

Safety Tips for Caregivers

By Chris Lacey, Autism ALERT, Inc.

The Basics:

- Identification
 - Medical ID jewelry
 - Disorder ID card
 - Custom business card
 - Temporary tattoos
 - Clothing
- Info sheet
 - Name, age, dob, physical attributes
 - Diagnoses / medical conditions
 - Medications
 - Communication ability (receptive and expressive)
 - Communication method
 - Ability to follow instructions / answer questions
 - Dietary constraints
 - Sensory issues
 - Atypical behaviors
 - Aggressive tendencies
 - Response to stress
 - Best way to approach / de-escalate
 - Preferred toys / activities
 - Likely to wander?
 - Contacts (caregivers, relatives, physicians, case workers, therapists, etc.)
- Home / Vehicle Decals
- Family / Group Picture
- Instruction Sheets
 - For individual
 - For alternate caregivers
- Emergency Medical Information Envelope on refrigerator
 - Info sheets
 - Picture
 - Blueprint of home / living facility
 - Phone list
 - Instruction sheets
 - Nearby water sources if a wanderer
- Emergency Suitcase(s)
- ICE
- Next of Kin Registry



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Working With Your First Responders:

- Meet with police, fire, EMS
 - Give info sheet
 - Discuss / plan for predictable encounters
- 911 premise alerts / address flags
- Practice anticipated interactions:
 - EMS evaluations
 - Routine police interaction
 - Traffic stops
 - Fire safety

Working With Schools / Residential Facilities / Places of Employment:

- Transportation
- Behavior issues
 - Restraint / seclusion?
 - When, where, why, how often?
 - Document
- Wandering
- Other safety concerns

Victimization:

- Bullying / harassment
- Sexual abuse
 - <http://wisconsindoc.familywatchdog.us/>

Aim To Teach:

- Recognize emergency vehicles / personnel
- Respond appropriately to emergency personnel
 - Remain calm
 - Do not flee
 - Do not make any sudden movements
 - Safely show medical ID jewelry / ID card
 - Observe personal space
 - The STOP command
- How to ask for help / a caregiver / a legal advocate
- How to call 911 and what to say



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Aim To Teach (continued):

- What to do if lost
 - Stay calm
 - Stay put
 - Make noise
- General safety
 - Street, fire, water, traffic safety
 - Stranger danger
- Appropriate sexual behavior
- How to report bullying / harassment
- How not to be a victim
 - <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/keepsafe.pdf>

Wandering:

- Home security
 - Door and window alarms and locks
 - Locked fences
 - Knox boxes
- Tracking devices
 - Perimeter / vicinity alarms
 - GPS vs. other technologies (radio frequency, cell phone towers)
 - Project Lifesaver / CareTrak / EmFinders
- Lost or missing
 - Rapid search
 - Call 911 IMMEDIATELY
 - Have info sheets available
 - Post persons at key places (esp. water sources)
 - Employ phone chain / deploy neighbors
 - Do NOT set up command center at missing person's place of residence
 - Bring out the dogs (take special care with scent items)
 - Be creative! (toys / objects, food, movies, songs, don't forget to listen)

Resources (Autism):

- For more information:
 - www.AutismAlert.org
 - <http://www.selectautismmerchandise.com/index.php?act=viewDoc&docId=2>
- Safety products:
 - www.SelectAutismMerchandise.com



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