



BE AWARE: It is common for some individuals with ASD to want to stay in their bedroom or their favorite safe place during a fire. They may be waiting for someone to rescue them or tell them what to do.

Some will be overcome with the fight, flight, or freeze response and will even become combative if someone tries to remove them from their room. There have been cases that once a person with Autism is outside the house, they may run away or even try to go back into the house.



4 Easy Steps to Help Keep Your Autistic Loved One Safe



Ensure your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are working

Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are required in every house and apartment in California. The Red Cross has the free program, "Sound the Alarm" available in various locations to help train and install smoke alarms - www.redcross.org/sound-the-alarm



Develop a plan.

- Plan out two escape plans and a meeting point after you are out of the house.
- If necessary, plan to have someone stay with the person with Autism so they do not reenter the home to retrieve a favorite object or attempt to flee the situation.



Practice!

Make it as close to real life as possible. Trigger the smoke or carbon dioxide alarms in the house and practice leaving the house multiple ways. Remember the fire could take place at night when people are in their pajamas. Once the plan has been mastered, practice your plan with everyone in the home at least twice a year.



Contact your local fire department's non-emergency number.

Call the Fire Department's non-emergency number and tell them you have a someone with Autism in the home. Do not rely on stickers to communicate with first responders.



Every person and every living situation is going to be different. You need a plan that will fit your family and be able to explain it in a way that meets the need of your loved one. You can use icons, pictures, and social stories. If you need help, ask your ABA provider or teacher.

Fire Safety Skills to teach individualized for the child or adult:

- ✓ **Recognizing an alarm and what to do**
- ✓ **A fire exit plan where child responds to fire alarm and can exit two ways**
- ✓ **Touching the door to check to see if it is hot**
- ✓ **Staying low if there is smoke**
- ✓ **Stop/drop and roll**
- ✓ **Recognizing First Responders and knowing they are there to help**



Additional Resources-

- Watch this video from SafeKids Worldwide: [Fire Safety for Families with Children with Cognitive Impairments](#).
- [interactive fire safety plan e-book](#) from the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA). (social story which can be personalized, watched and printed)
- NFPA – Making a Fire Escape Plan video - <https://youtu.be/khyHziYGFZg?list=PLjVWgk4vnRMS0ryWxJay-tBbUdR71h47y>.
- The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) also has a website with videos, games, and activities designed for kids: sparky.org.
- September 26th project - www.september26.org

