

# A GUIDE TO ACTIVITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

**It can be challenging to engage with clients during direct care services. Below are activity suggestions that can help keep clients engaged and enriched during services.**

## **1. SENSORY PLAY**

Sensory play can be a great way to provide individuals with autism a calming and engaging activity. Set up a sensory bin with rice, beans, or sand, and add items that encourage exploration like scoops, funnels and small toys. Or, create a sensory walkway by lining up various textures such as soft fabric, grass, and rough sandpaper for your client to walk on.

## **2. SWIMMING AND WATER ACTIVITIES**

Most individuals love water play, and it's also a great way to incorporate exercise into your client's routine. Pools (if applicable), water sprinklers, water balloons, and slip and slides can be great options.

## **3. OUTDOOR ADVENTURES**

Outdoor adventures can be a great way to encourage exploration and sensory integration. Consider taking your client hiking. If your child prefers less intense activities, even a simple nature walk or picnic in the park can be a fun outdoor activity.

## **4. MUSIC AND ART THERAPY**

Some individuals on the autism spectrum find music and art therapy to be soothing and enjoyable. You can set up your own art and music activities at the clients home, like painting with watercolors or playing musical instruments, or you can attend art and music events in the community.

## **5. MOVIE AND GAME NIGHTS**

Sometimes a quiet night in can be the perfect activity for individuals with autism. Set up a cozy indoor or outdoor space with your client's favorite games, books or movies. Consider making it a regular event!

**Remember that every individual is unique, and some activities may work better than others. Communication is key- check-in with the client or the client's family when planning activities and modify plans as needed. With a little creativity and planning, direct care services can be a fun and enriching time for individuals on the autism spectrum.**

# HERE ARE SOME CAMP SOCIAL ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BENEFIT CHILDREN ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM:

## 1. ART CLASSES

Art classes can be a great way for individuals on the autism spectrum to express themselves creatively and can increase their social interactions with their peers and teachers. Art classes can also help improve fine motor skills and sensory processing.

## 2. MUSIC THERAPY

Music therapy can be an effective way for individuals on the autism spectrum to learn to communicate and improve social skills. Music can be used to create a safe and comfortable space for the child to express themselves, learn to communicate with others through music, and improve cognitive skills.

## 3. SOCIAL SKILLS GROUPS

Social skills groups can be beneficial to individuals on the autism spectrum as they focus on teaching social communication skills, social cues and group interaction. They learn important skills such as conversation skills, greeting others, sharing and taking turns through various activities.

## 4. SPORTS PROGRAMS

Sports can be a great way for individuals on the autism spectrum to develop social skills and improve physical coordination. Team sports such as football and basketball can encourage teamwork and communication, while individual sports such as swimming can be less overwhelming for those who are easily overstimulated.

## 5. DRAMA PROGRAMS

Drama programs can be a creative and fun way for individuals on the autism spectrum to improve communication and social skills. Role-playing exercises can help teach important skills such as eye contact, conversation skills, and picking up subtle social cues.

## 6. ANIMAL THERAPY

Animal therapy programs can provide individuals on the autism spectrum with an outlet for anxiety and stress. Visiting animals in a safe and controlled environment has been found to provide emotional benefits and can help individuals improve their social and communication skills.

**OVERALL, SOCIAL ACTIVITIES THAT PROVIDE INDIVIDUALS WITH STRUCTURE AND ROUTINE, AS WELL AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION, CAN BE HELPFUL FOR THEIR DEVELOPMENT. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT AUTISTIC INDIVIDUALS ARE UNIQUE AND MAY PREFER CERTAIN ACTIVITIES OVER OTHERS.**