Preparing to go to the shore.
We are going to drive to the shore in our car.
We are going to stay in beach house for few days.
The beach is quiet in the morning.
During the day, there may be a lot of people on the beach.
We are going to put suntan lotion on you to protect your skin.
If the sun is too bright, you can wear sunglasses. If you get cold, you can wrap yourself in a towel.
You can play in the sand. It feels gritty, but it’s fun.
You can build a castle in the sand.
You can easily wash the sand off your body, hands and feet in the water.
Ocean water is salty.
You can wear goggles to keep it out of your eyes.
If you get tired, you can sit on a beach chair or lie on a towel.
You can float on a boogie board or ride the waves.
... or use a raft.
... or you can just splash around in the surf.
We can go to the boardwalk. It may be crowded and loud, but most kids love it.
There are great food choices on the boardwalk like pizza, popcorn or ice cream.
You can go on the rides if you want. It’s pretty noisy and lights are always flashing, but it can be really exciting.
We can play miniature golf.
… or drive go-karts. They are fast and loud, but you’ll have a great time.
We will drive home after our time at the beach.
13 tips to prepare your autistic child for trip to the shore.

1. Use this picture story to start preparing your child for a trip to the shore weeks before going.
   • We recommend that you read the story every day at the same time during the weeks leading up to the trip.
2. Customize the picture story by eliminating elements that would not be relevant for your child.
3. For your child’s first shore trip, you might want to go for a day trip in June or September when it is less crowded.
4. For children with texture issues,
   • Buy some sand and let your child touch the sand and play with it. Let them play with both dry and wet sand. Show them how easy it is to wash off.
   • Sun protection during your beach time is very important, so apply suntan lotion at home to get them used to that sensation and smell.
   • Remember that ocean water is salty, so you might want to bring some goggles.
   • The sand can get hot, so you might want to bring flip-flops. Practice walking in them at home.
5. When you are ready to go, pack some familiar and comforting items to distract your child during the car ride, like an Ipad, stuffed animals or action figures.
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6. It’s a good idea to pack comfort items from his or her room at home for the beach house to make it look more familiar. (For example, his or her favorite sheets, pillow or blanket, etc.)
7. Pack noise canceling headphones, if necessary.
   • These may be useful on the beach and the boardwalk.
8. There are great food options on the boardwalk or beach, but you might want to pack some food.
   • You might need to take a long walk across hot sand or wait in long lines. A packed snack may save the day.
9. On the first day, go to the beach early in the morning when it is less crowded. Let your child get used to the sand and the surf.
10. Inform the life guard that your child has special needs and may not respond to commands appropriately.
11. Talk a break from the sun and go to the boardwalk during the day before it gets too busy.
   • The rides are not very crowded during the day.
12. Anticipate situations that will be difficult
   • Going to the bathroom. Find a beach location close to a restroom.
   • Sudden loud noises. (Ice cream bells, kids screaming, life guard whistles)
13. Relax let your child be him or herself, it’s the beach and boardwalk not a quiet theater.