



Spring Newsletter

Tom and Karen Chapman care coordination services



**NIH Autism Center
of Excellence**



Discover sensory-friendly family films in metro Atlanta

Several theaters throughout metro Atlanta now offer sensory-friendly family films, providing children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) the chance to join their families and friends at the movies in a more comfortable and understanding environment. The theaters turn the lights up, lower the sound and encourage kids to get up and talk, dance, walk or sing. The following nearby locations offer sensory-friendly screenings:

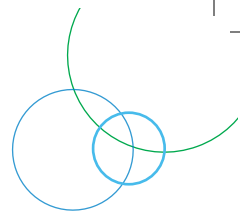
- AMC Parkway Pointe 15
- AMC Sugarloaf Mills 18
- NCG Cinemas—Acworth, Marietta, Stone Mountain and Peachtree Corners
- Studio Movie Grill Duluth and Holcomb Bridge

Keeping track of your child's individualized education plan (IEP)

Your child's IEP addresses his unique learning issues and includes specific educational goals. The IEP is a legally binding document developed with parent input that specifies services and supports that your child will receive during the school year. The following tips will help you keep track of your child's progress in meeting his IEP goals:

- Remember to check in with your child's primary teacher frequently. Your child may not be able to communicate with you about his IEP services and goals.
- Make sure you know the names and roles of every special educator assigned to your child. Find out what services they provide and on which days.
- Be proactive. Contact the IEP team leader if you feel the IEP isn't being followed.
- If the situation doesn't improve, request a special IEP team meeting with all assigned special educators so you don't have to wait until the next yearly meeting to address any problems.
- Go over your child's progress reports. IEPs should include measurable goals that are reported to you on specified dates.
- Try and read between the lines of your child's progress or lack thereof. Talk to your child and listen carefully to what he says or doesn't say about his time at school.





Tips for dining out

Eating at a restaurant can be a stressful experience for a child with ASD. Dining out entails a lot of waiting—to be seated, to get drinks, to order and even to leave. One way to make the process easier for your family is to prepare ahead of time, which can reduce anxiety in unfamiliar environments and can help your child know what to expect. Here are a few ways to make dining out easier:

- Use social stories or simply talk with your child about what the restaurant will be like.
- Look for restaurants with patios so you can sit outside, if possible. These tend to have more space and are less crowded. Some restaurants also have private rooms or quieter areas. Call ahead of time to see if this might be a possibility.
- Consider dining earlier in the evening when restaurants are generally less crowded and noisy.
- If your child doesn't have dietary restrictions, ask the restaurant server to bring food, such as bread or chips, to the table right away. This might help a child while waiting for the entree to arrive. You may also want to order your child's meal right away and ask that it be served as soon as possible.
- Many restaurants have coloring sheets and crayons available to help occupy children while they wait. If not offered, ask if this is an option or bring some from home.

We need research volunteers

At Marcus Autism Center, we're committed to providing the best possible care for kids living with autism now and to transforming the future of autism through research. Because of our mission, we are always looking for study participants.

Visit marcus.org/research or call **404-785-7600** to learn more about our research program.

Upcoming events at Marcus Autism Center

Visit marcus.org for more information about parent workshops, family activities and community events.



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