



CHILDREN  
& FAMILY  
SUPPORT

# Let's Get through Christmas

## Top Tips for Children with SEND



# Christmas...

- It can be easy to feel overwhelmed by the preparations for Christmas
- You may feel as though everyone else is enjoying the perfect family festivities while you may be feeling more isolated than during the rest of the year- school, stress, behaviour, meltdowns
- Often we can feel disappointment if Christmas does not live up to the picture in our heads of how it is ***supposed*** to be



# Plan Ahead

- Decorate the house gradually and let your child get used to the changes
- Have a 'Christmas free' area for your child to escape to if they get overwhelmed
- Develop a timetable of what will happen and who they will be seeing for children who find change difficult
- Pack a security back pack with items you child finds comforting and have it accessible to them



# Over the Christmas Period



- Have realistic expectations
- Keep a routine going
- Avoid marathon unwrapping sessions, have toys set to go if your child struggles with waiting
- Plan some activities where there is no expectation of your child and allow 'down-time'
- Talk to family about what will be happening and when
- Take food and drinks that your child will eat at gathering to reduce the pressure for children who like specific tastes and textures



# If It Doesn't Go To Plan

- Have an escape plan! A quiet space or take two cars when visiting
- Try not get frustrated if things don't go how you wanted them to
- Try to respond to behaviour rather than react. Ask yourself what does my child need in this moment
- Ignore any negative comments-most people don't mean to be unhelpful



# Take Care Of Yourself

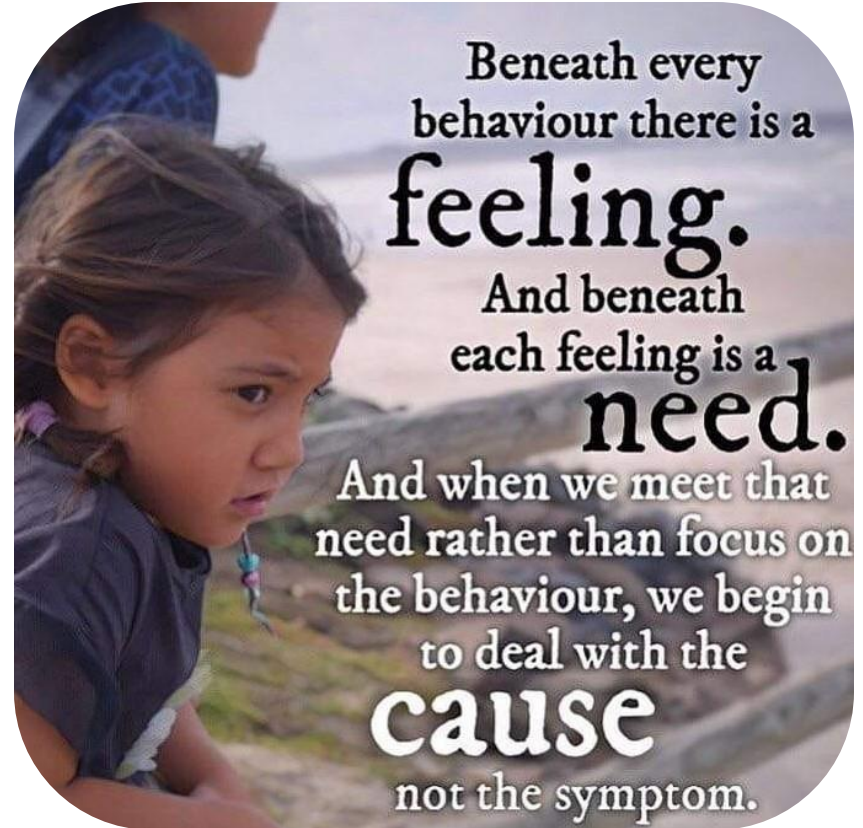
- Avoid trying for perfection
- It is OK to say 'no'
- Take time for yourself
- Ask for help, you don't have to do it all
- Get enough sleep
- Have a laugh, laughter decreases stress hormones and increases endorphins





# And Remember...

- Christmas lunch is just like a Sunday roast...we can blame celebrity chefs for the pressure!
- Christmas is only two days of the whole year!
- And it will come around again next year.
- Enjoy even the smallest successes.





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**Thank you**

