

Prompts for sharing an autism diagnosis with a child

- 1** **Sample conversation starters**
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| "You know how you like to..." | ...watch Star Wars on Disney+ all the time? |
| "You know how you don't like to..." | ...go to the movies because it is too loud? |
| "Remember when..." | ...you broke your toe and it did not hurt? |
| "You know how you need help..." | ...tying your shoes. |
| "You know how we..." | ...use a schedule for your day? |

- 2** **Sample autism icebreakers**
- "Did you know we all learn and experience life differently?"
 - "Have you ever heard of autism?"
 - "What do you know about autism?"
 - "Autism causes differences in the way our brains process information."

- 3** **Sample autism facts**
- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| "Autism helps explain..." | ...why you have a hard time communicating. |
| "Autism is..." | ...identified through evaluations by people with experience. |
| "Autism sometimes..." | ...is identified after kids start school. |
| "Autism is not..." | ...the same for everyone who has this diagnosis. |

- 4** **Relatable conversation prompts**
- "You have strengths like remembering everyone's birthdays, and you get A's in math."
 - "Things like reading and making friends can be tougher, right?"
 - "This is why Ms. Tate comes to 'work on your words,' so talking is less frustrating."
 - "You know Amy's son? He is diagnosed with autism, too."

- 5** **Open-ended conversation prompts**
- "There is a lot for us to learn."
 - "What are your thoughts?"
 - "Do you want to talk more?"
 - "Do you have any questions about autism?"

Using a combination of these prompts and ones you come up with, a parent's side of sharing autism with their child may sound something like this:

Remember when we went to talk with the counselor, and she asked us a lot of questions? We want to share what she told us with you. I think this information will be helpful with school and many other things. Have you ever heard of autism? Autism helps explain why you have a hard time communicating. You have strengths like remembering everyone's birthdays, and you get A's in math. Things like reading and making friends can be tougher, right? This is why Ms. Tate comes to 'work on your words,' so talking is less frustrating. Do you have any questions about autism?