

Are You Prepared if Your Child Runs Away?

Autism Services is pleased to present a **Lost Child Prevention Sheet** which provides suggestions on various measures that parents may take to help reduce the risk of their child getting lost or to assist searchers in locating them quickly. The sheet includes information on speeding up the search process with emergency response workers, alerting your neighbors, securing your home, and options if you are considering an ID bracelet or personal tracking device. This information sheet can be picked up from our office or accessed online at www.autismservices.ca.

***Not all suggestions listed below are right for every family in every neighbourhood.
You should carefully consider the best options for your individual child.***

The contents of this prevention sheet have been taken from Autism Speaks' Autism Safety Kit and modified to fit the needs of parents living in Saskatoon.

A leading cause of concern for parents who have a child with autism spectrum disorder is that their child may run or wander away and become lost. If you are concerned, now is the time to prepare.

Create an Emergency Information Sheet

The following material contains suggestions for how you can work with emergency services personnel so they may be better able to assist you in a time of emergency.

Currently, none of the emergency services in Saskatoon have the capacity to store individual information about Saskatoon residents. However, you can still provide dispatchers with important information about your child that they can relay to the first responders. We would suggest that you consider preparing an emergency information sheet for your child. Keep this sheet by the phone so that anyone calling emergency personnel for assistance if your child is lost will have the information they need. This emergency information sheet with a recent photo attached, can be given to police personnel sent to your door. They will now possess all the pertinent information they need to begin looking for your child immediately. This information sheet can also be distributed to the school, neighbours, or anyone else assisting in the search for your child.



A template for an emergency information sheet has been provided on the last page. Download a copy of this sheet from our website (www.autismservices.ca) and customize it for your child. You may wish to attach a map to the Emergency Information Sheet indicating the location of your home, places that your child may wander off to, places that attract your child, and dangerous places around your area (e.g., ponds, etc.) If you wish to create a map you can do so by using Google Maps.

Creating a map in Google Maps:

- Go to <http://maps.google.com>
- Type in your address (including city and province) in the search bar
- Zoom in or out using the + and – icons on the left hand side of the map
- Click on file, and then print to print your map

Please mark on the printed out map any of the places you think are important for others to know about (e.g., your home, parks child likes to go to, etc).

Alert Your Neighbours...

Although it may be difficult at first, introducing yourself and your child to your neighbours can help protect your child in the future. You may want to plan a brief visit to your neighbours and give them a simple handout with your name, address, and phone number or provide them with a copy of the completed 'Emergency Information Sheet'. By introducing yourself and your child to your neighbours they will know:

- Your child has autism; she/he does not understand dangers and may wander away from your home.
- What to do if they see your child outside of your house.
- Who they should call first if they see your child outside of your home (e.g., home phone, work phone, 911).
- The best way to get your child back to you.
- How they should approach and communication with your child.

"We had no idea Josh was out of the house, when we received a call from a neighbour. Thankfully, they were familiar with Josh and knew how to reach us."

Survey and Secure your home...

To prevent your child from slipping away unnoticed while at home you may want to try a few of these strategies:

- Install secure dead bolt locks that require keys on both sides. Please note: if you choose this option the key will need to be available to an adult in the home **at all times** so that your family can leave the home quickly in the event of an emergency. Some parents place the keys on a lanyard which the supervising adults carry around their neck while they are home.
- Install a home security alarm system.
- Install inexpensive battery-operated alarms on doors and windows to alert you when they are opened. These are available at stores like Wal-Mart and Radio Shack.
- Place hook and eye locks on all doors, above your child's reach.
- Fence your yard.
- Cut down trees in your yard that would enable a child to climb over a fence.
- Have only heavy outdoor furniture that children are unable to move to the fence and use it to climb over.

