

Partners have an important role, offering safety, reassurance, understanding and helping you and your family realise their rights to good support.

10 things family, partners and friends can do to support autistic pregnant women and birthing people

 Hayley Morgan

1 Advocate for their needs

Share sensory preferences and personal needs with healthcare staff. *Pre-birth discussions make a difference.*

2 Minimise sensory triggers

Reduce bright lights, loud sounds and strong smells. Use favourite scents, sounds, textures and stim gadgets, etc. Ask about familiarisation visits to get to know the place and what to expect.

3 Provide clear information

Request calm, straightforward explanations. Ask, "Can you explain that differently?"

4 Respect communication styles

Be patient and take time to communicate what is helpful before stressful situations. Encourage writing, gestures, or signals if/when speech becomes too much. Prepare a pain chart or alternative tools if this would be helpful.

5 Prepare a birth plan together

Include sensory needs and preferences. Use available autistic-specific templates (see: [A practical resource for autistic pregnant women and birthing people: support, rights, and wellbeing](#) in this pack).

6 Be an 'anchor'

Offer grounding: hold hands, guide breathing, or share a calming presence. Tune into their body language, tone, interests and/or memories.

7 Bring comfort items

For example, weighted blankets, earplugs and favourite objects. Advocate for their proactive use (with staff).

8 Stay flexible

Plans may change. Know the options, stay adaptable and provide choice.

9 Validate the experience

Acknowledge feelings. Reassure and affirm rights as an autistic person and parent-to-be. (see: [A practical resource for autistic pregnant women and birthing people: support, rights, and wellbeing](#) in this pack).

10 Offer postpartum support

Support physical, sensory recovery and emotional wellbeing. Respect boundaries and communicate choices and expectations clearly with friends and family.

You know your partner best – advocate, trust your instincts, and offer love.

