

1. Keep to your usual routine as much as possible

Obviously I don't mean go to school but if you can keep to the routine around the school day such as getting up, dressed, tea time etc as you normally would it will really help. Try to resist the temptation to stay in pyjamas all day and do it how you normally do!

2. Have a holiday routine

For the rest of the day, when school is normally on, come up with a loose routine you can follow each day. This could include going out for a few hours, coming home, lunch time, rest time, play time or sensory play time, story time, anything your child likes. Splitting up the day and following the same routine each day will help ease anxiety over what is going to happen next.

3. Have a visual timetable of the week and each day

Make a visual timetable with pictures that you can use to show your child what you are doing each day. Also create a visual timetable using your routine for each day. This is a series of pictures of each part of the day in the order they will happen. You can go through this with your child at the beginning of the day and then throughout the day to show them what is coming up next.

4. Explain tomorrow's activities the day before

Consider showing your child the weekly timetable each day so they know what to expect the next day and aren't waking up to the unknown.

5. Keep days out short

It is great to be able to take your child on trips out but try to avoid thinking of action packed trips which last all day (unless of course there is somewhere to have some down time if needed). Instead consider taking half day trips in the mornings when it is quieter and then returning home for lunch or before it gets too much for your child. You will know your child best and how much they can cope with. If you plan it this way you will feel less like you are failing when you leave early and if you plan it well you will be able to survive a trip with no meltdowns after (that might be wishful thinking!)

6. Plan rest times

If you are planning trips and busy times you will need to make sure you plan rest times too. Quieter times away from people and without too much going on. Plan these times around what ever calms your child normally. Even plan screen time into your child's day if this is how they relax. If you have a very busy week then maybe take a whole day or every other day to stay home and chill.

7. Social stories

If you are going somewhere your child isn't used to then consider writing a social story so your child knows what to expect. You can do some research too and find some pictures online to show your child so they will know what it looks like before they get there.

8. Plan well if you are going on trips or away for the holidays

If you are to be travelling by plane or car plan well in advance

Plan for day trips so you can take everything you may need such as ear defenders or snacks.

9. Plan meals and shop in advance

If your child is anything like mine then your food shopping trips might end up like this! So it could be an idea to plan the weeks food and either get it delivered or go to the shops the week before, without your child, so you know you have enough in for the week.

10. Relax and go with the flow!

Yes I am saying have a routine and go with the flow! We all know kids are unpredictable, moods change day to day, tiredness comes and goes etc. Try to stay positive, trips go wrong, meltdowns happen and so does the unpredictable. At the end of the day remember you are doing an awesome job!