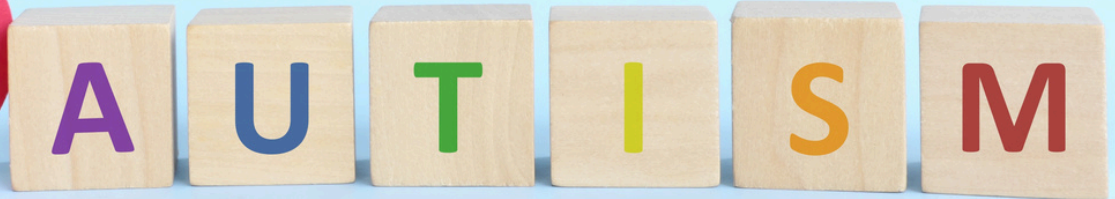


UNDERSTANDING



Information provided by our partners from the National Autism Safety Council

WHAT IS AUTISM?

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability caused by differences in the brain. Some people with ASD have a known difference, such as a genetic condition. Other causes are not yet known. Because autism is a spectrum disorder, no two people with autism are alike. It's estimated that half of children with autism wander from safe settings, and individuals with autism have seven times more contacts with law enforcement than the general population.

SIGNS OF AUTISM



SOCIAL & COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS

Persons with autism may come across as "deaf" due to not responding when their name is called. They tend to want to be alone, not make eye contact and have difficulty showing or understanding emotions.



COMMUNICATION IMPAIRMENTS

A person with ASD can either be speaking or non-speaking, commonly having speech delays. Communication cards and tablets are common tools utilized by non-speaking individuals. Just because someone is non-speaking doesn't mean they don't understand what is being said.



REPETITIVE BEHAVIORS

Repetitive behaviors such as "stimming" are common for individuals with ASD. This can be flapping hand movements, rocking their body, or spinning in circles. These movements can be demonstrated to show a variety of emotion.

SAFETY

WANDERING

- Nearly half of children with autism wander
- One third of those who wander are non-speaking
- Risks also include, dehydration, hypothermia, encounters with strangers and falls
- Always check water first

DROWNING

- Drowning is 160 times more likely for children with ASD
- Drowning accounts for 70% of wandering related fatalities
- Swimming lessons should be taught early and final lessons should be done in clothes
- Know where areas of water are near your residence

LOCATIVE TECHNOLOGY

- Tracking devices are available however, it is important to understand each device's limitations
- Ensure the device is secure and not easily removed

BULLYING

- Stop bullying before it starts by communicating with parents and teachers
- Promoting confidence and understanding it is okay to be different
- Start a movement to provide peer support