



Pony Club Coaches Resource

Autism: Top Tips

- **The 10 second rule**-wait for 10 seconds after asking a question to allow the autistic child to process the information and respond.
- **Use only essential language**-keep words to a minimum and use concrete language, e.g. jump your pony over the fence with the red and white poles.
- **Use visual information**-this helps the autistic child to understand. You can point to items such as grooming kit rather than just naming them.
- **Have a clear, predictable routine**-give the autistic child clear information about what is going to happen in the lesson, test or competition. This may be a timetable sent out in advance. Try to keep to the timetable or lesson plan, this will help the child cope and feel comfortable.
- **Agree a signal if the autistic child needs to take time out**-agree at the start of the lesson or test what signal the child can use to indicate that they need to have a short break. This may be a hand signal or gesture and will allow them to not feel overwhelmed.
- **Have a buddy system**-autistic children can struggle to engage with other children. If you ask another child to be their buddy it can help the autistic child to integrate into the group and make them feel more comfortable.
- **Talk to the parents of the autistic child**- they will be able to give you advise on what helps the child to cope and how to help them engage.