

## Haircuts – ALL AGES (5-18 YEARS)

### CHILDHOOD (5-10 YEARS)

#### Executive Summary

Haircuts can feel like a full-body sensory attack for autistic children ages 5-10: buzzing clippers on the scalp, water spraying near eyes, cape crinkling on skin, and a stranger’s hands near face and neck. Parents can transform this from a meltdown event into a predictable routine by finding an autism-friendly barber or mobile service, practicing vibration at home with clippers and electric toothbrushes, and using powerful distractions like a favorite show and lollipop (sugar, choking risk, and allergy warnings). A laminated haircut schedule, pre-visit phone script, and clear parent language help the child know exactly what will happen and when it will end. The barber’s job is to go fast and gentle; the parent’s job is to protect sensory boundaries and keep the environment calm. The goal is to complete a haircut in 15 minutes or less with no more than one brief pause, building over time toward predictable, low-stress haircuts every 4-8 weeks.

SpectrumCareHub Independence Series

#### CRITICAL DISCLAIMER: EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE

This guide offers practical tools for parents supporting autistic children during haircuts. It is **not** medical, legal, or therapeutic advice. Always consult your child’s healthcare provider, pediatrician, developmental specialist, or other licensed professionals for individual health, medication, or treatment decisions.

---

#### SECTION 1: Core Skills Checklist – Childhood (5-10)

Skill	What It Means	Can Your Child Do It?	Practice If Needed
Tolerate Head Touch	Allow hands on hair/head for 5+ seconds	Yes / No	Daily gentle head massage at home
Tolerate Vibration	Accept clippers/electric toothbrush on arm or leg	Yes / No	Practice “buzz” on arm, leg, shoulder
Wear Cape or Towel	Keep cape/towel on for 10+ minutes	Yes / No	Use “superhero cape” during TV time

Skill	What It Means	Can Your Child Do It?	Practice If Needed
Sit in Chair	Sit still 10–15 minutes	Yes / No	Practice at home with timer + reward
Follow Visual Schedule	Move through 5 picture steps	Yes / No	Use laminated schedule 3–5 days before

### Readiness Guide

4–5 Yes: Ready for short haircut appointment.

2–3 Yes: Practice 1–2 more weeks at home.

0–1 Yes: Consider in-home or mobile barber and shorter sessions.

## SECTION 2: Context / Principles – Childhood (5-10)

Haircuts combine many sensory triggers at once: touch, sound, movement, smell, and social interaction with a stranger. Children on the spectrum often struggle with “unknown sequence” situations, so **predictability beats bravery**. A good system is: pre-practice at home, pre-visit call, clear visual schedule, strong distraction, and fast, respectful barber work. Parents should protect their child’s sensory boundaries, not force compliance. Many autistic children do best with **scissors-only cuts** at first, then progress to clippers after several successful visits.

## SECTION 3: Sensory Profile Checklist – Childhood (5-10)

- **Tactile Sensitivities**

- Clipper vibration on scalp
- Cold metal scissors near ears
- Water spray on face/eyes
- Cape texture on neck and shoulders
- Loose hair clippings itching neck and back

- **Sound Sensitivities**

- Clipper buzzing near ears

- Scissors snipping close to head
  - Hair dryer roar
  - Background music and chatter
  - **Visual Sensitivities**
    - Bright salon lights
    - Mirror reflections of stranger's hands near face
    - Hair falling in front of eyes
  - **Smell Sensitivities**
    - Hair product chemicals
    - Shampoo scents
    - Barber's cologne or perfume
  - **Positional Sensitivities**
    - Head held still or tilted
    - Neck extended backward
    - Chair reclined or pumped up/down
- 

#### **SECTION 4: Sensory Hacks for Parents – Childhood (5-10)**

Schedule **first or last haircut of the day** to avoid crowds and waiting. Ask for scissors-only cut at first; add clippers later after home desensitization. Put a **soft hoodie on after the cut** to trap loose hairs and reduce itching. Place a small **towel behind neck** under cape to block clippings. Use **noise-canceling headphones** with the child's favorite show during the cut. Keep one parent in the child's line of sight at all times; no surprises from behind. Arrange **no hair wash** on early visits if water on face is a major trigger.

