



AUTISM ALLIANCE OF MICHIGAN PRESENTS

MiNavigator

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www.AAOMI.org

Help. Hope. Answers. Today.

Vacationing with your ASD Child

Contributed by Natasha Barber, Autism Moms Know Safety Blogger

Vacationing with kids is definitely not easy to plan. For parents, the whole trip is focused on keeping kids entertained, safe, and meltdown free. So what about vacationing with your sensory avoiding ASD child? It's not different; you still are focused on entertaining them and making it fun, but you also have additional safety hazards to consider and plan for. Here are some that I absolutely never forget.



- I always have my son's GPS on him. Why? The GPS allows me to know my son's exact location at all times. Using the phone app, I can track him continuously if needed and it allows detailed travel routes. I hope to never have to rely on it but it gives me peace of mind knowing he is tracked if he ever does wander away.
- I have a harness I carry with me. I use the harness when Joshua swims. To some it may look funny or even offensive, but it's how I establish a safe boundary for him in the water. I am not a good swimmer and my son likes to be under the water more often than not. The problem is when he starts swimming, he can't hear me. Using the harness, it gives him safe boundaries since he is unaware of dangerous situations.
- I carry a portable motion sensor and door alarm. They are small and inexpensive, but an absolute essential for night time wandering; especially when we are sleeping outside of the comfort of our home. The motion sensors wake me up when Joshua is out of bed. The door alarm is my red flag that the door is unlocked and I need to take quick action.
- Joshua always has a child ID of some sort when we are out. I make sure his shoe ID and ID bracelet are engraved with his name and my cell phone number. This gives anyone who is trying to help Joshua the information they need because he is nonverbal. Other options may include temporary water-based, and peel and stick tattoos, or a marker on a forearm covered by liquid bandaid.
- A final consideration is making sure the destination we choose to vacation is enjoyable for the whole family. We have to consider what my son would also enjoy and plan activities that he can participate in. Many fun locations will expose my son to excess noise and therefore headphones are always accessible.



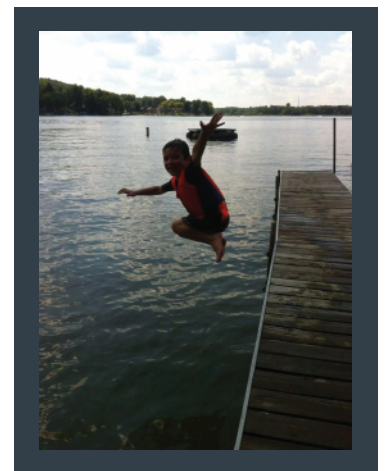
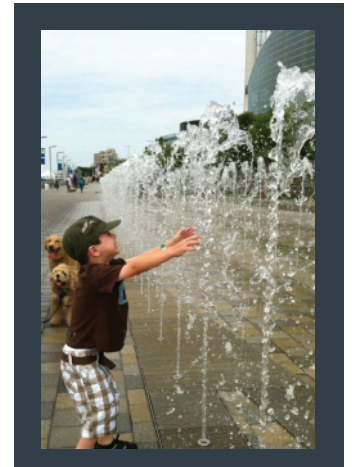
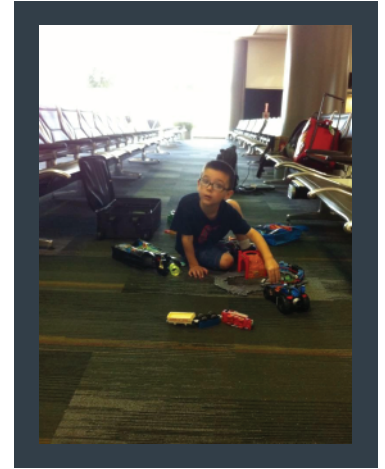


She Said She Said Vacationing Safety

Contributed by Emma Tryson, Navigation Specialist, AAoM

Preparing the MiNavigator newsletter, AAoM Navigator Emma Tryson shared additional safety strategies that she uses with her sensory seeking adventurous son. Below are Emma's tips:

- Review rules surrounding approaching and interacting with strangers on your way there and frequently throughout the trip. Social stories and a little healthy fear can be helpful.
- Again review water safety and set firm boundaries for water exploration in terms that the child can understand and reiterate before they enter the water.
- Prepare for a child who will struggle staying seated in a plane. For a child who likes to kick the seat in front of him, consider booking the family in an arrangement to ensure that a family member is in front and not just beside, or ask your OT or PT about lending you a piece of Theraband to offer some resistance input to the 'kicker' for the trip. Keep a close eye or hand on the seat belt, a reward may be necessary for staying in your seat with your seatbelt on.
- Plan for runners with pent up energy during layovers. This means more than bringing the loaded backpack. Don't forget toys or manipulatives for when the favorite electronic device is turned off, battery dies, or can not access wifi. Plan for gross motor activity to get rid of excess energy during layovers.
- Travelling can include exposure to scary germs for parents of those who like to mouth objects, seats, and body parts. Pack oral stimulation substitutes or items with strong oral input such as jolly ranchers, gum, safety lollipops, and chewelry.
- Enlist and accept the help of flight attendants, crew personnel, and friendly passengers. Sometimes a new face, story, point of interest can make a bigger impact than mom and dad.





