



Tip Sheet

for Dia de los Muertos at Cheekwood



VANDERBILT KENNEDY CENTER
TREATMENT & RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

November 1, 2014

Cheekwood and Vanderbilt Kennedy Center's TRIAD Partnership

Cheekwood and TRIAD have collaborated to develop supports to bolster community accessibility for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and related disorders in order to open new learning opportunities and experiences.

Additional Information about the Festival

El Dia de los Muertos is one of Cheekwood's most popular festivals. It could become very crowded on campus. Cheekwood and TRIAD are working together in an effort to be inclusive for this event by developing supports. However, this festival is full of color, activity, sound, and movement. There will be a quiet space for you and your child to take a break.

Supports

1. Social Story™

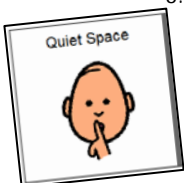
We have developed and provided three versions of a **Social Story™**, in English and in Spanish, for your child's use prior to the festival. Social Stories™ describe a situation or experience in order to provide children with an idea of what to expect. Creating predictability can be reassuring for children entering a new situation and can allow children to respond to challenges in an adaptive way. We recommend reviewing this social story with your child prior to attending the festival. Social Stories™ are an evidence-based practice as identified in the autism intervention literature review, *Evidence-Based Practice for Children, Youth, and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder* (2014) by the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders.

2. Activity Schedules

Activity schedules have been developed for each art activity. Activity schedules are used to make steps in sequence visual to increase your child's understanding of the instructions for the craft thus increasing independence. Activity schedules are also an evidence-based practice identified in the autism literature review, *Evidence-Based Practice for Children, Youth, and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder* (2014) by the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders.

3. Quiet Space

If you or your child needs to take a break from the noise and/or commotion, there will be a room designated as a "Quiet Space" to visit inside the Visitor Center. Please feel free to visit the quiet space as needed.



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4. Visual Schedule Creation Kit

Customize your visit to Cheekwood to best fit the needs of you and your family. Visual Schedule Creation Kits can be checked-out from the Visitors Services desk and include a template to sequence stops and activities according to your preference.

Refreshments

Visitors at Cheekwood are welcome to bring their own snacks. If you would like to purchase snacks while visiting for the *Dia de los Muertos* festival, there will be several food and drink vendors in the marketplace located in Parking Lot B. You could also visit the Pineapple Room Restaurant, however there may not be a wide variety of items you can order easily to go.

National and Local Autism Resources

- **VKC-TRIAD Community Engagement Initiative:** vkc.vumc.org/ce
The Community Engagement Initiative includes the Families First and Organizational Engagement Programs. Families First is a free workshop series for caregivers of young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The Organizational Engagement Program focuses on supporting organizations in building capacity for inclusion by providing training, developing supports, and collaborating on modified events.
- **Tennessee Disability Pathfinder:** 1-800-640-4636 or tnpathfinder@vumc.org
The Tennessee Disability Pathfinder is a free, statewide, information and referral service for persons with disabilities, family members, service providers, and advocates.
- **National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders:** <http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu>
The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders is a multi-university center to promote the use of evidence-based practice for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders.
- **Autism Speaks** <http://www.autismspeaks.org/>
Autism Speaks is an autism advocacy organization in the United States that sponsors autism research and conducts awareness and outreach activities aimed at families, governments, and the public.
- **Autism Tennessee** <http://autismtn.org/>
The mission of Autism Tennessee is to enrich the lives and experiences of individuals on the autism spectrum, their families, and their surrounding community through support, advocacy, and education.
- **Mayer-Johnson** www.mayer-johnson.com
DynaVox Mayer-Johnson is the leading provider of speech generating devices and symbol-adapted special education software used to assist individuals in overcoming their speech, language and learning challenges.