



Roarsome Roar

INCLUSION NEWSLETTER

IT'S CHRISTMAS !

This time of year children with special educational needs and disabilities are often edged with anxiety. Everywhere they look they see, hear and smell Christmas. From TV ads, bright lights and jangly music on the streets. Even the festive Christmas activities at school are a constant reminder of the big day ahead. It's easy for them to get overwhelmed, over stimulated and heightened - just waiting to explode like a shaken bottle of fizzy pop.

Tips for a calm build up to Christmas

1. **Pick a date:** Impress upon your children a date that the Christmas prep will start. This will help to keep the build up a little under control. You can't prevent them seeing Christmas all around, but reminding them of your family traditions may help keep levels manageable.
2. **Shop online:** When you have a special educational need and disability, shopping at Christmas can cause severe stress. The bright lights, noisy tunes, strong smells, queuing to see Santa and the intense crowds are a big NO.
3. **Keep the routine going:** Over the Christmas period, the routines that your child depends upon to keep their anxiety levels in check can be difficult to maintain. Possibly try sticking to their regular bedtime and waking routine - even if it's moved a little later on each side - whatever works best, for your family needs. Maintaining sleep hygiene will also help reduce anxiety, getting over-tired and, in turn, can help to manage moods.

Tips for Christmas day

1. **Manage visitors:** Choose the option that is best for your child when it comes to having visitors or travelling to see family.
2. **Simplify Opening Presents:** For children who struggle with fine motor skills, reduce frustration. Loosen ribbons, unseal envelopes, and minimize tape on presents.
3. **Plan for Sensory Needs:** maybe have a indoor or outdoor space that is quiet and away from the noise of the day.
4. **Pace the Day:** go at a speed that suits your family and your needs. Being flexible and patient will help to alleviate some of the stress from the day.



Does it matter if things do not go to plan on Christmas day?

They always make the best stories for the future.

**Keep it simple, manageable, do not put too much pressure on yourselves -
we all do our best to create the Christmas that everyone enjoys.**

