



PARENT / CAREGIVER NEWSLETTER November 2022

Hard to believe it's November already and signs of Christmas and the holidays are appearing everywhere! The next couple months will bring lots of changes to our schedules, routines, and expectations. These changes can sometimes be particularly difficult for children with autism. A few suggestions for helping your child manage holiday transitions and changes:

- **Use lots of positive reinforcement.** Notice and praise any "good" behaviors! Reinforcing desired behaviors will increase the odds your child will do it again.
- Keep the morning and nighttime routines as consistent as possible.
- **Use priming** – allowing your child to preview what is about to happen. Knowing what to expect may help your child with transitions. Use word or picture calendars or schedules to let your child know what to expect.
- **Priming** can also include practicing desired behaviors before the actual event such as opening presents, giving high fives to relatives, or any other behavior a child needs help with.
- **Use activity menus** – children will be out of school and/or ABA services during the holidays. Often children with autism aren't yet skilled in independently managing their time. An activity menu can use words or pictures to help children select something to do during their free time.
- Help friends and family have positive interactions with your child by sharing information with them beforehand such as what your child likes or doesn't like or how your child communicates.
- Have an exit strategy for holiday functions. It's preferable to respond to early warning signs your child is becoming distressed before behaviors escalate. Exit strategies may include having a quiet place to retreat to, using redirection or increasing reinforcement for desired behaviors.
- Have a particular need or concern for your child during the holidays? Let us know! We can schedule individual sessions to provide family support. janice

THIS MONTH'S FAMILY MEETINGS

Hammond 11/21 **11:00am** Group Meeting in person

Thibodaux 11/17 Group Meeting at **8:45am in person**

Houma 11/16 Group Meeting at **8:45 in person**

Baton Rouge SLA 11/17 Group Meeting at **8:45am in person**

Baton Rouge Pre-K 11/22 Group Meeting **11:30 in person**

Lafayette 11/29 Group Meeting at **2:00pm in person**

All New Orleans/Houma/ Thibodaux Online Meeting
11/15 at **9:30am and noon** – online only via TEAMS
11/17 at **6:00pm**- online only via TEAMS

Group sessions are open to any Touchstone parent or other legal guardian. Other caregivers may attend *with* parents/guardians. Please refrain from bringing children to the group meetings. Individual sessions can be conducted at the centers, in the home, or in the community, and address your child's specific needs.

Join Us! If you are unable to attend the monthly meetings, please contact Angie Lanoux at: alanoux@tc-aba.com to set up individual meetings.

Parent Collaboration Support:

Houma/Thibodaux/NOLA- Paula White at pgwhite@tc-aba.com

Baton Rouge/Lafayette/Hammond- Mary Johnson at mjohnson@tc-aba.com

Thanksgiving Closures

Wednesday, November 23 for Staff Professional Development Day

Thursday and Friday, November 24 and 25 – Thanksgiving holidays

We are thankful for the opportunity to work with your family!