---

#### **SECTION 5: Pre-Visit Call Script – Childhood (5-10) (Copy & Paste)**

"Hello, I'm calling to schedule a haircut for my 5-year-old with autism on [DATE] at your quietest time. We need the shortest appointment you can offer, and scissors only please—no clippers yet. My child has strong sensory sensitivities to vibration, water on the face, and

loose hair on the neck. Is it OK if my child watches an iPad during the cut and has a small lollipop (choking risk, sugar, and allergy warnings) as a distraction? We will bring a photo of the desired haircut. Thank you for being flexible and going as quickly and gently as possible."

**SECTION 6: Complete Packing List – Childhood (5-10)**

Category	Items
Practice Tools	Home clippers (for leg/arm practice only), electric toothbrush for vibration desensitization
Sensory Tools	Noise-canceling headphones, 2–3 fidgets (spinner, squishy toy, tangle)
Distraction	iPad/tablet with one favorite 20-minute show downloaded, lollipop or sucker (choking risk, sugar, and allergy warnings)
Comfort	Soft hoodie for post-cut (to trap hair), small towel for neck to block clippings
Visual Supports	Laminated photo of desired haircut, small picture schedule (car → chair → cut → hoodie → treat)
Emergency	Wet wipes for neck/face, spare T-shirt, small first-aid kit if child scratches

**SECTION 7: Laminated Visual Schedule – Childhood (5-10)**

**Example Schedule**

Time	Step	What Happens	Parent Narration
4:00 PM	Snack + calm	Protein snack and magnesium chew (food allergy and drug interaction warnings)	"Fuel your body and calm your brain before haircut."
4:30 PM	Drive to barber	iPad charged, headphones ready	"We're going to see Mr./Ms. [Name] who cuts hair safely."

Time	Step	What Happens	Parent Narration
4:45 PM	Go inside, no wait	Straight to chair if possible	"We go right to the chair—no long waiting."
5:05 PM	Cape + iPad + lollipop	Cape on, show starts, lollipop begins	"Superhero cape on. Show and treat while hair gets shorter."
5:10 PM	Haircut time (15 min)	Scissors cut hair, parent nearby	"Stay still. When show ends, haircut done."
5:25 PM	Hoodie + treat	Hoodie on to catch loose hair, favorite snack after	"All done! Hoodie on, itch gone. You earned your treat."

---

## **SECTION 8: Parent Scripts During Haircut – Childhood (5-10)**

### **Clipper Practice at Home (before any salon clippers)**

"First, the clippers buzz on your leg where it feels safer. It may tickle or feel funny, just like an electric toothbrush. We can turn them off any time you say stop. Today we are just learning the feeling; no haircut here."

### **Cape On**

"This cape is your superhero shield. It keeps all the hair off your clothes and neck so it does not itch. When the cape is on, the barber knows to work fast and gentle. When we take it off, the haircut is finished."

### **Water Spray**

"The spray bottle is like a gentle warm mist, similar to washing your face. We will close your eyes for five seconds. I will count out loud: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Then we are done and dry off fast."

### **Stranger Barber Introduction**

"This is Mr./Ms. [Name]. Their job is to cut hair safely and quickly. I will stay right here where you can see me. When the show is over and the haircut is finished, you get your treat."

### **Hair Falling**

"Some hair will fall into the cape and onto your shoulders. That is normal and temporary. When we are done, we will shake the cape outside and use the towel and wipes to clean your neck. Then hoodie on—itch gone."

---

## SECTION 9: Food Timing & Biomedical Preparation – Childhood (5-10) (EDUCATIONAL)

Offer a **protein-rich snack** (cheese, nut butter, yogurt—nut and dairy allergy/intolerance warnings) about 30–60 minutes before the haircut to prevent blood sugar drops during the appointment. Some families use an afternoon magnesium + B6 combo (drug interaction warning) to support the nervous system, but dosage and safety must be confirmed with the child’s healthcare provider. Hydration with water before and after the haircut helps reduce overall stress. Avoid sugary drinks and snacks right before the appointment to minimize hyperactivity and post-sugar crashes.

