**Stimming**

**What is it?**

Stimming is a self-stimulatory behaviour, and usually refers to specific behaviours that include hand flapping, rocking, or repetition of words and phrases.

Although almost everyone engages in some form of self-stimulating behaviour. You might bite your nails or twirl your hair around your fingers when you’re bored, nervous, or need to relieve tension.

**Stimming behaviours –**

Visual: Staring out of the corners of one’s eyes, moving objects in front of their eyes.

Auditory: Repeating words and phrases from programmes/vocalizations

Tactile: Rubbing fingers against the objects such as carpets

Vestibular: Spinning, hand flapping, tip toe walking.

Taste: Licking objects, edible and non-edible.

Smell: Smelling objects or people.

A child with autism, their stimming behaviours may be unusual to others and will be heighted so will rock their whole body back and forth, making unusual vocalizations and repeating this and this sometimes can last for several hours. Stimming shouldn’t always be a cause of concern and be stopped, unless it’s affecting their daily life such as learning, destructive or sometimes dangerous. When you feel this is affecting their daily life you can use strategies to control this or redirect it.

**Strategies for controlling and redirecting stimming behaviour’s**

* Flapping hands – Fidget toys, engaging in fine motor activities.
* Spinning – Other physical exercise, jumping, running, turning into a game – ring ring a roses, sensory circuit.
* Smelling others – Smell jars, encouraging appropriate way of greeting by modelling.
* Chewing toys or licking – personal chew toy and oral exercise such as vibrating
* Repeated words or phrases from favourite programme – extend by using activities using interest.

Although children should be allowed time to be able to stim, as this behaviour can be used to keep them in a calm state and regulate themselves. This may help them cope with a situation that they cannot cope with such as a noisy environment, so holding hands over ears and humming will block the noise out for them, which if stopped this may result in challenging behaviours being expressed.