

INCLUSIVE VALENTINES DAY

Tips, Craft Ideas, and Resources for children and adults with autism spectrum disorder or intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

It's easy to dismiss Valentine's Day as just a "Hallmark holiday," but for many individuals, February 14th is a special date with great significance.

For individuals on the autism spectrum and those with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, symptoms can vary widely. Sometimes holidays like Valentine's Day can be a struggle for these individuals as there is more commotion, increased sensory input, heightened emotions, and more.

Below are some tips and craft ideas - along with FREE printable inspirational valentines - to make sure all individuals feel that warm and fuzzy feeling this Valentine's Day!

Tips for an Inclusive Valentine's Day

- Practice exchanging valentines and celebrate the holiday at home.
- Have your loved one create a list of special people in their life and ask what they like about each individual.
 - Ask them what it means to be a friend and how they can show appreciation for others.
- Ask your loved one's teacher (if they are in the school) how they have handled Valentine's Day in the past and ask if any individuals have special food diets and/or allergies to be made aware of when exchanging goodies.
 - Instead of candy, we recommend tokens like pencils, crafts, etc.
- Talk to your loved one about Valentine's Day - it's not a popularity contest but a time to spread positivity, celebrating and discussing love, friendship, and kindness.
- Tips about love, dating, relationships and disability - click [HERE](#).
- Looking for inclusive date ideas? Click [HERE](#).

Craft Ideas and FREE printable valentines

- [Fingerprint Heart Art](#) - using cardstock, washable finger paint, and colored construction paper, these hearts are sure to be beautiful and create a fun experience for all!
- [Painting with Marbles](#) - A project perfect for all ages and abilities, marble painting is a quick and easy craft everyone is sure to enjoy!
- [DIY Sensory Bin](#) - add pink, red, purple, and white objects (or whatever colors your loved one desires) like heart shaped foam pieces, sprinkles, colorful pom poms, colored sand, candy hearts, beads, and more to your sensory bin!
- [Sensory Bottles with Hearts](#) - Fill clear bottles with water, oil, food coloring, glitter, and heart-shaped sequins for a calming sensory experience.
- [Valentine 'flowers'](#) - Using cupcake liners of various sizes and colors, glue, markers, colored construction paper, scissors, and popsicle sticks or straws, this craft is perfect for individuals with limited motor skills.
- [Paint Rocks or Glitter Rocks](#) - Who knew rocks with painted or glitter hearts could be such a fun and easy decoration for yourself or someone in your life?
- Download FREE printable Easterseals MORC Inspirational Valentines [HERE](#)