Consider an ID Bracelet/Tag or Medical Alert Bracelet for your Child

ID bracelets or other ID methods (cards, temporary tattoos, tags) can be used to identify your child, especially if your child is non-verbal. Include your name, telephone number, that your child has autism and if applicable, is non-verbal on the ID bracelet or tag. If your child will not wear a bracelet or necklace, consider a temporary tattoo or other tagging devices with your contact information. Please refer to the attached safety products flyer for information on specific ID products and how to purchase them.

Consider purchasing a Medical Alert bracelet for your child. Every medical alert bracelet can be engraved with a member's key information: their ID number, information indicating your child has autism and the MedicAlert 24-hour Emergency Response Hotline number. Therefore, anyone who sees the information will know that your child has Autism and that they can call the Medic Alert 24-hour Emergency Response Hotline number to find out more detailed information about your child, such as contact names and numbers, home address, how to communicate with them, behaviour risks, medications they are on, etc.

For most children under 14 years of age a Medical Alert membership and bracelet are FREE through **the No Child Without Program**. The No Child Without program offers free MedicAlert protection to children enrolled in Saskatoon schools.

To see if your school is participating in the program, please go to the following website: <http://www.nochildwithout.ca/schools.asp?p=SK>

Enroll your child in the No Child Without program by completing the following steps:

- Obtain a membership application from your school (if it is a participating school)
- Apply online at http://www.nochildwithout.ca/parent_enrol.as
- Call 1-877-282-5378

If your child does not qualify for the No Child Without program, but you would still like to enroll your child in Medical Alert you can:

- Apply online at <http://www.medicalert.ca/en/why/purchase.as>
- Call 1-800-668-1507

Consider a Personal Tracking Device

There are a number of different personal tracking devices that can be beneficial to utilize with a child with autism. The unit attached to your child is usually quite small and can be attached to a numerous places on your child, including backpack, shoe lace, zipper, and belt. The unit for parents is usually a handheld unit that will direct parents to the location of their child. The tracking distances vary by device; however, most have a range from 200 feet or more. The personal tracking devices that direct parents to the location of their child cost approximately \$200. Please refer to the safety products flyer on the following page for more information on a specific personal tracking device.

Please Note: Autism Services does not endorse any product. We cannot speak to the quality or effectiveness of the products. Autism Services collected information for the convenience of families.

Child Locator

Quickly locate a lost child with a touch of a button. The child receiver is attached by passing shoes laces, belts, or velcro straps through the plastic loop on the receiver. The receiver can be attached anywhere that is comfortable for your child including shoes, backpacks, pants, etc. A key chain style transmitter is carried by the parent/guardian. Should you loose sight of your child, push the button on your key chain transmitter and the child's receiver will beep loudly. This will aid in alerting you of your child's whereabouts, while drawing attention to the dangerous situation your child may be in. This product has a distance range of 100-150 feet and both the receiver and transmitter are water resistant.



<http://www.brickhousesecurity.com/mommy-child-locator.html>



http://www.familyonboard.com/giggle_bug_toddler_tracker_child_locator.html

Autism ID Card & Laminating Pouch

Your child carries an identification card in his or her pocket or backpack. One side states that the child has autism and outlines possible behaviors they may display. The other side gives emergency contact information provided by the parent/guardian prior to laminating. The information on the card helps the child communicate with others in the event should the child be lost or need help.



<http://www.selectautismmerchandise.com/index.php?act=viewProd&productId=6>

The BrickHouse Locator with Distance Alert

This is a homing device that can lead you to you tagged child. The small tags can be attached to almost anywhere on your child using a key ring or string. Most common places of attachments for these tags are: shoe laces, belts, zippers, and backpacks. The parent/guardian locator devices feature many options including:

- *Locate mode* lets you find your tagged child up to 600 feet away outdoors and up to 250 plus feet away indoors. To use this mode, a button is pushed to activate the locator. By activating this mode, the tag on the child will beep, and the parent/guardian locator will show a visual picture on the screen directing you to where your child is.
- *Alert mode* will warn you if your tagged child is outside of your designated "safety zone." The safety range can be set to alarm should your child leave the house, yard, or other designated area. The parent/guardian locator will beep and display an alert that your child has left the safety zone.
- *Panic mode* is an option of the child's tag. Should the child become lost or scared, they can push the button on their tag. This will set off a distress alarm on the parent/guardian locator device.



