

# Home for the Holidays

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**Autism**ONTARIO

# Language

## Language

- Identity-first (e.g., autistic person)
- Person-first (e.g., person with autism)

# Disclaimer

## General Disclaimer

- Opinions are of the presenters
- Make informed decisions

# Agenda

Five at-home activities targeting five skill areas:

- 1) Fine motor skills
- 2) Gross motor skills
- 3) Sensory
- 4) Mindfulness
- 5) Socio-emotional

# Fine Motor Skills

- Drawing allows your child to express themselves in a fun and creative way.
- You can modify this activity to meet your child where they are at.



# Fine Motor Skills

You will need:

- paper
- drawing utensil: crayon, marker, chalk, pencil crayons, etc.



# Fine Motor Skills

Steps involved:

1. Help your child to draw three circles, one on top of each other.
2. Help your child to add detail to their drawing: a face, stick arms, buttons, or clothing items (scarf, buttons).





# Fine Motor Skills

- Try different writing utensils to see what works best for your child
- Help?
  - hand over hand
  - tracing
  - model/example
  - draw side by side





# Fine Motor Skills

- Other options:
  - dark paper and chalk?
  - shaving cream?
  - white board? Chalk board?



# Fine Motor Skills



# Gross Motor Skills

- Adding a playful element can make getting active more fun and interesting!
- This game can be played with the whole family.



# Gross Motor Skills

You will need:

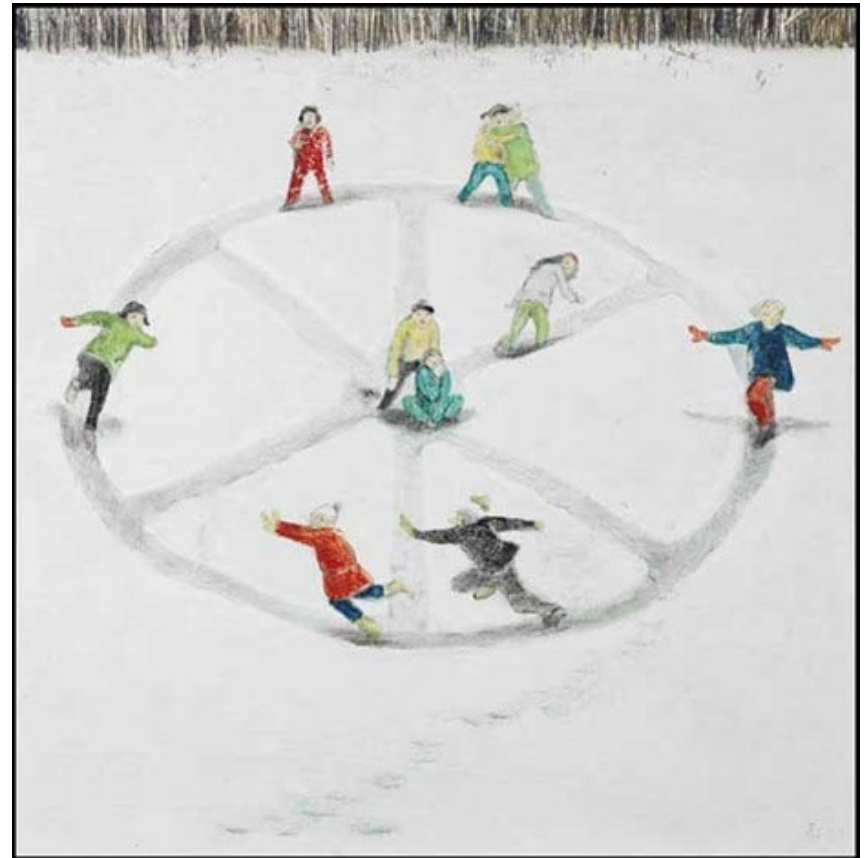
- Snow
- A large open space such as a yard, park or field



# Gross Motor Skills

Steps involved:

1. Walk through the snow in a large circle to create a path
2. Walk across the circle to create “short-cuts” through the circle (see photo).
3. To play, select one player to be “it”—they can chase the other players, but all players must stay in the pathways created.



