



P.O. Box 27462
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www.midmichiganautism.org

Autism ID Packet for First Responders Recognizing the individuals around you.

The newest 2007 statistics for Autism are:

- 1 in every 150 children is diagnosed with Autism.
- Individuals with autism can't be identified by appearance. They look like everyone else! They are identified by their behaviors!
- 50% of individuals with Autism are non-verbal throughout their life span.
- Another 20% may present as nonverbal when highly stressed.
- Drowning is one of the leading causes of death for individuals with Autism.
- Individuals with Autism are 7 times more likely to come in contact with police than their peers.
- Many children with Autism are "runners" or "wanderers". They will escape the house or yard and wander away. They bolt into oncoming traffic without any fear and are attracted to water but most can't swim! These individuals move very quickly and do not respond to their name being called.

There are two very important preventative actions that can be put in place for the safe return of a loved one.

1. Identification: Wearing a “Medic Alert” bracelet or pendant.

www.medicalert.com This Company provides a low cost emblem that is personally engraved with information and a unique member I.D. number that identifies the individual. First responders such as police, paramedics or hospital personnel can call a 24 hour 800 number to find out information about the individual. If the person will not wear the I.D. bracelet, put a tag on their shoe or belt. www.awareabouts.com Sew information inside a shirt collar. Masking tape works temporarily. Write your phone number on the child’s skin with permanent marker so that if the child is lost a responsible adult can be contacted. Be creative, this is your child that you want returned safely.

***A484 - Stainless Steel Petite Emblem,
Raised Logo w/ 9" Sports Band Orange***

*On the front is MedicAlert's trademark logo
with the Staff of Aesculapius.*

Quality since 1956.



*Band is polyester ribbon and
contains NO latex.*

Thread is both polyester & nylon.

***Emblem Dimension:
1 1/4" wide X 11/16" high***

***A491- Stainless Steel Large Emblem,
Raised Logo w/ Bracelet***

*On the front is MedicAlert's trademark logo
with the Staff of Aesculapius.*

*MedicAlert®'s Stainless Steel
Bracelet is an almond-shaped
disc with quality stainless steel
construction.*

*The medical insignia and lettering are finished
raised steel.*



***Emblem Dimension:
1 5/8" wide X 7/8" high***

- 2. Registering Your Child with 911:** Your child can be registered with the 911 Central Dispatch Systems in your city or county so that the first responders on the scene will know that there is a child with Autism at your residence/phone number. A child with Autism may not be able to respond to an officer asking questions. Their erratic behavior may look defensive or like they have something to hide from the officer or first responder. This could put both the child and the first responder at risk. All you need to do to register your child would be to fill out a simple form or have a short phone conversation with your local 911 Central Dispatch Center Supervisor. Ask to have your child's picture attached to the file so that the first responders will know what your child looks like. Some of the 911 systems have the ability to "Flag, Premise Alert or House Watch" for a specific address or phone number. Other systems have the ability to bring up the alert when a neighboring address has a 911 emergency. Ask your contact which system is available in your county. Remember you are not calling the 911 phone number! You are calling their office, so look up your county's 911 Central Dispatch number or call the local city hall and they can give you the correct phone number. Or:
- a. Go to http://www.michigan.gov/msp/0,1607,7-123-1593_47748_47760---,00.html.
 - b. Open the PDF file labeled "Primary PSAP's by County". This should give you the name, address, phone number and email address of the contact person for that county.
 - c. If your county does not have a form or process in place, please have them contact Loren Hebert at lhebert@eatoncounty.org. He has put a process in place for Eaton county and can help your county's 911 central dispatch.

When finding a lost child, time is of the essence! Being able to send out an Amber Alert, utilizing the auto dial program from the "A Child is Missing Program" www.achildismissing.org and sending out flyers or emails to search parties and the media, is very important. With a current picture on file in the 911 system, this can be done very quickly.

Next Of Kin Registry: <http://nokr.org/nok/restricted/home.htm> NOKR is a free tool for daily emergencies and national disasters. NOKR is an emergency contact system to help if you or your family member is missing, injured or deceased. NOKR provides the public a free proactive service to store emergency contacts, next of kin and vital medical information that would be critical to emergency response agencies. Stored information is only accessible via a secure area that is only accessible by emergency public trust agencies that have registered with NOKR. This is the only organization globally that provides free emergency contact resources of this kind to both citizens and to emergency agencies.



Now that all of the safeguards are in place, training your first responders how to identify a person with Autism and how to communicate with them is the next step. Woodside Fire Protection District in Woodside CA put together a video, manual, booklet and poster designed as an educational tool for fire departments and other first responders.

This program was funded by a FEMA grant and all of the materials are available at no charge on line at www.woodsidefire.org under the tab labeled “When Words Are Not Enough.” The communication booklet depicts symbols and sign language that will help first responders communicate with individuals with communication difficulties. The first responders can be trained in several hours and are then able to go into the schools. For the first time, special education students can be included in the fireman teaching sessions with the other regular education children. The symbols used in the training booklets are “Board maker” type symbols that special education children, teachers and parents use in everyday life.

A training video by Dennis Debbaudt “Autism Risk and Safety Management, Information and Resources for Law Enforcement, First Responders, Parents, Educators and Care Providers”(retails for \$154.95 a piece) teaches how to recognize and deal with individuals with autism. www.autismriskmanagement.com This video must be viewed and discussed with all law enforcement officers. AI (Autism Impaired) persons are attracted to shiny objects such as a badge or a gun. The AI person does not understand the concept of personal space or boundaries; they may come at you reaching for your gun. If these individuals are grabbed they may start to struggle and make the situation worse. If you handcuff an AI person and leave them on the ground face down, they may suffocate. AI persons sometimes do not have the trunk or upper body strength to be able to breath. AI persons cannot answer questions and sometimes repeat the question that was asked. Officers without training may think that the individual is just being “smart” with them. The officer must ask questions slowly and wait for a response. Lowering your voice and not touching the individual will help keep them calm and easier to handle. The training video touches on all of the 3 safeguards for identifying and recognizing individuals with Autism that were mentioned above.

The worst thing that parents can do is to do nothing! Take the child with autism out in public. Take them to the fire station and to the police station. Introduce the first responders to your child and let your child see the fireman in full gear without it being a panic situation. The child may remember that this person is there to help them, even when their sirens are blaring and chaos is surrounding them. You never know how a person with Autism can surprise you!

Look for the Autism ID Packet for Families on line at www.midmichiganautism.org.