## SECTION 10: Biomedical Considerations Table – Childhood (5-10) (EDUCATIONAL)

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Common Symptoms</b>	<b>Possible Biomedical Factors</b>	<b>Professional Evaluation Steps</b>
Extreme Tactile Defensiveness	Screaming/pulling away from touch	Sensory processing differences, anxiety, sleep issues	Occupational therapy sensory evaluation, pediatrician check
Skin Irritation After Cut	Redness/itching at neck and scalp	Sensitive skin, product reactions	Pediatrician or dermatologist, fragrance-free products
Overwhelming Anxiety Pre-Cut	Refusal to enter shop, crying in car	Nervous system hyperarousal	Pediatrician assessment, may discuss sleep, anxiety supports
Post-Cut Fatigue or Meltdown	Crash at home after haircut	Overload from sensory bombardment	Build recovery routine (bath, quiet time, hydration)

All medical and supplement decisions must be made with a licensed healthcare professional.

## SECTION 11: Meltdown Recovery Protocol – Childhood (5-10)

1. **Stop the cut immediately** – Ask barber to put scissors or clippers down.

2. **Remove the cape** – Free neck and shoulders from clippings and pressure.
3. **Activate sensory shield** – iPad on, headphones on, preferred show started.
4. **Exit the chair and shop if needed** – Go to car or quiet area outside.
5. **Offer soothing inputs** – Small lollipop (choking/sugar/allergy warnings) and a protein snack if safe, plus water.
6. **No talking for 20 minutes** – Silent drive or quiet sitting, no analysis or lectures.
7. **Home recovery** – Warm sensory bath or shower, fresh clothes, calm play.

If haircut is incomplete but safety is intact, schedule a follow-up trim on a different day rather than forcing completion.

### SECTION 12: Post-Activity Parent Reflection – Childhood (5-10)

Question	Notes
Total appointment length (minutes)	
How many pause/escape attempts?	
Distress level during cut (1–10)	
Most helpful tool or strategy	
One change to try next time	
Child’s own words about the haircut	

### SECTION 13: Crisis Scenarios – Childhood (5-10)

#### Scenario: Child Screams When Cape Touches Neck

Problem: Child yanks at cape, says “take it off!”

Actions: Ask barber to pause. Fold a soft towel and place it around neck, then place cape over towel so cape does not touch skin directly. Explain: "Towel first, then cape—softer and less itchy." If distress continues, try cutting with a towel only and skip cape, accepting some hair on clothes.

**Scenario: Terrified of Scissors Near Ears**

Problem: Flinching or jerking head sideways whenever scissors approach ears.

Actions: Switch to trimming away from ears first, use mirror to show what scissors are doing, and narrate each snip. Ask barber to move more slowly and cut around ears last, when trust is higher. Practice "freeze like statue for 5 seconds" at home before next appointment.

---

**SECTION 14: Milestones & Celebrations – Childhood (5-10)**

<b>Achievement</b>	<b>Celebration Idea</b>
Sits in chair with cape on for 10 minutes	Extra bedtime story or small sticker
Allows full scissor cut with one short break	Favorite snack or small toy after haircut
Tolerates mild clipper practice on arm/leg	Choose next movie night film
Completes haircut with minimal distress	Special parent-child outing (park, playground)

---

## TWEENS (10-14 YEARS)

### Executive Summary

Tweens ages 10-14 care deeply about appearance and peer perceptions, making haircuts both social and sensory events. They may feel embarrassed by "kid barber" settings and want more modern, teen-oriented salons. Sensory challenges include louder perceived clipper sounds, increased neck sensitivity, and discomfort with being watched. Parents can support tweens by upgrading to a more adult-feeling salon, letting them self-select styles from teen haircut photos, and using AirPods with music instead of cartoons. A pre-call script sets expectations: electric clippers only, minimal small talk, and strict timing. The goal is for the tween to show a reference photo, sit through a 20-minute clipper cut, and leave feeling confident in their appearance and self-advocacy.