# Gross Motor Skills

Can you practice being open to new ideas by changing/adapting the rules?

- Can you create a “safe zone” or “time out”?
- Can more than one person be “it”?
- For those with limited mobility, can you use a sled or adapted “snow coach” to enable moving through the snow?





# Gross Motor Skills





# Sensory

- Encourage exploring different sensations in a safe, controlled way.
- A homemade sensory bin can also easily be adjusted to fit what works best for your child.



# Sensory

What you will need:

- bin, tin, or bowl
- snow! (or shaving cream or whipped cream)
- small toys or winter themed items
- tools (tongs, kitchen utensils, sand toys, etc.)
- cloth/towel
- optional: mittens or gloves.



# Sensory

## Steps involved:

- Fill your bin, tin, or bowl with snow, shaving cream or whipped cream
- Add small toys or winter items.
- Your child can explore the snow while wearing mittens or gloves or use tools to scoop or shovel the snow.
- You can hide items inside for your child to find, or create a list for a “scavenger” hunt of hidden items.





# Sensory

- safety: oral exploration?
- explore using tools like a spoon or shovel.
- wet cloth and dry towel available



# Sensory



# Mindfulness

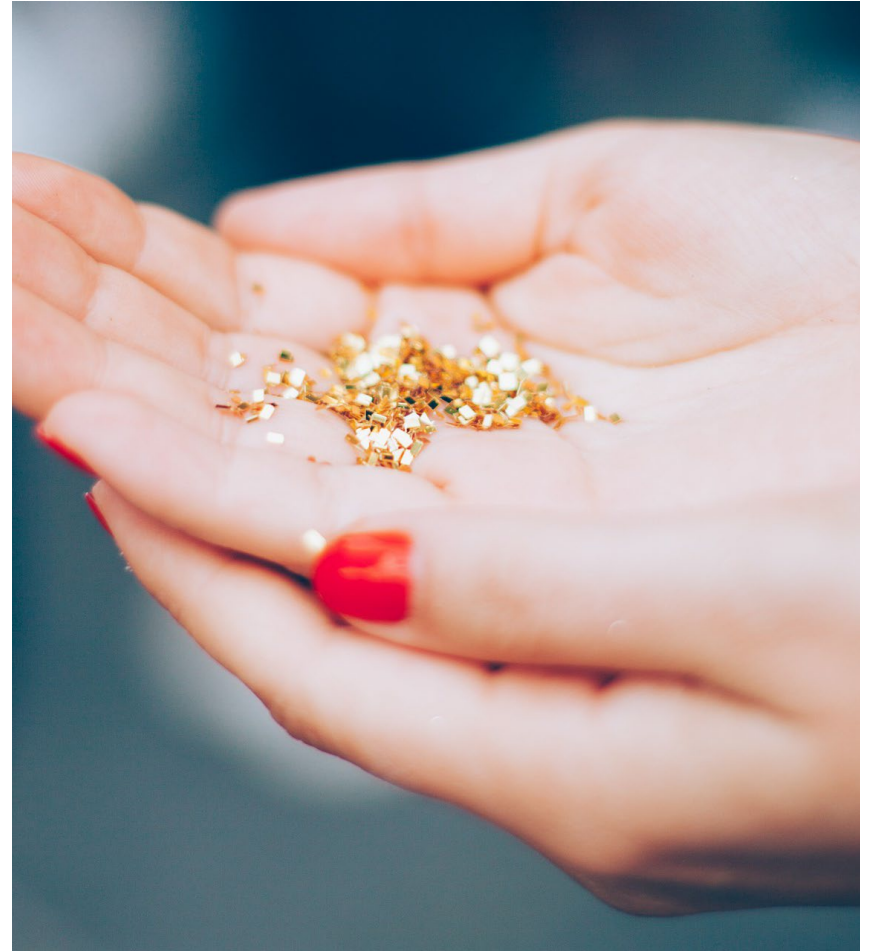
Mindfulness means being aware of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environments