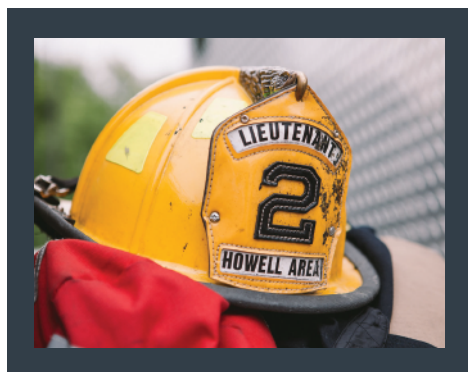
Michigan Autism Safety Training

Contributed by Tammy Morris, AAoM, Chief Program Officer

Over the years, the Autism Alliance of Michigan has had the opportunity to benchmark our trademarked Autism Safety Training for first responders with other states across the nation. We have found no other state or agency offers a comparable training delivered to and by first responders. This has been reinforced by interest from other states including Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, Idaho, who have contacted us to implement these trainings outside of Michigan. The Autism Alliance of Michigan's first Safety Specialist, Scott Schuelke, Retired Lansing Police Department, trained with Dennis Debbaudt, the global voice on autism safety who first launched efforts in 1994 based out of Florida. Joined by Sgt. Mark Boody, Novi PD, in 2014 and now additional highly experienced Safety Specialists in 2017, the Michigan Autism Safety Training continues to grow in its reach and goals of training all first responders in the State of Michigan, with nearly 19,000 trained. While a growing number of agencies, and in some cases, parents, have begun to offer first responder training, we have found our program to be an effective, professional, and unique approach for a number of reasons;

Why is Michigan's Autism Safety Training (MAST) One of a Kind?

- We focus on proactive strategies for how to respond; strategies for positive interactions and techniques for communication in addition to basic awareness of autism symptoms. We have found what's critical is the practical application of basic techniques, the within context of actual scenarios.
- MAST was created by content experts on staff at AAoM, credentialed in a number of autism fields, such as education, clinical, law, speech/language, behavior analysis, among others. We are able to adjust content to a number of audiences, expanding outreach of safety trainings to multiple community venues.
- MAST training was developed by the clinical, education, legal and resource expertise of Autism Alliance of Michigan autism specialists. Delivered by police officers training goes far beyond just awareness and understanding autism, but scenarios and tools to help first responders manage on duty situations.





Why is Michigan's Autism Safety Training One of a Kind? cont.

- Safety Specialists do more than deliver training, they consult on MiNavigator cases to help individuals, families and professionals managing safety and legal situations, bringing ongoing education to trainers and the most up to date information regarding scenarios faced in the field.
- Safety Specialists work together with Clinical, Legal, Communication, Behavior, and Education experts to offer comprehensive Crisis Intervention Training addressing autism and mental health and developmental disabilities beyond autism for communities who need to bring in expertise for routine Crisis Intervention Training and preparedness.
- Autism Alliance of Michigan has recognized that beyond first responders, community members, recreational and cultural venues are all motivated to welcome and keep individuals with autism safe under their watch. In 2016 AAoM delivered the first "Alliance Seal of Approval" to the Detroit Zoo and Grand Rapids Children's Museum for their efforts to train all staff, ensure safety audited spaces for visitors, and preparation of materials with AAoM to help prepare families for visits.
- AAoM offers free downloadable materials for schools, families, community providers to help plan for safety in the community.
- AAoM will partner with any community or partner willing to bring Michigan's Autism Safety Training to community, members and first responders.



Over the summer days, an eye on safety is critical. Among a population where misunderstanding can lead to tragedy, understanding is a necessity. At a time when professionals are offered so many online curriculums and training options to tab through quickly, a face to face and back and forth discussion is essential.

To schedule an autism safety training for your department, facility, venue, or group, please contact navigator@aaomi.org or call 877-463-AAOM.





GPS Peace of Mind

Contributed by Kat Nelson, AAoM Program Assistant GPS Program Coordinator

Over 300 families have been awarded scholarships through AAoM's Sean Taglione Memorial GPS Scholarship Program over the course of the past 3 years! The program that was born out of tragedy and one family's dedication to preventing the loss of more precious children. The GPS Program has seen unwavering support and interest from the community ever since. University of Michigan fraternities and sororities have been on board, thanks to the leaders of Winterfest and their passionate fundraising efforts for GPS devices and subscriptions. AAoM partnered with AngelSense in 2016 and has heard frequent parent testimonials. Families rely on their AAoM sponsored GPS for daily activities, peace of mind, and amazing stories of recovery of children who have wandered from a safe distance or watchful eye.

