

Extra Helpful Tips

- DO** use the individual's name first to get their attention and if it is a child get down to their level before using short sentences e.g. Sam please sit down or Sam please come down stairs.
- DO** keep your language simple and direct, use closed and direct questions, be clear to minimise misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Use visual cues to increase understanding e.g. photos, symbols, writing, drawings, objects etc. only if there is a need.
- DO** explain to the individual why they are there and what you are going to do as they may find it hard to understand what is going on. They may not recognise who is who.
- DO** allow the individual extra time to process information and respond to any questions when they are spoken to. Also only ask them one thing at a time otherwise this may cause them confusion. If you interrupt them then they may have to start again as they may become overwhelmed.
- DO** check for understanding as they are unlikely to tell you that they do not understand. The person may not be able to read between the lines, be clear e.g. yes or no, black or white.
- DO** keep good communication between you and the individual and keep them informed at all times so they know what is happening. Also keeping them up-to-date on what's going to happen in the future.
- DO** give them time to outline their concerns as they may need to make sense of what is happening and going to happen.
- DO** remember to let the individual know if things change or if something isn't happening anymore as lack of warning may increase their anxiety levels and upset.
- DO** have a quieter area if needed to reduce the individual's stimuli in their environment to help bring down their stress and anxiety levels.
- DO** keep choices to two until you are sure the individual can make the right choice some may have repetitive questioning which may occur whereas others might withdraw.
- DON'T** expect them to understand body language, gestures, tone of voice or facial expressions and some individuals may not like their personal space invaded.
- DON'T** assume that inappropriate behaviour is deliberate which may include flapping, tapping, rocking, pacing or talking incessantly, inappropriately or on seemingly irrelevant topics; it may be the only way that an individual can cope with a stressful situation.
- DON'T** take lack of eye contact as a sign of rudeness; it can be hard to process a lot of information, an individual may find eye contact unpleasant or painful.
- DON'T** ignore the individual or shout, stay calm, use calm communication and be patient.

This is a guide only, everyone is different and difficulties vary from person to person

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, ADVICE AND HELP CONTACT: **CANadDa**

W: www.canadda.org.uk

E: canadda@canadda.org.uk