

Preparation for COVID-19 when living with a family member with additional support needs

- ✓ Keep a good daily routine, with fun, love and health guiding your day.
- ✓ Find Social Stories about the situation & what may happen.
- ✓ Support the person to get used to protective gear that may need be used. (e.g. facemasks; swab stick; (or cotton buds); aprons, etc.)
- ✓ Identify someone in your main service or your HSE Community Team you can contact for help and advice.
- ✓ Ensure the health passport is up to date, along with any prescriptions; and that the GP's details are easily accessible.
- ✓ If you're new to your area, or haven't been registered with a GP's surgery, ring them to let them know you are caring for somebody with additional support needs, highlighting any known risk factors (e.g. immunosuppression, underlying illness, difficulties social distancing, etc.).
- ✓ Store sufficient supply of hard to source items (e.g. medical equipment; medications; continence equipment, feeding equipment; Leave enough for other families!).
- ✓ Create a list of emergency / resource contact numbers and stick it on the fridge.
- ✓ Write a list of the person's favourite things to do in the house. Keep this list on the fridge and stock up on what you'll need for them.
- ✓ Write a list of the persons favourite things to do outside the house. Try to see how you can provide 'the next best alternative' for these (e.g. using Skype to visit people; YouTube clips of favourite activities; ice-cream shop in your kitchen; Dublin Zoo webcam, etc.).
- ✓ Arrange a 'back up' plan in advance, in case you or the person you care for is required to self-isolate.
- ✓ Don't sweat the small stuff - this isn't a time to worry about school work, spring cleaning or keeping up with the Jones's, . Just do what needs to be done to keep everyone on an even keel. The rest can wait.....