### CRITICAL DISCLAIMER: EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE

This section provides practical strategies for parents and tweens. It is **not** medical advice or psychological treatment. For personalized guidance, consult healthcare and mental health professionals.

---

### SECTION 1: Core Skills Checklist – Tweens (10-14)

Skill	What It Means	Can Tween Do It?	Practice If Needed
Choose Style Photo	Select 1–2 preferred haircut pictures	Yes / No	Review teen cuts online together
Show Photo to Barber	Verbally say "like this please"	Yes / No	Practice in mirror or with parent
Wear AirPods Through Cut	Keep earbuds in for 20+ minutes	Yes / No	Longer music sessions at home
Handle Clipper Vibrations	Accept clippers on sides/back of head	Yes / No	Practice clippers on arm/leg at home
Use Hoodie Post-Cut	Put on hoodie to manage clippings	Yes / No	Hoodie after showers to test comfort

---

## **SECTION 2: Context / Principles – Tweens (10-14)**

Tweens balance sensory needs with rising social self-awareness. They may refuse childish environments but still require strong accommodations. Upgrading to an upscale or modern salon can increase dignity and cooperation. Parents shift from “doing it for them” to coaching: helping them pick styles, rehearse words, and handle awkward small talk or decline it politely. Independence now prepares them for teen self-management later.

---

## **SECTION 3: Sensory Profile Checklist – Tweens (10-14)**

- **Social Anxiety:** Worry about looking childish, fear of peers seeing them at barber, concern about "bad haircuts" leading to teasing.
  - **Tactile:** Changing hair thickness due to puberty, increased neck and scalp sensitivity, discomfort with styling products on hair.
  - **Sound:** Louder perceived clipper buzz, dislike of overlapping salon sounds and music.
  - **Positional:** Taller bodies in chairs not designed for tweens, discomfort maintaining posture for 20+ minutes.
- 

## **SECTION 4: Sensory Hacks – Tweens (10-14)**

Choose a modern or teen-friendly salon with private or semi-private chairs. Book at off-peak times to reduce audience. Encourage tween to wear AirPods with their own music playlist to maintain control over sound environment. Use a hoodie after the cut to trap hair and offer sensory comfort. Keep post-cut routine consistent (e.g., smoothie treat plus mirror check at home in private).

---

## **SECTION 5: Pre-Visit Call Script – Tweens (10-14) (Copy & Paste)**

"Hi, I'm scheduling a haircut for my 12-year-old with autism on [DATE]. We're looking for a modern style and a calm environment. Electric clippers only please, with a style reference photo we will bring in. My tween prefers minimal small talk and will be wearing headphones for most of the cut. Could you please schedule us at a quiet time and let the stylist know we will show a photo and then they can get right to work? Thank you."

---

## SECTION 6: Packing List – Tweens (10-14)

Category	Items
Style Reference	3–5 printed photos of teen haircuts, backup on phone
Audio Distraction	AirPods or over-ear headphones, downloaded playlist
Comfort & Protection	Hoodie for post-cut hair trapping, small towel for car seat
Food/Treat	Protein bar pre-cut, smoothie or preferred drink post-cut (dairy and sugar warnings if applicable)
Tech	Smartphone for games in waiting area if any delay occurs

## SECTION 7: Visual Schedule – Tweens (10-14)

Time	Step	Tween Role
4:00 PM	Protein bar + style photo review	Eat snack, choose favorite style photo
4:30 PM	Drive to salon	Select music playlist for the car
4:45 PM	Enter modern salon	Walk in with parent, go to chair
4:50 PM	Show photo to stylist	Say: "I'd like it like this, please."
4:55 PM	20-minute clipper cut	AirPods in, minimal small talk
5:15 PM	Hoodie on, smoothie stop	Hoodie on to catch hair, smoothie drive-thru

## SECTION 8: Parent Scripts – Tweens (10-14)

### Style Selection Coaching

"Look at these photos and pick the one that feels most like you. When we get there, hold the picture up and say, 'I'd like my hair like this, please.' I will stand next to you if you want backup."