# Mindfulness

To make a calming jar at home you will need:

- Clear, plastic jar or bottle
- Clear glue
- Water
- Favourite character figurine
- Super glue or hot glue
- Add ins: Glitter, sequins, “snowflake” glitter





# Mindfulness

Steps involved:

1. Ensure that the jar you are working with is clean and dry
2. Place your figurine on the inside of the lid, to make sure it fits
3. Use super glue or hot glue to attach the figurine to the inside of the lid
4. Leave the figurine/lid combo to dry (shouldn't take more than a couple of minutes)
5. Fill the bottom of the jar with glue (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)
6. Have your child add in their glitter, sequins, and any "extras"
7. Add water to fill the remainder of the jar; leave about a cm at the top to leave space for your figurine
8. Use super glue or hot glue around the lid and screw it on tightly to seal in the water



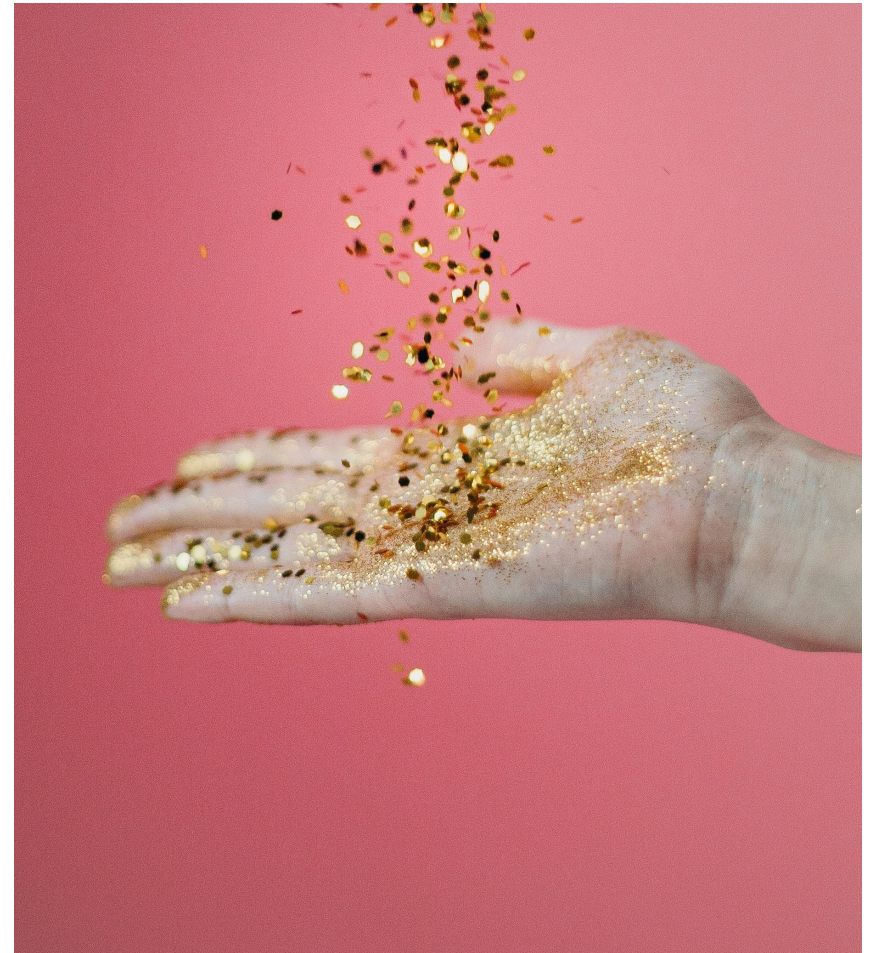
# Mindfulness



# Mindfulness

Tips for using your snow globe:

