|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Overarching Principle** |
| **Communication** | Use clear and direct language to give precise instructions, stating specifically what the young person needs to do |
| Avoid being ambiguous as people with Autism have a literal understanding of language. |
| Visual support should be considered when supporting someone with Autism.. This can help to avoid uncertainty and unpredictability and avoid anxiety. Visual supports can make communication physical and consistent. |
| Allow time to process information when giving instruction by breaking down information into bite size chunks |
| Ensure you use active listening by focusing entirely on the young person and listen to what is being said. Try not to focus too much on external distractions. A good listener will understand what a person is truly saying. |
| **Social Interaction** | Introduce activities that encourage turn taking  Teach about social rules through stories, discussion and real life scenario’s. |
| Think about activities and relationships as a series of steps so that you can identify those parts the young person can do for themselves. |
| Provide the right amount and type of support at the right time – too much and the young person will be ‘over-supported’ and hindered in their independence. |
| Look for opportunities for the young person to express their preferences and be listened to, recognise that choosing within activities is a valuable opportunity for experiencing choice and control. |
| **Flexibility of Thought** | Talk through activities before, during and after. Have a running commentary to help the young person gain an understanding of themselves as being participants in the activity  Support the use of emotions and facial expressions by talking about how they feel and give the appropriate vocabulary to do so. |
| It is important to have a structured routine both daily and weekly. This consistency should limit any anxiety caused by being unsure or unaware of what is happening. Routines help us to manage and understand our environment, and changes in these routines can lead to confusion and distress. |
| Be aware of transitions when moving from one activity to the other where visual resources’ are used to support what is happening. Having a countdown or a sand timer can also help in the build up to any transition. |
| Prepare for any changes to routine by using verbal instruction, visual resources or a social script. People with Autism do not have the flexibility to fill each gap in a day. |
| Support the use of emotions and facial expressions by talking about how they feel and give the appropriate vocabulary to do so. |
| **Sensory Processing** | Ensure that the environmental demands are taken into account for the young person’s sensory processing and be aware if the young person seeks or avoids information |
| Be aware of an individual’s personal space, as any intrusion into this can lead to a build-up of anxieties so respecting this is important if an individual is showing signs of agitation. |
| Try and maintain an environment at home that you know will not have any disturbances or unexpected noises. Low stimuli rooms will be better and be have agreed times with the rest of the family so you do not get disturbed. |