

Travelling as an Autism Family

Strategies & tools to help you take the trip of your dreams

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Our Family



Our Travel Story



Challenges of Travel



Change

Sensory

Social

Anxiety

Financial

Support

Benefits of Travel

Communication

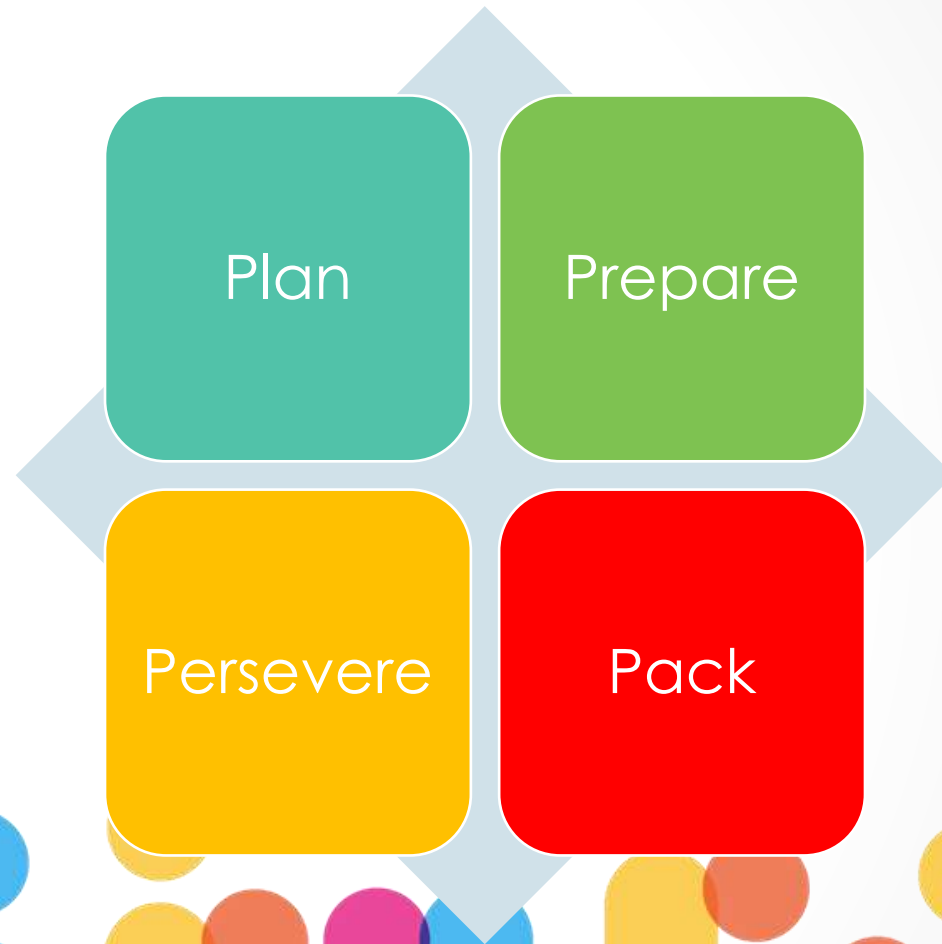
Responsibility

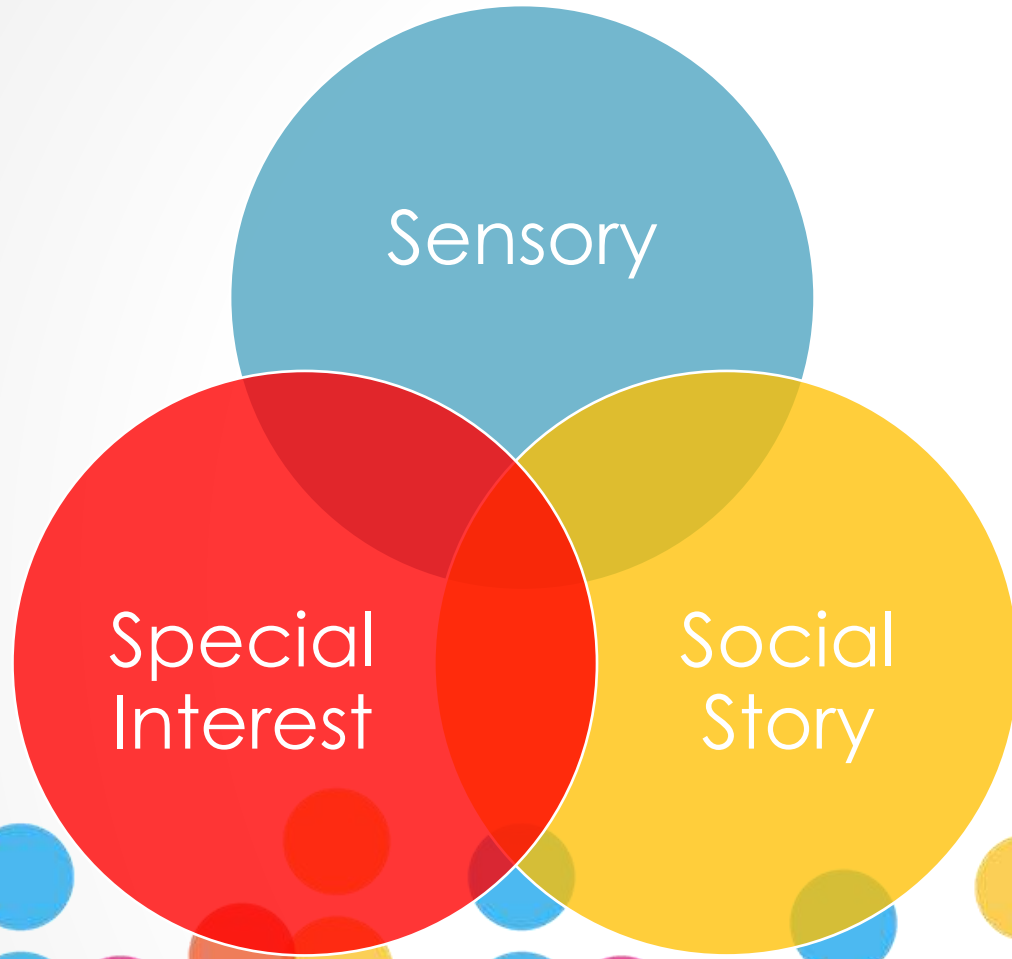
Confidence

Togetherness



Our Strategy 4 Ps





Our System

3 Ss



Sensory Considerations

Identify sensory triggers (e.g. smells, sounds, sights, textures, movement)

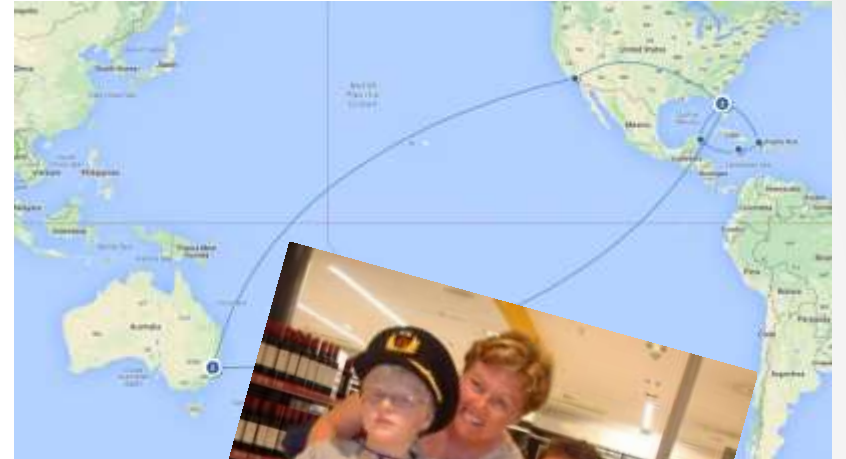
Have strategies in place to deal with them
(create a portable sensory kit)



Social Stories / Visual Itineraries

Social stories answer the
“why/what/where/how/when/who” questions
for our kids

You can find social stories online or you can
make your own



Examples of visual itineraries

April 12th – Flying to the USA

Today we are going to fly to America! Woohooo!

We will be getting up very early in the morning – like 4am! There won't be time for breakfast before we drive to Sydney, but that's okay, we'll get you something once we reach the airport. You will probably want to sleep in the car anyway.

When we arrive at Sydney airport we will check in and leave our bags. We also have to go through a security check before waiting to get on the plane. That's okay – we've done it all before.

