

# WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY/APRIL 2

## Parenting & dealing with autism

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While the journey with an autistic child is tough and the challenges, countless, parents confess that they have learnt a lot in the process.

“A strong parent support network is what is required because there isn't enough professional help or special schools for autistic kids. To prevent families from burn-

ing out, it is important to stick close together and learn from other parents' experiences,” says Merry Barua, the founder of Action for Autism, and a mother of an autistic son who is now in his late twenties.

Accept that autism is as much a part of the child as his other talents are. Dealing with autistic kids in social situations can be problematic

because of the complex and ‘invisible’ nature of the condition. Hold your head high and:

- Don't ask complicated questions from an autistic child. They take everything literally and at face value
- Keep instructions clear and concise
- Use visuals as far as possible to reach out to them
- Keep their lives structured

### Light it up Blue

To create awareness about autism, a lot of important sites like the India Gate and other government buildings have decided to deck up their exteriors by hanging blue lights. Family and friends of autistic kids will chime in by following suit on the 1st and 2nd of April. And why blue? Blue is the colour of communication.