

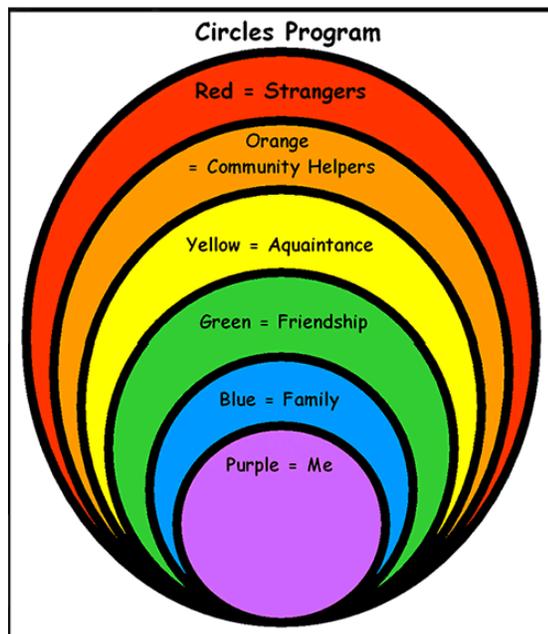


Along the Spectrum

Tazewell Mason Counties Special Education Association

Part of teaching children about safety includes teaching them about the potential danger of strangers. Teaching a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) about “stranger danger” and how to react in a dangerous situation is complicated by social and communication impairments. However, it is particularly important given the high rate of children with ASD who wander away. Additionally, children with ASD are more likely to be alone than with friends as they get older and more independent, thus creating more opportunity for abduction or assault. - Center for Autism Research

TMCSEA can provide the Circles program to districts for use with students on the Autism spectrum and with other disabilities. This program assists students in discriminating different levels of intimacy and adapting their behaviors accordingly. The program teaches students how relationships can be formed and maintained according to the social norms & social boundaries of our day and age. Thus, the Circles program lays the foundation for people with disabilities to manage the amount of personal responsibility and social integration now available to them. Circles Level 1 presents to special needs students some extremely abstract concepts in a very simple and concrete manner. The connection between the kind of relationship and the corresponding level of intimacy is demonstrated visually, making it easy for students to understand this important concept.



[Circles Program Website](#)

When planning for or responding to any safety emergency, consider the following:

- Will the student respond to his or her name being called?
- Will the child go with a stranger?
- Does the child have a fear of cars or animals or is he or she drawn to them?
- Does the child have a fear of or is he or she drawn to water (for example, fountains and pools)?

If there are concerns of the student running off (elopement), consider the following:

- A Medical Identification Bracelet
- If the child will not wear a bracelet or necklace, consider a temporary tattoo with contact information.
- A personal tracking device

Special Needs Assistance Program (SNAP) is a non profit organization that provides equipment, resources and services to children with disabilities. SNAP has partnered with Tazewell County Sheriff Department to provide personal tracking devices for children who may engage in elopement behaviors.

For more information on tracking devices email SNAP at cisnap@gmail.com or visit the website at www.cisnap.org



Individuals with autism are just as interested, if not more interested, in using the internet as a connection to mass amounts of information and millions of people. To ensure the safety and success of internet usage, it is critical that individuals with autism learn how to protect themselves online, and that they understand what is and isn't appropriate on the internet. Common guidance includes:

- Establish ground rules with the student about how they can use the Internet, when and for how long.
- Talk to the student about the kind of things it is ok to look at. A basic rule could be if you couldn't watch it on television, it's not ok to search for it online.
- Ensure the student knows to come to you or another adult if they see something that upsets them.
- Talk to the student about what it is and isn't ok to tell people about themselves online. Encourage them to use an online nickname and avatar and to tell you if anyone requests their real name, photos or

Sometimes we give information to students on the autism spectrum regarding stranger awareness that may be vague. Here are some hints to help word our warnings more specifically and warn them in a non-threatening way.

Five Rules for Stranger Safety

Instead of: Don't talk to strangers

Say: Check with me or your parents or your babysitter before talking to another grown-up.

Instead of: If you get lost in a store, ask a trusted adult to help you find me

Say: If you get lost in a store, stay in the building and find someone with a name tag to help you.

Instead of: Don't take candy from a stranger

Say: Don't take anything from anyone except your parents, babysitter, teacher, or friend's mom or dad on a playdate.

Instead of: Don't leave my sight

Say: Don't go where you can't see me.

Instead of: Don't keep secrets

Say: A surprise is the only secret that's okay to keep.

Stranger Danger Social Story

This Social story is a small book highlighting the danger of strangers and what not to do. A Stranger Danger work sheet is part of this unit.

These small books can be laminate for durability and read to or with your students.

Available at Teachers Pay Teachers-<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/>



helpful
RESOURCES

Apps: iModeling Bounderies, Website Warrior, Gooseberry Play, Staying Safe and Safer Strangers

Books: NO Trespassing-This is MY Body!
Super Duper Safety School: Safety Rules