



Camden

### **Camden learning disabilities service**

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### **Top tips: supporting someone with a learning disability when you need to stay at home due to Covid-19**

- Routine is still important: Try to get up and go to bed at the same time. Try to break up the day at similar times for breakfast, lunch, dinner.
- Use a visual timetable, make a to-do list and plan what you will do in the day
- Try to keep busy – make sure to do physical activities throughout the day (like shaking out sheets, hanging up laundry, whisking and mixing when baking, kneading bread, scrubbing and wiping dishes and tables, cleaning the bath, hoovering, or an online exercise class).
- Be mindful of screentime – it's easy to get too much of this.
- Try to get some fresh air into the house – open blinds and curtains and let the light in
- If you have your own garden or balcony you can use this to spend some time outdoors. If you and the person you support are well, you can take a walk but make sure to keep a distance from other people.
- Have a look at what you can hear and see outside, wildlife can be a good one, such as birdwatching. You might have some seeds you could put out for the birds, or water for a birdbath.
- Try mindfulness and focusing on the 'here and now' – what you can see, hear, smell, taste and touch
- You may need to remind the person you support why you are not going out – you can use social stories to help with this. You may need to offer an alternative suggestions.
- Validate people's feelings around staying at home.
- Don't tell the person you support what they CAN'T do, but focus on the activities that they CAN do
- Support the person to make choices around activities so they still have some control – make sure you only give options that are available to

them and remember to use symbols, photographs and objects to support choice making

- Try to involve the person you support where possible in anything that you need to do around the house – even involvement in small steps of an activity is good.
- Try to do calming activities before bed, keep the same bedtime routine
- If possible encourage the person you support not to use the bed apart from at bedtimes so that this is associated with sleep
- Support the person you support to reach out to others via phone, email, skype and social media.
- You can encourage good hand hygiene at home by making this fun – this could be by doing more water based activities like washing up, handwashing clothes, water play (use colanders, funnels, recycling containers, different sponges and scrubbers). Try using different scented soaps, lots of bubbles, singing songs together whilst washing your hands to ensure the person you support is washing thoroughly, or setting a timer, competing about who can make the most bubbles or squelchy noises!

Thank you for your support – it is invaluable in keeping the client and community well! Please contact the team using the number above if you have any queries we may be able to support with.

Hilary Low

CLDS OT

19/03/2020