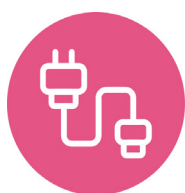


Autism & Meltdowns



A meltdown is an involuntary response to sensory overload, overwhelm, exhaustion, anxiety, change or a combination. Autistic people cannot control meltdowns.

These tips and facts will help you to gently support someone in meltdown.



Sensory Processing

- » Autistic brains experience the world differently. **Autistic experiences are real and valid.**
- » Sensory processing differences can mean some sounds, textures, tastes and sensations may be intolerable or painful.



Ensure Safety

- » Give the person space.
- » Remove others from the area
- » Give subtle supervision from a distance.
- » Intervene only if in immediate danger e.g. traffic.



Reduce Stimulus

- » Where possible reduce noise, bright lights, and remove triggers.
- » Reduce eye contact.
- » Reduce speech volume
- » Use a positive and calming tone.



Respect cues

- » If speaking to, being close by, maintaining eye contact, or touching someone increases signs of distress, avoid these where possible.



Do not touch or restrain

- » Only hold a person if you know it's effective in calming them.
- » This should only be done by someone known well to them.



Recovery time

- » Provide drinks, snacks, space and access to a calming or favoured activity.
- » Do not judge, punish, or impose consequences.

Adopted from the work of the Bendigo Autistic Advocacy and Support Services (AU).

Statewide Contacts

(03) 6722 5000

www.autismtas.org.au
autism@autismtas.org.au

Published November 2021

To find out more about
professional development
for your business contact
learningpd@autismtas.org.au