<http://www.brickhousesecurity.com/locator.html>

Autism Safety Tags

This ALERT tag can be attached to a necklace, zipper, or backpack. In the event that your child runs off or cannot be located, this safety tag lets emergency personnel and others know that your child may not respond to verbal commands.



Order online: <http://www.autismlinkstore.com/index.asp?PageAction=VIEWPROD&ProdID=9>

Autism Safety Package

- Engraved medic alert jewelry
- Child information sheet
- Autism ID card
- Autism alert car magnet
- Autism alert window decal
- Autism alert window cling
- Temporary tattoos
- Autism awareness cards
- Guide to keep child safe



Order online: <http://www.selectautismmerchandise.com/>

Who's Shoes Child ID

This velcro tag attaches to your child's shoe laces. The outside of the tag is labelled "Who's Shoes ID", when opened, there is a place to write your child's emergency contact information. This tag can provide valuable information to individuals able to assist in the return of your child should you child be lost.



Order online at: <http://whosshoesid.com/index.asp>

Autism Alert Temporary Tattoo

These temporary tattoos state that the individual has autism and may require help in finding their way home. Parents provide a phone number to be called should you child be lost or hurt. This product is great for short term use while camping, at the exhibition, or on holidays. Temporary tattoos are made with safe, FDA-certified pigments and cosmetic ingredients.



Order Stop sign online:
<http://www.selectautismmerchandise.com/index.php?act=viewProd&productId=11>



Order Puzzle Piece online:
<http://www.mypreciouskid.com/temporary-tattoos.html>

Autism Speaks ID Kit

The information printed on these items can be whatever you would like to a maximum of 20 characters for the bag tags, zipper pulls, and iron-ons and 50 characters for the wristbands.



Kit includes:

- 15 'My 411 Wristbands'
- 2 Bag Tags
- 6 Zipper Pulls
- 25 Iron-Ons

Order online:
<http://www.mabel.ca/mabel.php?n=autism%20speaks%20id%20kit>

Occupant With Autism Alert

This "Occupant With Autism" Alert comes as a decal, magnet or cling. It can be placed on your car, window, door, etc. to alert emergency services to the presence of your child. With this alert, emergency service personnel may more appropriately interact with your child during a time of stress. It is made to withstand sunlight and harsh weather conditions.



Order Stop online:
<http://www.selectautismmerchandise.com/index.php?act=viewProd&productId=9>



Order Ribbon Warning online:
<http://www.buttonsandmore.com/decal/ulthm.htm>

Emergency Information Sheet for (Full Name of Child)

Photo

Include recent photo of your child

Date photo taken:

Physical Description:

Date of Birth:

Height:

Weight:

Eye Color:

Hair Color:

Scars:

Identifying Marks: (e.g. birthmarks)

Responds to: (List behaviours, expressions, or items that child will respond to)

Please be aware that: (List anything others should know about how your child reacts, e.g. does he/she bite, not like to be touched, etc.)

Child may: (List behaviours your child frequently engages in, such as rocking, climbing, flapping arms.)

Favourite places: (List places your child likes to go or has wandered off to before, e.g. specific parks, etc.)

May be frightened by: (List animals, objects, sounds, etc. that child may be afraid of and how the child reacts when he is afraid.)

Best way to communicate: (Identify the best way for others to communicate with your child, such as through pointing at objects, key phrases child may know, etc.)

Identification: (List any identification your child may have on him/her, such as a medical alert bracelet, etc.)

Contact Immediately:

- 1) Name:
Home phone:
Cell phone:
Relationship to child:
- 2) Name:
Home phone:
Cell phone:
Relationship to child:

Child's Home Address:

Please refer to attached map for location of home, favourite places, etc.