



# Quick Tips **SAFESEARCH** FOR AUTISM™

SafeSearch is a one-page framework that provides basic response and interaction steps when a child, dependent, or adult with autism is missing.



National  
**Autism Safety**  
Council™

**S**



## Search Nearby Water First

Search ponds, pools, lakes, canals, and unique water sources (horse troughs, stock pools, gravel pits) closest to the last known location. Google the address to help identify water not readily seen. Use drones, K9s, and sonar if available, and instruct searchers to remain at water bodies. Search busy roads. In urban areas, search parked cars (floorboards) thoroughly.

**E**



## Engage Caregivers

Gather information about the lost individual from caregivers, including routines, sensory triggers, fixations, preferred food/items, de-escalation techniques, and behavioral patterns. Confirm preferred communication method to assist if located, and ways to contact the caregivers.

**A**



## Activate Alert Systems

Notify the media, public, and other agencies through Silver Alerts, Purple Alerts, Reverse 911, Wireless Emergency Alerts, or State EMA systems. Include critical information: autism, name, age, description, last-known location, last found location of previous elopement, and to search and stay at nearby water.

**R**



## Reach Out to Other Agencies

Notify and quickly mobilize other agencies, including fire, EMS, SAR, and relevant partners. Share last-known location, behavioral info, and instructions for a coordinated search.

**C**



## Check Other Areas

Thoroughly search sheds, abandoned homes, wooded areas, and other locations where children or dependents may hide. For older, more independent individuals check shelters, hospitals, homeless encampments, and parked cars. Ensure all assigned zones are covered systematically.

**H**



## Handle Recovery with Care

Approach calmly; avoid loud commands. Contact the caregiver and allow the individual to have comfort items like water, cookie, or phone. Speak directly to the individual in simple, literal language. Do not talk about next steps to someone else. Example: "First, we're going to walk to the car," as opposed to, "Let's get him to the car."