At the airport stay close to Mum and Dad at all times and keep your backpack close – never leave it anywhere.

We will be flying on a Boeing 737, which is a big plane.



We don't know what seats we have yet, but Mum and Dad will move around so you don't have to sit next to a stranger.



The flight is a long one – we will be on the plane for about 13 hours, maybe even longer. There's no point asking "Are we there yet?" or "How much longer?" just assume it is still a fair way away.

What will we do on the plane?

You will have your backpack with a book or something else to keep you occupied. There is also a TV screen for you to watch movies. Remember that sometimes the movie will be interrupted because of announcements or technical difficulties – if this happens, just go back to your book!



About half way through our flight we will need to settle down and go to sleep. This is *VERY IMPORTANT*. Doing this will mean we arrive in the USA with as much energy as possible.

What will we eat on the plane?

We will pack some lollies to chew as the plane takes off and lands, but we can't carry lots and lots of snacks. We are going to be given meals on the plane, too. We have no control over what you are given, so please be polite and find something on the tray that you can eat.

What is *one* lolly or snack you would like to eat on the plane?

What are the rules on the plane?

You must be on your best behavior on the plane. It is a relatively small space and there will be lots of other people – grown-ups and children – on board. Remember the following:

- Be quiet – no shouting or yelling or carrying on
- Be polite – use your best manners for everyone
- Stay in your seat – you can't just wander around and you cannot play in the aisles

Remember, the flight takes about 13 hours. That's pretty much an entire day. WOW. A whole day on a plane!

List three things you might do on the plane (not eating or sleeping):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Examples of visual itineraries



Rangitoto Island!

Day 2

Today we are going on an adventure to an extinct volcanic island. There won't be any lava but there will be amazing views - don't forget to pack your binoculars or camera!

The *Rangitoto Volcanic Explorer Tour* leaves from the harbour, which is just a short walk from our hotel. We take a ferry ride for about half an hour to an enormous island that used to be a volcano! This is Rangitoto Island.

FACT!
Rangitoto Island is a 5.5km wide island with a distinctive symmetrical shield volcano cone rising 260 meters high over the Hauraki Gulf.

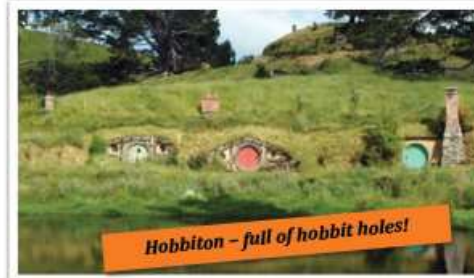
It is Auckland's newest volcano. It only formed 550 - 600 years ago!

When we get off the ferry we will have a tour in a four wheel drive. There will be a tour guide and might also be other tourists - so don't forget to be polite and let everyone enjoy the ride. Afterwards we will take a walk to the very top of the mountain - we will be standing on the very top of an ancient volcano - AWESOME!

This adventure departs at 9.15am and will take 4 to 5 hours. We will take water and some stuff to eat. When we get back we can explore the city.

Diary: Describe one amazing thing about Rangitoto Island.

FACT!
Tonight is New Year's Eve! Our hotel is right in the middle of the city, where there will be lots of parties and excited people. It might be a bit noisy but we can stay up later if we want to! We might even be able to see some fireworks at midnight - New Zealand is the first major country to celebrate the New Year!



Hobbiton - full of hobbit holes!

Day 4

Today we are going to leave Auckland and head south to Lake Taupo and our holiday cabin. Can you find Taupo on the map of New Zealand?

Before we get to the holiday park we are going to visit Hobbiton. This is where they filmed parts of the movies *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*.

At Hobbiton we will take a short bus ride before going on a walking tour with a guide and other visitors. The tour will take about two hours and will end at a café.

After the tour we will drive to the Top 10 Holiday Park in Taupo. We will be spending three nights there. We can relax, take advantage of the park facilities, and go out on some adventures while we are there.

Diary: Write about one thing you did today.



Incorporate Special Interests

Special interests motivate & engage our kids
so include them where you can

They are also an important coping mechanism
& reduces stress and anxiety when away from
home



Can you guess one of my son's special interests?



Resources

For more information:

www.PositiveSpecialNeedsParenting.com

Plus, discover additional tools & strategies in my new e-book *Autism Family Travel: A Guide for Families*, available through Amazon now.

