



Safety

SEPAG
May 12, 2021

Statistic for Children with Developmental Disorders

- 49% of children with ASD or Developmental Disabilities will wander or bolt from a safe location.
- Individuals with ASD are often attracted to water and they have little to no sense of the danger it holds.
- Drowning is the leading cause of death among children with Autism
- Traffic is also a concern for children that wander/bolt
- Other dangers include: dehydration, heat stroke, hypothermia, falling/injury or encounters with strangers
- Children with ASD are 40 times more likely to die from injuries than the general population.

Wandering, Elopement or Bolting

- Elopement/Wandering is defined as the tendency for an individual to leave the safety of a responsible person's care or safe area, which may result in potential harm or injury to the child.
- Elopement occurs impulsively and quickly, such as running or bolting from a caregiver or contained supervised area.
- There is an increase risk of wandering associated with the severity of Autism but all children can wander.
- Wandering occurs in all different settings and under different type of adult supervision (home, school, friend's house).

Why Might a Child Elope?

- Children and adults can wander for many reasons, such as:
 - 1) To avoid something in their environment, such as a loud noise
 - 2) Go to a favorite place, like a park, store etc.
 - 3) Avoid something they are scared of, such as a dog
 - 4) Seek out sensory stimuli, like water
 - 5) To control a situation
 - 6) To be chased
 - 7) If they see something they like
 - 8) Aimlessly walking
 - 9) Feeling overwhelmed or anxious



What We Can Do to Keep Everyone Safe

- Prioritize Safety: Is your child attracted to water, to the street, to the woods?
For older children, what friends would they run to? Park? Store?
- The child needs.....
 - ❑ To learn to swim
 - ❑ To respond to “stop,” “go” and “no” (safety language)
 - ❑ To respond to their name
 - ❑ To recognize personal space and boundaries
 - ❑ To learn any other skills that promote safety and minimize danger- for older students- this means Internet Safety

What We Can Do to Keep Everyone Safe

- Address wandering with your child
- Let the school/teacher know if your child wanders, bolts or elopes
- Project Lifesaver (Monmouth County Program)
- Special Needs Registry (Monmouth County Program)
- Meet the police officer and first responders in your community

What We Can Do to Keep Everyone Safe

- Print out a Google Map of your neighborhood- note the areas that your child might frequent- parks, water, store
- Teach the child how to ask for help- “Helpful/Good strangers”
- Teach how to call 911- how to say your name, address and phone number clearly.

What to Do if you are lost in a Store?

- State your name clearly
- Know your phone numbers, address and parents name
- Role play situations
- Never leave the store
- Ask a store employee for help

At Home

- Set up an emergency response plan
- Immediately call 911
- Keep a current photo of your child available
- ID bracelet (put full name on tags and place on backpack)
- Let teachers know if wandering is an issue at home
- Meet your neighbors

At Home

- Teach and reteach (and reteach).....
 - 1) The command to “Stop”
 - 2) Practice responding to their name
 - 3) Teach child how to swim
 - 4) Teach child street safety
 - 5) Review “good stranger”, who they can ask for help
 - 6) GPS tracking device (cell phones)

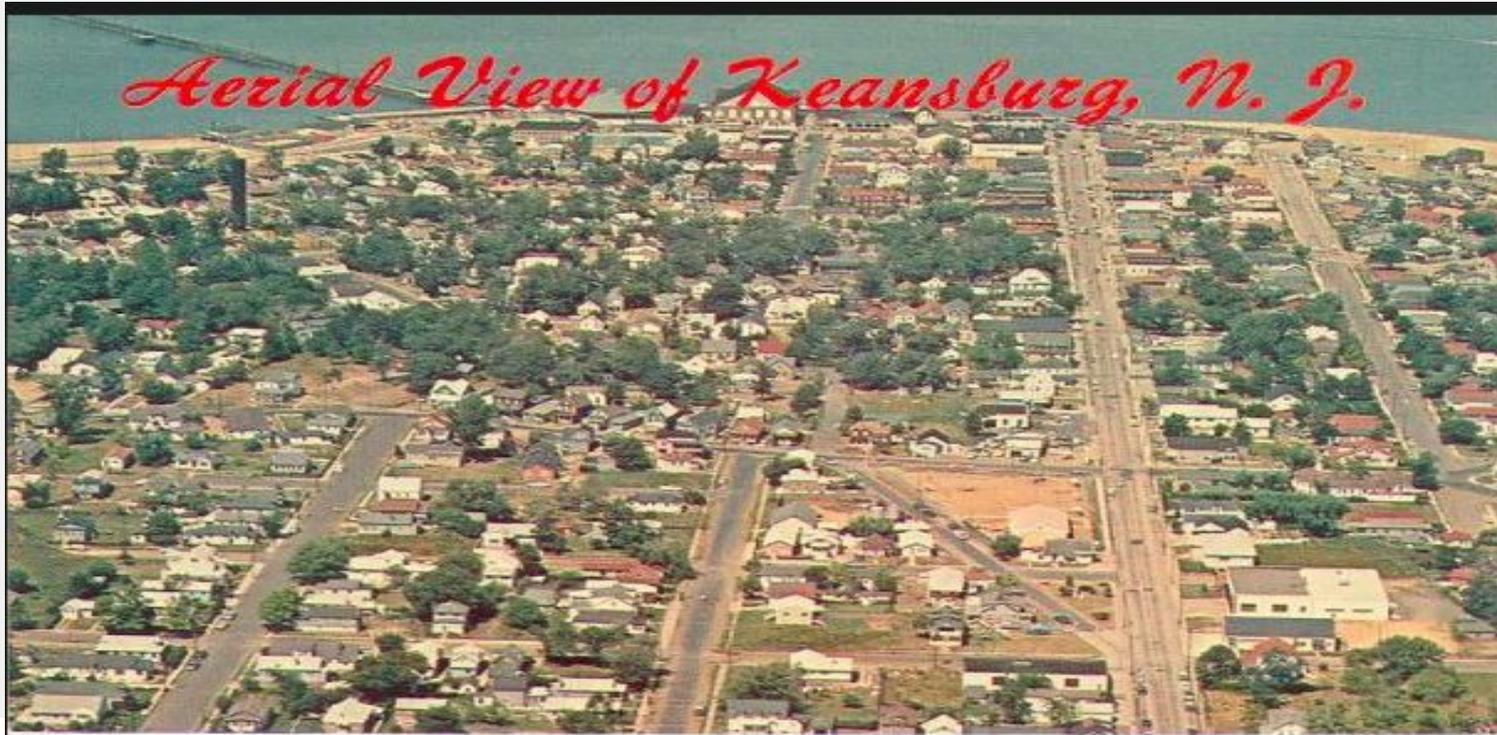
Safety Proof Your House

- Place locks on doors higher than child can reach
- Place alarms on doors
- Make sure hazardous material are out of reach
- Indoor gates
- Gates on the perimeter of your property
- Video Monitors (Blink, Ring)

Safety for Teens

- Online Monitoring/Issues- Social Media- Tick Tock, Facebook
- Cyberbullying
- Understanding Text/Chat/Online messages
- Victim of a Scam
- Developing Friendships online or through gaming apps
- Friendships- pursued

Google Map View of Keansburg



Resources

<https://www.mcsnrnj.org>

<https://www.mcsonj.org/community-outreach/project-lifesaver/>

<https://www.poac.net>

<https://www.autismspeaks.org>

Titan Friends of Diverse Learners (KSEPAG)

Connect with us:

Email address:

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Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2849601131978801/?ref=share>

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