

PDA Hygiene Routine Reset

One-page nervous system plan for lower-conflict hygiene (PDA + AuDHD).

Why hygiene triggers PDA

- Sensory overload (water, mint, hair, smells)
- Demand = loss of autonomy
- Shame + pressure escalates fast

Parent nervous system first

- Neutral tone, low words
- No power struggle, no ultimatums
- Your calm cues safety

Autonomy (privacy + control)

- “Solo or body double?”
- “Shower, wipe-down, or deodorant-only?”
- Let them choose the order

Minimum viable hygiene

- Deodorant + clean shirt counts
- Mouthwash counts
- Dry shampoo day is allowed

Sensory load hacks

- Temperature choice (warm/cool)
- Towel robe, dim lights
- Toothpaste alternatives

External cue (no nagging)

- One playlist/timer daily
- Cue = start; no prompting
- Predictability reduces threat

Scripts that work

- “What’s hardest: sensation or demand?”
- “Easy version today?”
- “I’m on your team.”

Emergency unstick plan

- One step: “Turn on water.”
- Pause and reset if escalates
- Repair later, not in the storm