

AUSM EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FACT SHEET



REMEMBER

- Every behavior has a function.
- Every behavior communicates something.

Danger Zones

- Sharp objects, oven/stove
- Places with lights and noises
- Pools and lakes
- Public restrooms
- Internet



Autism Emergency Preparedness Tips and Strategies

1. Use positive phrasing. Tell an individual what you want him or her to do instead of what not to do.
2. When you ask an individual to stop a behavior, give him or her one with the same function to replace it.
3. Use the 5-point scale to understand an individual's emotions.
4. Walk through emergency plans step by step and practice with visual aids. Include the individual in building a plan if possible. Have one for fire, storms, and/or bullying.
5. Some people respond to video modeling: record a short video of someone engaged in the skill you want to teach.
6. Teach rules and boundaries with consistent language: safe versus unsafe, appropriate versus inappropriate, expected versus unexpected.
7. Use your community! Get to know your neighbors, introduce the person with autism to emergency responders, know the local policies, work with the IEP team at school.
8. Identify the individual as on the spectrum with an identification card, bracelet, or shoe tag. Use apps or aides.
9. At home, use labels and visuals when possible. Create a safe space for the individual with autism in case of emergency.
10. Swimming lessons are a must for individuals with autism.



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Contact the Autism Society of Minnesota or visit www.ausm.org to learn more about autism emergency preparedness.

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childhood  **adolescence**  **transition**  **adulthood**