



TIP SHEET

Safety Tips for Children with Autism

Your child's safety at home, at school, and elsewhere requires vigilance, continued attention, and skill building.

Children with autism have special safety concerns. They may:

- Not respond to their name
- Escape from their house
- Wander away in the community
- Be too trusting of strangers

Here are some suggestions on how to keep your children safe:

- **Teach Your Child to Swim:** Drowning is the leading cause of death for individuals with autism. Children are often attracted to water and may wander away towards ponds, pools, or lakes.
- **Provide Local First Responders with Information about your Child:** If wandering is a concern, contact law enforcement, fire and ambulance agencies. Ask your local 911 call center to "red flag" this information in their 911 computer data base. Dispatchers can alert patrol officers about your concerns before they arrive.
- **Get an ID Bracelet for Your Child :** Include your name, address and phone number, and whether your child is non-verbal
- **Secure Your Home:** Install secure deadbolt locks, home security system, alarms on windows and doors, and place locks above your child's reach, fence your yard
- **Notify Your Neighbors:** Get to know your neighbors and let them know what characteristics or unusual behaviors your child might exhibit
- **Teach Your Child Skills to Avoid Abuse or Abduction:** Teach them not to approach or talk to strangers, teach them who it is OK to talk to ("community helpers" such as police officers, fire fighters, etc.), teach your child what to do if they get lost, and teach them what to do if a stranger approaches them in public (run away, say "no," report the stranger to a trusted adult).