

Safety in the Community



The Supporting Families Supports Coordination Innovation Workgroup has been sharing ideas to help SCs fill their buckets to better help them support individuals and families. This resource is guided by the Charting the Life Course framework and is in response to SCs as they support individuals with Intellectual Disabilities, autism, children with medical complexities, and their families.

Being involved in community life creates opportunities for new experiences and interests, the potential to develop friendships, and the ability to make a contribution to the community. An interdependent life, where people with and without disabilities are connected, enriches all of our lives. (Everyday Lives: Values in Action, 2021).

Supports Coordinators and families have asked for resources to help individuals not only become engaged in their communities but to do so safely. The previous resource guide focused on Community Engagement ([click here](#)). Individuals and their supporters can use the strategies below to help remain safe while in the community.

- Be aware of surroundings – Notice who’s around and look out for anything suspicious, such as someone following you or approaching you aggressively. If you feel threatened, go to a public place/store as quickly as possible and call 911.
- Use crosswalks. If there aren’t any, stop, look, and listen before crossing the street. Only cross the street at corners.
- Walk with a friend or in a group. There is safety in numbers!
- Don’t go with anyone you don’t know.
- Avoid dark, empty parking lots, alleys, and parks.
- Try to stay in areas with lots of people around.
- Don’t display valuables such as money, jewelry, or smartphones.
- Trust your instincts – if something or someone makes you feel uncomfortable, listen to your gut. Cross the street, go into a crowded area, or seek help from an authority figure. Don’t worry about offending someone.



Discovery and Navigation

1. Experiences and Questions Booklet (the Blue Book) pages 12-13: [LC-EXPERIENCES-BOOKLET-updated-9-2016.pdf](#)
2. Special Needs Toolkit: [Bully Free World](#)
3. Safety Plan for Individuals with Autism: [PAAutism.org, an ASERT Autism Resource Guide](#)

Connecting and Networking

1. PA Family Network workshops/resources: [PA Family Network - Vision For Equality](#)
2. Community Safety Tips for People With Disabilities: <https://youtu.be/6-bNO0hxUpp>
3. Safety Resources: [State Police | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)



Goods and Services

1. Autism ID Card Social Story: [PAAutism.org, an ASERT Autism Resource Guide](#)
2. Talking About Going into the Community: [PAAutism.org, an ASERT Autism Resource Guide](#)
3. Emergency Responder Notification Forms: [PAAutism.org, an ASERT Autism Resource Guide](#)