

Autistic Friendship



All people have their own
unique personality, so every
friendship is different.



Otto Crow is Autistic and a great friend. His best friend,
Ruthie, is Autistic, too.

Like all Autistic
kids, Ruthie and
Otto are
different from
each other, but
they also have
a lot in
common!



Otto & Ruthie

They both focus better when they look away during chats

Otto does not speak. He communicates with a tablet

Ruthie communicates by speaking

They both love to jump and flap their arms

They both wear headphones because loud sounds hurt their ears



Otto and Ruthie

showing each other they care



PAYING ATTENTION

Showing friends you care is all about knowing and remembering what they like and don't like.

BODY BOUNDARIES

Ruthie does not like hugs, so Ruthie and Otto touch foreheads instead. This is respecting the other friend's body and consent.

SENSORY HEROES

Otto brings Ruthie her headphones when things will be loud. Ruthie sets up a bubble station so Otto can escape and get a sensory break.

AUTISTIC JOY

Ruthie really loves dragons, and Otto really loves the color yellow, so they always include dragons and yellow when they play.





Because autistic brains are different, autistic friends experience what they see, taste, feel, smell, and think in different ways. A room that looks peaceful to you might be stressful to them because the way they see is different.

Even if it's fun or easy for you, believe your autistic friends if they tell you they don't like something.



Sensory needs your autistic friends may have.


Some autistic people need to move a lot. In fact, they might not be able to stop moving or making sounds, even if they want to.

Some may be very sensitive to touch. They might need to wear different clothes and shoes. Touching sticky or rough things like paint, glue, mud, chalk, or sand, or wearing wet clothes, could be very stressful.

They could have a hard time looking at you and hearing you at the same time, so they might look away or close their eyes when you talk to them.

Remember, we are all different and have different sensory needs.

-Otto



Autistic people take in and process more information than most people

They notice smells, sounds, and sights others tune out—all the things all at once!

Autistic friends might need more breaks

Even if they're having a great time, they can get overwhelmed and need a break.

It is sort of like watching five movies at the same time! Their brains need to take a rest sometimes.

Friends Stimming!

Everyone stims!

Stimming is movement or sounds that help a person to not be too overwhelmed. Have you ever been so happy you jumped for joy? When you're nervous, do you fidget, walk around, or talk to yourself?

That's called stimming!



Because your Autistic friends take in so much information, they might stim more often. Stimming is great because it helps all people to have more fun, be more calm, and process big emotions!



This NeuroInclusive story was written as a companion to Meg Raby's picture book, *My Brother Otto and the Birthday Party*. The illustrations come from Meg's book and were used with her permission.

@NeuroClastic