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/family-life-and-relationships/family-life/children-of-autistic-parents](https://autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/family-life-and-relationships/family-life/children-of-autistic-parents)

[autismspectrumnews.org/navigating-autistic-burnout-as-an-autistic-parent](https://autismspectrumnews.org/navigating-autistic-burnout-as-an-autistic-parent)

[attwoodandgarnettevents.com/what-are-the-strengths-and-challenges-of-being-an-autistic-mother](https://attwoodandgarnettevents.com/what-are-the-strengths-and-challenges-of-being-an-autistic-mother)

[amaze.org.au/2023/03/antheas-story-parenting-autistic-children-as-an-autistic-parent](https://amaze.org.au/2023/03/antheas-story-parenting-autistic-children-as-an-autistic-parent)

Aspect offers a comprehensive approach, based on the idea of a **different brilliant**<sup>®</sup>, that:

- Respects difference and diversity
- Builds a person's skills based on their strengths, interests, aspirations and support needs
- Develops autism-friendly environments
- Supports others to understand and embrace autism and to develop respectful supportive interactions.