

SAFETY ON DAY TRIPS

AN AUTISTIC CHILD'S WORKBOOK



BEFORE WE LEAVE

Predictability and preparation can reduce risk and distress.



My trip plan

Where are we going?

Who is coming with me?

How will we travel?

When will we come home?

Safety things to prepare

☐

Emergency contact details

☐

Recent photograph of the child

☐

Identification card, band or tag if appropriate

☐

Medication and written instructions

☐

Weather-appropriate clothing

☐

Safe foods, drinks and allergy information

☐

Sensory and communication tools

☐

A planned quiet space and exit route

STAYING TOGETHER

Use the level of supervision the child actually needs.



Before we begin, my adult and I can agree:

- ☐ who stays closest to me
- ☐ where I can stop safely
- ☐ how I can ask for a break
- ☐ what happens if we are separated
- ☐ which adult I can approach for help

If we become separated

CHILD

Stop in a safe place if able. Show an ID card or approach an agreed helper.

ADULT

Begin the agreed search plan immediately. Alert staff and give a recent photo and description.

BOTH

Practise this plan calmly before the trip without frightening or blaming the child.

RIDES, EQUIPMENT AND MOVEMENT

Excitement, movement and waiting can change safety needs.



Before using equipment

- ☐ read and follow the safety rules
- ☐ check age, height and ability guidance
- ☐ use straps, barriers or helmets correctly
- ☐ stay within arm's reach if needed
- ☐ stop if the child becomes unsafe or distressed
- ☐ never assume understanding from spoken words alone

My safe movement plan

The adult helping me is...

A safety rule I need shown clearly is...

My signal for stop, help or break is...

WATER, ANIMALS AND OUTDOOR SPACES

Curiosity and sensory seeking need calm, active supervision.



Important safety checks

- ☐ identify water, roads, drops, gates and exits
- ☐ use close supervision around water
- ☐ follow animal and enclosure rules
- ☐ check surfaces, heat, shade and weather
- ☐ keep medication, allergens and safe foods in mind
- ☐ use sunscreen and offer regular drinks

My outdoor safety map

Safe place or meeting point:

Places needing extra care:

My adult will help me by:

SENSORY SAFETY AND COMMUNICATION

Preventing overload is part of keeping a child safe.



Early signs I may need help

- ☐ moving faster or trying to leave
- ☐ covering ears or eyes
- ☐ changes in speech or communication
- ☐ freezing, dropping or hiding
- ☐ repetitive movement increasing
- ☐ becoming unusually quiet or disconnected

My communication and regulation plan

My stop or break signal is...

Things that help my body feel safer...

Words adults should use or avoid...

GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Safety planning should be individual, respectful and proportionate.

PLAN FOR REAL NEEDS

Use the child's known communication, sensory, mobility, medical and supervision needs. Do not reduce support because the setting looks family-friendly.

ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITY

Agree which adult is actively supervising, particularly near water, traffic, crowds, animals, rides and transitions.

PREVENT OVERLOAD

Build in breaks, safe food, hydration, movement and quiet. Overload can reduce danger awareness and increase flight, freezing or shutdown.

MAKE INFORMATION ACCESSIBLE

Use photographs, symbols, demonstrations, AAC and short language. Check understanding through action, not by requiring eye contact or spoken confirmation.

RESPOND WITHOUT BLAME

Distress, bolting, hiding or dropping may communicate fear or overload. Secure immediate safety, reduce demands and co-regulate.

KNOW THE EMERGENCY PLAN

Carry essential details, medication and a recent photo. Know the venue's first-aid point, exits, staff procedures and local emergency arrangements.

Safety support should protect the child's dignity and freedom while meeting their genuine level of risk and need.



AFTER THE DAY TRIP

Recovery and reflection help adults plan safer future trips.

My recovery menu

QUIET less talking, softer light or a familiar space

MOVEMENT walking, rocking, stretching or other safe movement

COMFORT a familiar object, programme, food or drink

CONNECTION closeness, parallel time or space according to preference

What we learned

Something that helped me feel safe...

A difficult or risky moment...

What adults should change next time...

Something I enjoyed...

