



AUTISM ALLIANCE OF MICHIGAN PRESENTS

MiNavigator

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Help. Hope. Answers. Today

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

What should the autism
community know?



Contributed by Jill Matson, MSN, RN, CPNP - Clinical Specialist & Navigator Manager

The situation regarding the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to change quickly. Up-to-date information can be obtained by visiting the [CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov).

[Symptoms of coronavirus](#) include fever, cough and difficulty breathing. Symptoms may appear 12-14 days after exposure. Call your health care provider for medical advice if you think you have been exposed to coronavirus and develop any of these symptoms.

Older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions (like heart or lung disease or diabetes) seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness. Autism alone does not increase a person's risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19.

If you are caring for a child or family member with autism:

- ① Talk with your children before they hear about it elsewhere, so you can understand what they know and provide facts appropriate to their age and understanding.
- ② Communicate in a way that your child prefers, such as through pictures or stories.
- ③ Allow your child to process the information. That may mean they “play out” or talk about fearful topics, but you can be on hand to reassure them and answer questions.
- ④ Communicate with your support system, including school contacts, caregivers and support groups.

cont.





- ⑤ Be on the lookout for changes in routine or other signs of distress. Your child may need additional support if they are feeling stressed or anxious.
 - ⑥ Be a source of reassurance and positivity to help your child feel safe through frightening situations.
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Unemployment Insurance During COVID-19

Chaunta Tsegaye, MSA - Insurance Specialist

According to the U.S. Department of Labor website: Under the guidance, federal law permits significant flexibility for states to amend their laws to provide unemployment insurance benefits in multiple scenarios related to COVID-19. For example, federal law allows states to pay benefits where:

(1) An employer temporarily ceases operations due to COVID-19, preventing employees from coming to work; **(2)** An individual is quarantined with the expectation of returning to work after the quarantine is over; and **(3)** An individual leaves employment due to a risk of exposure or infection or to care for a family member. In addition, federal law does not require an employee to quit in order to receive benefits due to the impact of COVID-19.

Unemployment Insurance Flexibilities (2020, March) - Coronavirus Resources, Retrieved from <https://www.dol.gov/coronavirus>

How to file for unemployment:

[UIA Claim filing Process](#)

Step 1: [File a claim online](#)

Step 2: Register for work

Step 3: Report to Marvin

Quick Tips: Handwashing

Hetal Patel, MA, CCC-SLP - Clinical Outreach Specialist

Children with autism may avoid handwashing for many reasons. They can simply forget, not like bathrooms or demonstrate sensory avoidance of water or soap. Handwashing is always important, however, and is even more critical at this time.

cont.










Handwashing can be encouraged by using:

- Visual support to demonstrate each step
- Social stories to better explain why handwashing is important.
- Here is a link to a free social story: <https://able2learn.com/products/i-can-wash-my-hands-social-story-pages-11.html>
- Video modeling technique by showing videos of others handwashing. Here is an example: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_d-kSG4rX0&feature=youtu.be
- Verbal reminders as support
- Songs to encourage at least 20 seconds of handwashing
- Hand over hand cues for reluctant children

When handwashing should occur:

- After using the restroom
- Before meals
- After handshaking
- After being in public spaces
- After blowing your nose or sneezing

 Washing hands
 Water on
 Hands wet
 Rub hands with soap
 Rinse
 Water off
 Dry

Resources for Families

JoAnna Lofton - Community Resource Specialist

Many will struggle to meet the needs of their children and families at this time. Below are organizations across the State of Michigan that can provide assistance. We will continue to provide additional resources in future newsletters.

cont.





Basic Needs Resources:

United Way of Michigan
[Find Help](#)

Schools distributing breakfast and lunches
[How to find free lunch for Michigan kids with schools shut down](#)

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
[MDHHS - Assistance Programs](#)

Gleaners Food Bank
[Get Help](#)

Society of St. Vincent de Paul
[Assistance/Services](#)

Autism Resources:

Autism Support Network
[Free autism & Asperger's support](#)

Ocali: Education Webinars
[OCALI | Home](#)

AFIRIM: Self (Parent) Directed ABA programs
[AFIRM Modules](#)

AIM-Autism Internet Modules
[Autism Internet Modules](#)

Internet-WiFi Access:

Comcast is offering Xfinity WiFi free for everyone through Xfinity WiFi hotspots across the country, including non-Xfinity Internet subscribers. For a map of Xfinity WiFi hotspots, visit www.xfinity.com/wifi.

Comcast is also offering its Internet Essentials program free for the first 60 days of service to new customers. After your first two free months expire, you can either cancel the service (which you can do at any time) or keep it as a regular paying Internet Essentials customer for \$9.95/per month.

10 Random Things To Do this Week from Home!

- ① Have a dance party
- ② Video call a friend or family member
- ③ Make a yummy treat
- ④ Go for a walk
- ⑤ Learn a new song
- ⑥ Have scavenger hunt around the house
- ⑦ Make a fort
- ⑧ Look through old photos
- ⑨ Make an obstacle course in the house
- ⑩ Play with bubbles outside