### Clipper Start Coaching

"When the clippers turn on, they will feel and sound strong at first. Turn your music up a bit,

and remember—this is the quickest way to get an even cut. You can tap my hand if you need the stylist to pause."

### Small Talk Boundary Script

"If the stylist tries to chat and it feels too much, you can say, 'I'm going to focus on my music, but thank you,' and then look back at your phone or the mirror."

---

## SECTION 9: Food Timing & Biomedical Preparation – Tweens (10-14) (EDUCATIONAL)

Offer a **protein bar or small meal** 30–60 minutes before the haircut (check for nut/dairy/gluten issues). If your tween uses supplements like magnesium or B vitamins (drug interaction warning), timing them earlier in the day may support calmness, but exact use must be coordinated with a healthcare provider. Encourage water before and after the appointment. Avoid high-caffeine energy drinks or large sugary drinks beforehand, as they can increase jitters and emotional swings.

---

## SECTION 10: Biomedical Considerations Table – Tweens (10-14) (EDUCATIONAL)

Problem	Common Symptoms	Possible Biomedical Factors	Professional Evaluation Steps
Heightened Irritability at Salon	Snapping at stylist/parent	Hormonal changes, sleep deficit	Pediatrician or adolescent specialist review
Scalp Sensitivity	Pain with combing or cutting	Dry skin, dandruff, product reaction	Pediatrician or dermatologist
Lightheadedness During Cut	Dizzy in chair	Low blood sugar, dehydration	Nutrition and hydration check, pediatric visit
"I Hate My Hair" Crises	Extreme reaction to cut	Body image stress, social anxiety	Mental health or school counselor support

---

## SECTION 11: Meltdown Recovery – Tweens (10-14)

If a tween becomes overwhelmed, help them stand up, step away from the chair, and sit in a quieter area or car with AirPods and a favorite playlist. Offer water and a small protein

snack, and pause conversation for at least 15–20 minutes. If they refuse to complete the cut, accept an imperfect haircut and plan a gradual correction over multiple shorter visits rather than forcing immediate perfection.

**SECTION 12: Reflection – Tweens (10-14)**

Question	Notes
Did tween show style photo themselves?	
Distress level during cut (1–10)	
Did music/headphones help?	
Tween’s confidence in final look (1–10)	
One thing to change next time	

**SECTION 13: Crisis Scenarios – Tweens (10-14)**

**Scenario: Tween Hates Finished Cut**

Problem: Looks in mirror, says "I hate it," becomes upset.

Parent Response: Validate emotion: "You’re allowed to feel upset about your hair." Ask stylist for small adjustments if possible. Offer reassurance that hair grows and you can plan a different style next time. Take a photo to discuss what to change.

**SECTION 14: Milestones & Celebrations – Tweens (10-14)**

Achievement	Celebration
Tween chooses own style photo	Extra time with favorite activity
Tween shows photo to stylist	Parent praise + small treat
Tween completes 20-minute cut with minimal support	Choice of weekend activity

<b>Achievement</b>	<b>Celebration</b>
Tween expresses satisfaction with haircut	Photo saved as "win" in family album

---

## TEENS (14-18 YEARS)

### Executive Summary

Autistic teens ages 14-18 often need professional-looking haircuts for sports teams, jobs, college visits, and social life. Sensory issues remain but now layer with executive demands: booking appointments, budgeting, and stylist communication. Parents gradually shift to a coaching/support role while teens handle booking, payment, and style selection. Haircuts become part of adult self-presentation. A strong system includes: teen-led online booking, style research, realistic budget, clear stylist scripts, and meltdown exits if needed. Goal: Teen completes a full haircut cycle—book, arrive, consult, cut, pay, tip, and book follow-up—independently or with minimal parent backup.

