

Autism Holiday Toolkit

Family Checklist

Plan Ahead

- Create a visual schedule for the week/day
- Highlight events, meals, & travel
- Practice new experiences with photos/videos

Sensory Prep

- Designate a quiet “reset” space
- Pack headphones, fidgets, weighted blankets
- Introduce decorations gradually; avoid flashing lights & loud sounds

Social Skills

- Use social stories for events and gift opening
- Role-play greetings
- Provide phrase or choice cards for easy communication

Meals & Routines

- Include familiar foods
- Serve foods separately to reduce stress
- Keep core routines: bedtimes, meals, and screen time

Emotional Regulation

- Practice deep breathing
- Use a feelings chart to identify emotions and coping tools
- Schedule short breaks

Caregiver Support

- Prepare siblings with guidance and expectations
- Caregiver self-care: short breaks, realistic expectations