- Encourage your child to play gently with the jar
- Show them how the glitter swirls and falls
- Use the jar both when your child is calm and when they may be struggling



# Socio-emotional Development

Family movie night's help your child:

- Gain socio-emotional awareness
- Identify their feelings
- Connect their feelings with external behaviours
- Learn ways to calm down and self-regulate





# Socio-emotional Development

You will need:

- Favourite winter-themed movie
- Comfy place to relax and enjoy the movie as a family
- Optional: Snacks



# Socio-emotional Development

Discussion questions:

1. What did you like about the movie? Why?
2. What did you not like about the movie?  
Why?
3. What do you think the movie was trying to teach us?

# Socio-emotional Development

4. Was there a time when one of the characters was sad?
5. Was there a time when one of the characters was happy?
6. Was there a time when one of the characters was scared or afraid?
7. Can you think of a time when you felt sad, happy, scared, or afraid?



# Socio-emotional Development

8. When the main character was in crisis, who could they have asked for help?
9. When you're struggling or having a bad day, who can you ask for help?

# Socio-emotional Development

Tips for getting the most out of your movie night:

- Do your best to “protect” this time as a family.
- Remember that this is supposed to be fun!



# Socio-emotional Development

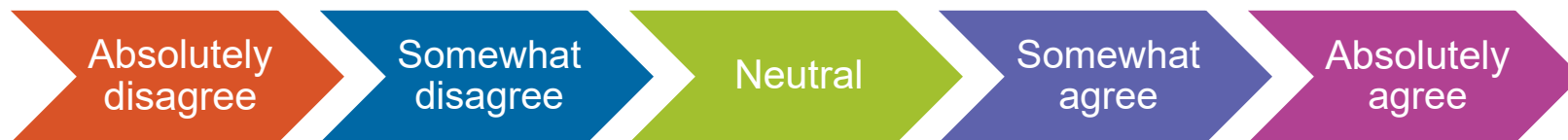


# Resources

- Autism Speaks- Home for the Holidays resource:  
<https://www.autismspeaks.org/blog/home-holidays-ways-make-sure-your-autistic-child-enjoys-their-break>
- Lakeridge Health- Accessible Holiday Experiences:  
[https://www.lrcss.com/blog/making-the-holiday-experience-more-accessible-for-individuals-with-autism?gclid=Cj0KCQiAlZGcBhCoARIsAGQ0kkp3HRf58jWNwIB4OPjKA7xIFPfR0LLCi384VmWdzKFBKblzTXt\\_W98aAgHuEALw\\_wcB](https://www.lrcss.com/blog/making-the-holiday-experience-more-accessible-for-individuals-with-autism?gclid=Cj0KCQiAlZGcBhCoARIsAGQ0kkp3HRf58jWNwIB4OPjKA7xIFPfR0LLCi384VmWdzKFBKblzTXt_W98aAgHuEALw_wcB)

# Feedback Survey

- Please answer each question in the survey
- The questions include items with:
  - A Likert scale (i.e., a 5-point scale with a range of responses)



- Selecting only one answer (single answer)
- Selecting all answers that might apply (multiple selections)
- Text boxes where you type your answer

# References

- Cachia, R. L., Anderson, A., & Moore, D. W. (2016). Mindfulness in individuals with autism spectrum disorder: A systematic review and narrative analysis. *Review Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 3(2), 165-187.
- Hartley, M., Dorstyn, D., & Due, C. (2019). Mindfulness for children and adults with autism spectrum disorder and their caregivers: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 49, 4306-4319.
- Ridderinkhof, A., Bruin, E. I., Blom, R., & Bogels, S. M. (2018). *Mindfulness*, 9(3), 773-791.

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