### CRITICAL DISCLAIMER: EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE

This section is educational and does not replace medical, psychological, or financial advice. Teens and parents should consult appropriate professionals for personalized planning.

---

### SECTION 1: Core Skills Checklist – Teens (14-18)

Skill	What It Means	Can Teen Do It?	Practice Needed?
Book Appointment	Use phone/website to schedule time with stylist	Yes / No	Practice mock calls and online forms
Select Professional Style	Choose haircut suitable for interview, school, or sport	Yes / No	Review style guides/screenshots together
Communicate Style	Explain using photos and clear words	Yes / No	Role-play stylist consult with parent
Manage Payment & Tip	Pay with card/cash and add tip	Yes / No	Budget and tipping practice at home
Schedule Follow-Up	Book next cut for 4–6 weeks later	Yes / No	Add reminders to phone calendar

---

## **SECTION 2: Context / Principles – Teens (14-18)**

Teens are transitioning to adult grooming expectations. A haircut is now part of reputation, job readiness, and self-esteem. Parents shift from controlling the process to coaching: helping teens think through style choices and money, but not speaking for them. Autistic teens often thrive with clear scripts and checklists; this is not childish, it is **professional**. The haircut system should align with future goals: casual sports cut, neat work style, or polished college interview look.

---

## **SECTION 3: Sensory Profile Checklist – Teens (14-18)**

- **Executive Function:** Tracking appointments, planning travel, remembering payment method, calculating tip.
  - **Social Pressure:** Worry about dating, photos, or job interviews; fear of being judged for haircut or salon behavior.
  - **Physical:** Emerging facial hair, new hair growth patterns, tolerance for gels, waxes, or sprays.
  - **Independence:** Being alone with stylist, using adult language, managing unexpected changes (stylist running late).
- 

## **SECTION 4: Sensory Hacks – Teens (14-18)**

Encourage teen to choose a stylist with consistent schedule and communication style. Allow teen to keep earbuds in during most of the haircut, removing briefly for consult. For those sensitive to products, opt for fragrance-free, lightweight gels and avoid heavy sprays. Use a “hat or hoodie” plan for days when haircut feels “too much”—normalizing that everyone has awkward hair days.

---

## **SECTION 5: Pre-Visit Preparation & Script – Teens (14-18)**

### **Teen Booking Script (Copy & Paste)**

"Hi, I'd like to book a haircut with [Stylist Name] on [DATE] in the [morning/afternoon]. I have some sensory sensitivities, so I'll be using headphones for most of the cut. I have a

style photo to show and want something professional-looking. Do you have a 30-minute appointment around [time window]?"

---

### SECTION 6: Packing List – Teens (14-18)

Category	Items
Professional	3–5 style photos saved on phone, notes on what they like (length, texture)
Payment	Debit/credit card, plus at least \$10 cash for tip
Tech	Phone for before/after photos, calendar for scheduling next visit
Product	Known-safe styling product if they react to new ones (ingredient intolerance warning)

---

### SECTION 7: Visual Schedule – Teens (14-18)

Time	Step	Teen Action
3:00 PM	Travel to salon	Drive, ride-share, or ride with parent
3:45 PM	Check-in	Give name and appointment time at counter
3:50 PM	Stylist consult	Show photos, explain preferences clearly
4:00 PM	30-minute precision cut	Use headphones if desired
4:30 PM	Style product demo	Ask stylist to show how to apply
4:40 PM	Payment & tip	Pay, calculate tip (about 20%), say thank you
4:45 PM	Book next appointment	Ask: "Can I book 4–6 weeks from now?"

---

### SECTION 8: Teen Scripts – Teens (14-18)

#### Stylist Consult Script

"I'm looking for a professional style that works for [school/work/college interviews]. I like

the sides shorter and the top with some texture, similar to this photo. I want it to be easy to style in the morning."

**Product Instruction Script**

"Can you show me exactly how much product to use and how to apply it? Can you write down the steps or let me record a short video on my phone while you show me?"

