

Police Officer Laurie Reyes of Montgomery County Police Department has responded to dozens of autism wandering emergencies, and recommends providing this letter to trusted neighbors to inform them of your child with autism's tendency to wander.



Dear Neighbor,

We have a child with autism. About half of children with autism have a tendency to wander from safety.

We watch our child very carefully, but sometimes he/she unpredictably wanders away from safety.

Our child's name is \_\_\_\_\_. He/she is \_\_\_\_\_ years old as of today, \_\_\_\_\_. He/she is \_\_\_\_\_ tall and weighs about \_\_\_\_\_ lbs. He/she usually wears \_\_\_\_\_.

### WHAT TO DO?

We kindly ask if you see our child alone, please stay with him/her and immediately call:

\_\_\_\_\_. We are probably already looking for him/her. Please also call 911 and tell them that you have found our child.

Our child, \_\_\_\_\_, does not speak very well and does not appreciate danger. He/she might walk into the street without looking. He/she may be dangerously drawn to bodies of water like lakes, rivers or swimming pools and could drown. He/she might walk in your house or yard if a door or gate is open. He/she will become lost very easily and not know he/she is lost. If you ask our child a question he/she will likely not answer.

Our child may appear to be deaf. However, our child can hear. But he/she may not react to things that he/she hears or sees or respond to your verbal commands.

Our child sometimes has outbursts where he/she might scream or shake his/her hands, or act in other unusual ways for a few moments. Please don't misinterpret any of these motions. He/she does not intend to hurt anyone. If you see our child please stay with him/her and call us, then 911 right away.

We have included a recent picture of our child.

Thank you,

\_\_\_\_\_ (Parent Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Address)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Phone)

To learn more about autism, please visit [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org).