City of Dothan/Houston County Emergency Operations District
Autism Spectrum / Special Needs Child Form

Dear Parents –
The City of Dothan & Houston County Communications Center are dedicated to providing outstanding service anytime there is an emergency at your home. We understand that you as parents worry about your child incessantly and while we cannot predict an emergency, we can take the time to prepare for the unexpected together. The purpose of this form is to obtain information on your child so that in the event of a call regarding him/her, our responders are better prepared to handle the situation. We are also dedicated to upholding the privacy of our citizens therefore once this form is completed and received by the center, it will be entered into our computer system (which can only be accessed by first responders) and the original form will be destroyed. Once this form is completed it can be hand delivered or mailed to: 405 E Adams St Dothan, AL 36303 or emailed to: 911@dothan.org – Thank you for allowing us to continue serving you, the amazing citizens of this wonderful community!

General Information:
Childs Name: ____________________________________________________________________________
Childs DOB: ___
Childs physical address: ____________________________________________________________________________
Childs school: ____________________________________________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Name: ____________________________________________________________________________
Home Phone: __________ Cell Phone: __________ Additional Phone: __________
Parent/Guardian Name: ____________________________________________________________________________
Home Phone: __________ Cell Phone: __________ Additional Phone: __________

Childs disorder or special need:
Please list any other medical conditions that our responders should be aware of: ________________________

Does your child have a water attraction? Yes/No
If so, can your child swim? Yes/No
Does your child have a tendency to wander? Yes/No
Does your child have a favorite place? Yes/No - Location: _____________________________
Is your child verbal or non-verbal? _____________________________
How should first responders approach your child? _____________________________

Is your child afraid of anything (loud sirens, strobe lights)? _____________________________

Is there anything we should know when communicating with your child? _____________________________

Is there anything else you feel we should know about your child? _____________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

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City of Dothan/Houston County Emergency Operations District
Autism Spectrum / Special Needs Tips for Parents

Dear Parent –
Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form. We know from experience in the event of an actual emergency parents may become frantic and have trouble communicating with us therefore we want to be as prepared as possible to help you with an emergency involving your child.

Did you know?
- A person with Autism is 7 times more likely to come in contact with law enforcement than anyone else.
- 1 in 68 children are born with some level of Autism and no 2 persons with Autism are alike.
- It is important for first responders to know they are responding to someone with special needs or Autism for the following reasons:
  - During a fire, a child with Autism or special needs may hide in closets, washing machines, drawers, cabinets or other confined spaces to feel safe.
  - After being rescued from a fire, children with special needs are considered a “bolt risk” because they may not be able to quickly register the sense of fear/safety.
  - A child with Autism or special needs may have a fear of or sensitivity to lights (strobe lights) or sounds (loud sirens)
  - Some persons with Autism or special needs can be mentally younger than they physically are. A Police Officer handling an emergency may see a 25 year old man who is not following basic officer safety commands when the person is mentally 3 years old & the officer does not know that he doesn’t understand.
  - When scared, even someone who has higher functioning Autism may lose the ability to follow simple commands.

We understand that you as parents do everything you can to protect your child. We want to provide you with a few tips just in case there are some things you haven’t considered.

- Anytime we respond to an emergency involving your child, always tell the 9-1-1 operator that your child is on the Autism Spectrum or has special needs. She will ask you questions about your child and provide responders with information specific to your child’s needs.
- Free personalized ID’s are available through MedicAlert. Visit www.medicalert.org/autism
- If your child is a wanderer, take a picture of him/her every morning. Doing so will mean that you always have a current picture for first responders and an accurate clothing description every day.
- Take fieldtrips to the Fire Department, Police Department and Ambulance Station. This will familiarize your child with emergency vehicles and personnel so they are less likely to be scared of them if an emergency happens.
- Put bells on your windows, never bars. While we understand the fear of your child wandering out of a window, bars are unsafe. We recommend putting bells or alarms on your windows. Bars add an additional obstacle for firemen when rescuing from a fire.
- Consider a tracking device. We have seen many parents place a tracking device on something that the child keeps with them all of them time or even on their clothing.
- Put an ID sheet in their backpack. Be sure to include information such as their name and emergency contact information.
- Practice emergency scenarios with your child and if there is anything we can ever do to help, contact us.