

April 29, 2020

Special Needs/ASD & Mental Health

The **BIG 5** steps to wellbeing were originally developed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) in the UK and were aimed at improving the wellbeing of the entire population. The BIG 5 steps include: **Connect, Be Active, Keep Learning, Take Notice, and Give Back.**

When practiced regularly, the Big 5 are meant to improve one's sense of personal wellbeing and contribute to good mental health. The intention of this ongoing newsletter is to highlight tips and practices related to the Big 5 that can be easily incorporated into family life.

THIS WEEK'S BIG 5 THEME IS:

Be Active

Engaging in regular physical activity is associated with greater wellbeing and overall health. However, movement and exercise don't necessarily need to be intense for you to feel good and experience these positive impacts. What is most important is that you discover an activity that you enjoy - one that suits your level of fitness and mobility.

What is one way you can **BE ACTIVE** with your child this week?



TIPS AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES WITH A CHILD WITH AN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER AND/OR INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

TIP #1: Move in a way that suits you and your child

Need to keep calm and slow down? Take a moment to **relax and stretch**. Check out: [yoga in a chair](#)

Or **tense and relax** different muscle groups. Check out: [progressive muscle relaxation for children/youth](#)

TIP # 2: Have fun and use your favorite music to boost and energize!

Create an obstacle course with household objects to lift, throw safely, and balance. Or try: [4 exercises with at-home objects.](#)

Create a gross motor circuit or sensory path with materials you have at home (e.g. chalk on the driveway, painter's tape, printables or drawings, felt squares etc.). This video provides an example of a sensory path at school: <https://bit.ly/SensoryPath1>.

Dance with Go Noodle. A great video platform for movement (e.g., [Pop See Ko](#))

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

[Fitness for All Levels from Special Olympics](#)

Health Care Access Research and Developmental Disabilities (scroll to the end to sign up for Fit Fridays)
<https://www.hcarrdcovid.com/info>

[The Mental Health Benefits of Exercise](#)