**Sensory Considerations**

Turn lights low to reduce fluorescent light exposure if possible.

- Variety of seating options available when available (chairs, couches, bean bags, etc.)
- Playing calming video/music on low volume on available TVs/screens in shared spaces.
- Non-disruptive headphones available at check in.
- Reduce crowding to allow social and visual cues.
- Offer weights for lap pads.
- Patience and a smile go the extra mile.

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**Appointment Preparation**

- Develop Social Narrative to help individuals and families prepare for the appointment.
- Send paperwork ahead to reduce time spent waiting at check in.
- Send a reminder email to participants with tips, resources, and paperwork.

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**Space Considerations**

- Waiting room with sensory tools, activities, visual signals caused by the needle poke.
- Private rooms for vaccine administration.
- Plan for an extra vaccination room in case someone needs more time.
- When possible, separate observation and waiting rooms.
- Two separate observation spaces when possible - one for activities for children and one for family members and adults.
- Allow movement, exploration, and play.
- Clear signs showing where to go.
- Break space for volunteers, nurses, and others to reduce crowds, and noise in other spaces.
- Consider providing water, coffee, snacks, or music.

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**Injection Tools**

Buzzy Bee: “Through a combination of education, distraction, and our FDA 510(k) cleared topical product, this FDA 510(k) cleared topical product is the most proven way to control pain associated with venipuncture and cosmetic injections. Our solutions use high-frequency, low amplitude vibration, which provides a more subtle sensation than percussion or other stimulation vibration therapies. Users should familiarize themselves with the vibration strength before the first application.”

Shotblockers: “The contact points on the underside saturate the sensory nerves, distracting the patient marking pain signals caused by the needle poke.”

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**Other Supports & Accommodations**

- To find an adaptive vaccine clinic near you, an educational program, or to learn more about the VEI please visit: www.AutismSociety.org
- To speak to an I&R Specialist directly, call 1-800-3-AUTISM (1-800-328-8473), or email info@autism-society.org
- Visit www.AutismSociety.org to learn more.

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**Fear of Needles and the COVID-19 Vaccine: A Guide for Caregivers**

- Support Animals
- Music therapy available
- Hand Sanitizer
- Band-Aid choice board
- Commitment to flexibility, patience, and environment
- Orientation small/multiracial groups and other volunteers. Allow as much time as needed (with social impact)
- To provide water & snacks for participants while waiting in observation
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**Click for Bullet Points for Resources:**

- **Services:**
  - Soothing, gentle environment
  - Relating with Birds
  - Nature-oriented activities
  - Waterfall experience
  - Petting zoo
  - Aquatic environment

- **Sensory:**
  - Sensory Fidget Tubes
  - Sensory Stress Balls
  - Wristband fidget
  - Sensory Stress Balls and Water Box Set

- **Resources:**
  - Autism Society of America’s Guide to Accessible Vaccine Clinics
  - Autism Society of America’s Guide to Accessible Vaccine Clinics

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**“My son was very comfortable getting his booster. The quiet rooms and friendly staff were a huge help. We were all very excited that he handled it so well.”**

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**“The different tools used to distract my son and make him as comfortable and relaxed as possible. Also that nobody held him down.”**

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**Prepping a Child for the COVID-19 Vaccine**

- Family Support Specialists who are knowledgeable and experienced in working with children and adolescents to help support participants at all steps of the process. This person should be prepared with comprehensive knowledge of the vaccination process and be able to provide additional information based on the needs of the participant.
- Orientation small/multiracial groups and other volunteers. Allow as much time as needed (with social impact)
- To provide water & snacks for participants while waiting in observation

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**Other Resources [Clickable Links]**

- Support Animals
- Music therapy available
- Orientation small/multiracial groups and other volunteers. Allow as much time as needed (with social impact)
- To provide water & snacks for participants while waiting in observation

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**“Everything was great and although my son wasn’t happy about getting the vaccine, this was by far the smoothest vaccination he has ever received. He only wants to get vaccines here now!”**

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**To our National Helpline:**

- To speak to an I&R Specialist directly, call 1-800-AUTISM (1-800-328-8473), or email info@autism-society.org
- Visit www.AutismSociety.org to learn more.