



FaithWorks Counseling

Dr. Debbie Harnois

2901 University Avenue, Suite 17

Columbus, GA 31907

706.366.9691

www.FaithWorksCounseling17.com

Caregiver Tips for Raising a Child with Autism (Level 1)

You are not alone. Many families are raising children with autism, and there are strategies and supports that can make the journey easier for both you and your child.

1. Build Structure and Routine

- Children with autism often do best with predictable schedules.
- Keep mealtimes, school prep, and bedtime as consistent as possible.
- Use a visual schedule (pictures or simple drawings) to help your grandson know what's coming next.

2. Support Communication

- Your child may communicate in unique ways. Be patient and flexible.
- Encourage him to use words, gestures, or pictures to express his needs.
- Praise his efforts to communicate — even small steps count!

3. Manage Meltdowns with Calm

- Meltdowns are not “bad behavior,” but a sign he is overwhelmed.
- Stay calm and speak in a quiet, steady voice.
- Give him a safe, quiet space to calm down.
- Afterward, gently help him name his feelings (“You were upset because it was too noisy”).

4. Encourage Independence

- Give him small, age-appropriate jobs (putting toys away, helping set the table).
- Break tasks into one step at a time. Celebrate success, no matter how small.

5. Take Care of Yourself

- Caring for a child with autism is rewarding but can also be stressful.
- Make time for your own rest, hobbies, and social connections.
- Ask for help when you need it — from family, friends, church, or support groups.
- Family Caregiver Alliance — www.caregiver.com
- Generations United Grandfamilies Resources — www.gu.org/explore-our-topics/grandfamilies

6. Use Community Resources

- Autism Hope Center, Columbus, GA 706-604-6333. Website: www.autismhopecenter.com Also on Facebook.
- Autism Speaks (www.autismspeaks.org) — Toolkits and caregiver resources.
- Local School District — Special education services, individualized supports.
- Parent/Grandparent Support Groups — Talking with others in similar situations can provide encouragement and tips.
- Georgia Crisis & Access Line (1-800-715-4225) — If you ever feel overwhelmed and need immediate support.

7. Remember Your Strengths

- Your love, stability, and faith are powerful gifts for your child.
- You don't need to be perfect — consistency, patience, and love go a long way.
- Celebrate small victories and remind yourself: *"I am doing my best, and that is enough."*

✓ **Takeaway:** Raising a child with autism is a journey. With routines, patience, and support, you and your child can thrive together.

Additional Resources

Recommended Books

- Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew – Ellen Notbohm
- Uniquely Human: A Different Way of Seeing Autism – Barry Prizant, PhD
- The Autism Sourcebook – Karen Siff Exkom
- Parent a Child with Autism Spectrum Disorder – Albert Knapp, PhD

Parent Training Programs & Online Modules

- Triple P – Stepping Stones – www.triplep.net
- Incredible Years – Autism Spectrum & Language Delays <https://incredibleyears.com/programs/parent>
- AFIRM Modules (Evidence-based Practices) – <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu>
- Autism Navigator Parent Resources – <https://autismnavigator.com>