Caregivers of individuals with autism and with a history of wandering can apply at:

<https://autismallianceofmichigan.org/project/gps/>



"Our missions are so aligned and I feel that together we are making a real impact. We appreciate, and are very proud of the relationship we have built over the past year with AAoM and look forward to a continued success in serving our families"

Doron Somer, CEO AngelSense





The Wheels on the Bus go Safely 'Round

Contributed by Barbara Brish, AAOM Education Specialist

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) every student with a disability is eligible for transportation to ensure access to school. Inclusion needs are the same as the classroom.

The ride to and from school can be the highlight or most stressful time of the day. For parents of young children, children new to school, nonverbal children who can't communicate about their day, or those with sensory or behavioral challenges that are escalated on the bus ride, this is particularly true. Below is an outline of the integral role that bus drivers and aides on the bus play in a student's daily life, as well as a checklist of reminders for drivers.



Drivers and aides provide:

- Positive influence daily for the children.
- Daily tasks of meeting basic needs, including:
 - Physical;
 - Socializing with others; and
 - Communication.
- A team approach to transporting students.
- An extra set of hands on field trips (sometimes may be requested).
- School bus drivers can be a positive influence in a child's life - drivers play an important role, daily, in a child's life - a friendly and encouraging adult before and after a difficult day.





Drivers Should:

- Maintain contact with their dispatch and the school.
- Not make changes in routes without approval.
- Communicate changes in routes to the school so they can prepare student(s).
- Get to know the students, the staff and caregivers.
- Practice confidentiality as they will be privy to important facts about the students and their families.
- Give assistance to students as needed.
- Arrange safe transfer of students at staging areas.
- If transferring medication, have it signed for at school.
- Special needs student must be included in transportation.
- Develop methods for safe transportation.
- Know specific needs for each special needs student, including physical or behavioral management.
- Document in great detail and provide to a supervisor any difficulty on the bus.
- Maintain contact with school personnel to assist in working with the student and any difficulty on the bus.



AAoM would like to applaud Dean Transportation for being a leader in the transportation industry implementing Michigan Autism Safety Training for all drivers.





AUGUST AT A GLANCE

Please visit our community calendar for full event listings at www.navigator.autismallianceofmichigan.org/events.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT
		1 BWCIL Cooking Class (Port Huron)	2	3 Meijer Gardens Family Fun Night (Grand Rapids)	4 Behavior Technician Learning Series (Detroit)	5 Sensory Sensitive Movies at Rave Cinemas, Flint West 14 (Flint)
6 Siblings Camp (Mayville)	7 SIPI IT Program (Flint) Independent Living Skills Development (Lansing)	8 SIPI IT Program (Flint) Independent Living Skills Development (Lansing)	9 Welcome to Medicare Workshop (L'Anse) Project Uncommon (Flint)	10 ACT Open House (Grand Rapids) Kayaking at Stratford Beach (Midland)	11	12 Autism 101: Information & Resources for Families with a New Diagnosis (Southfield)
13 Siblings Camp (Mayville)	14 4th Wall Theater Workshop at Detroit Opera House (Detroit)	15 Monthly Support Group & Newly Diagnosed Meetings (Burton)	16 Parent Engagement Training (Detroit)	17 NAMI Family-to-Family Classes (Lansing)	18 Spartans Stores YMCA Family Hope Program (Wyoming)	19 Camp Zip Summer Cooking (Ann Arbor)
20 Test Ride a Pony (Davidsburg)	21 ESDM Advanced Training (Ann Arbor) Camp Tall Tree (Fenton)	22	23 Understanding and Developing Attention Skills in All Children (Escanaba)	24 Self-Regulation Training (Harris) Taylor's Beach Campground (Howell)	25	26 FALCONERS Event (Lansing) Embrace the Amazing (Detroit)
27 Rejoicing Spirits -no-shush worship service (Birmingham)	28 Learn, Know, Act: SPEAK UP! Skills of Self-Advocacy (Battle Creek)	29 Mental Health First Aid Course (Traverse City)	30 LAMP Training workshop (Bay City) ADA Celebration 2017 (Grand Rapids)	31 Common Ground Legal Aid Clinic (Pontiac)		

All Families will leave with a safety plan for school, home, and the community.

This is open to ALL FAMILIES.

For more information:
Call the MiNavigator at (877)463-AAOM
or Navigator@aaomi.org with questions.

Register at:
autismsafetyfair.eventbrite.com



SAFETY FAIR | AUGUST. 12 | WCCCD-DOWNTOWN CAMPUS



The mission of Autism Alliance of Michigan is to lead collaborative efforts across the state that will improve the quality of life for individuals with autism through education, access to comprehensive services, community awareness, inclusion efforts and coordinated advocacy.