**Payment Script (Internal Steps)**

1. Check total on screen.
2. Add about 20% as tip.
3. Say, "Thank you, I'll see you next time."

---

**SECTION 9: Food Timing & Biomedical Preparation – Teens (14-18) (EDUCATIONAL)**

Teens should avoid arriving to the salon hungry, dehydrated, or sleep-deprived, as all three increase sensory overload and irritability. A protein-rich snack and water 30–60 minutes before the appointment help maintain blood sugar and focus. Supplements like magnesium or B vitamins (drug interaction warning) should only be used under medical oversight. Caffeine should be moderate—too much can amplify anxiety and sensory sensitivity.

---

**SECTION 10: Biomedical Considerations Table – Teens (14-18) (EDUCATIONAL)**

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Common Symptoms</b>	<b>Possible Biomedical Factors</b>	<b>Professional Evaluation Steps</b>
Overwhelming Anxiety About Appearance	Repeated mirror checking, refusal to leave home	Social anxiety, body image concerns	Mental health professional or counselor
Scalp or Skin Reaction to Products	Rash, itching, breakouts	Ingredient sensitivity, fragrance intolerance	Dermatologist or allergist evaluation

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Common Symptoms</b>	<b>Possible Biomedical Factors</b>	<b>Professional Evaluation Steps</b>
Lightheadedness During Appointment	Dizzy while sitting/standing	Low blood sugar, dehydration	Primary care visit, nutrition/hydration advice
Extreme Fatigue After Social Tasks	Needs long recovery nap	Autistic burnout, sleep issues	Provider assessment for sleep and stress

---

### **SECTION 11: Meltdown Recovery – Teens (14-18)**

If a teen becomes overwhelmed, they can step outside or sit in a quiet waiting area with earbuds, water, and time to breathe. Parents should avoid lectures and focus on stabilizing: "You handled a hard situation; let's regroup." For incomplete cuts, discuss a plan to repair or adjust style later rather than forcing immediate corrections.

---

### **SECTION 12: Reflection – Teens (14-18)**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Did teen book appointment themselves?	
Did teen lead the stylist consult?	
Confidence in haircut for goals (1-10)	
Any sensory issues with products or tools?	
One skill to improve next time	

---

### **SECTION 13: Milestones – Teens (14-18)**

<b>Achievement</b>	<b>Celebration</b>
Teen books first own haircut	Acknowledgment and praise, small privilege

Achievement	Celebration
Teen leads full consult and pays independently	Special outing or experience
Teen manages professional style for goal (job, interview)	Add photo to "adult wins" folder, share success story if teen agrees

---

### **SpectrumCareHub – Science-grounded autism family support**

**Educational resource only—not medical advice.** This guide provides general strategies to support sensory and practical challenges around haircuts. It does not replace care from licensed professionals. Always consult your child’s or teen’s healthcare provider, developmental specialist, mental health professional, or occupational therapist for:

- Individual medical concerns or diagnoses
- Medication or supplement decisions (starting, stopping, or changing)
- Persistent anxiety, sensory distress, or behavioral challenges
- Skin or scalp reactions to products

Every autistic child and teen is unique. Adapt these systems to your family’s sensory profile, culture, and values. Start small, track wins, and build step by step.

Key resources include autism organizations, local parent support groups, and sensory-informed barbers or stylists who welcome neurodivergent clients.

© SpectrumCareHub 2026

© 2026 Spectrum Care Hub LLC. All rights reserved.

Spectrum Care Hub LLC grants the purchaser or authorized user a limited, non-transferable, non-exclusive license to download and use this document for personal use only.

This document may not be copied, shared, distributed, resold, sublicensed, posted online, or otherwise transferred to any third party without prior written permission from Spectrum Care Hub LLC.

Access to paid materials is restricted to the individual purchaser or authorized account holder. Unauthorized distribution or sharing is strictly prohibited.

Unauthorized reproduction or distribution may violate federal copyright law (17 U.S.C. § 101 et seq.).