First Responders Guide for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

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Autism Speaks: 888-AUTISM2 (888-288-4762) 888-772-9050 (Spanish)
www.autismspeaks.org

Autism Society: 800-3-AUTISM (800-328-8476) www.autismsociety.org

CA Dept of Developmental Services

Project Life Saver
www.projectlifesaver.org
877-580-LIFE (877-580-5433)
to locate nearest law enforcement special needs registries

NCMEC
www.missingkids.org/thesissues/autism
916-654-1690  www.dds.ca.gov/rc/

Regional Centers www.dds.ca.gov/rc/

Funding from the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)
Keep in Mind:

- If an individual is placed face down, be aware of underdeveloped muscles that may restrict their breathing ability – sit them up or place them on their side as soon as possible
- Use a blanket to prevent them from injuring themselves
- Nearly one-half of those with Autism wander or bolt from safety
- Consider that they may:
  - be at risk of having a seizure
  - be surprisingly strong while agitated or scared
  - be hyposensitive to pain (high tolerance) and hyper-sensitive to their senses
  - be attracted to bodies of water (pools, lakes, rivers or ocean)
  - avoid eye contact and be unresponsive to name, questions or instructions
  - exhibit repetitive behaviors (verbal or physical IE: hand flapping, rocking motion, humming).

Best Practices:

- Assess the individual - every person with Autism is different
- Ask before proceeding to avoid a trigger
  - Actions that can lead to triggers: over stimulation (touching, sirens, bull horn, screaming, TV, radio, bright lights), too many people at the scene, unwarranted searches, crying, if they are soiled/wet
- Low Key / Soft Approach / Non-Intimidating
- Two Person Teams (male/female)
- Keep It Simple (literal actions & language)
- Monitor the individual often
- If available and safe, ask a family member or caretaker to assist or mediate
- Take advantage of TIME - BUILD RAPPORT and BE PATIENT!!

For additional information and resources please visit our website: https://cirinc.org/up/about.html