

National Autism Safety Council Launches to Address Preventable Injury, Trauma & Early Mortality in the Autism Community

New national nonprofit focuses on education, training, research, healthcare, and public safety systems to improve safety and well-being across the lifespan

CARY, NC, UNITED STATES, March 3, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Autism Safety Council (NASC) today announced its official launch, introducing a national initiative dedicated to preventing injury, trauma, victimization, and premature death among individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).



NASC was created to strengthen coordination across autism safety efforts by aligning families, professionals, and systems around practical, prevention-focused solutions. It brings together nationally recognized advocates, clinicians, researchers, and subject matter experts who have been advancing autism safety efforts for decades. The organization's board and advisors include leaders from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, The Arc, Pathfinders for Autism, The Autism Project, Johns Hopkins, the University of Missouri, and East Tennessee Children's Hospital, alongside self-advocates, state advocates, community partners, and families with lived experience, including those who have lost a loved one. Together, they are working to improve safety outcomes for autistic individuals across the lifespan while supporting siblings, caregivers, and the professionals who serve them.

Autistic individuals face disproportionate risks related to multiple safety issues, including wandering and elopement, drowning, suicidality, unsafe community and police interactions, bullying, pica, mental health crises, trauma, and victimization. NASC was established to address these challenges through evidence-informed education, training, public awareness, and research.

"Too many families live with the daily fear that their loved one may be injured, victimized, or lost simply because the right safety supports are not widely available," said Joe Heaps, the Council's

Chairman. “NASC exists to change that reality. Our goal is simple but urgent: prevent harm, save lives, and build safer communities for autistic individuals everywhere.”

NASC advances five core strategies to create meaningful and measurable safety improvements nationwide and beyond:

1. **Public Awareness and Education:** Lead national education campaigns that reduce stigma, strengthen safety understanding, and promote trauma-informed approaches across communities.
2. **Cross-Sector Training Programs:** Develop and scale practical training for public safety agencies, 911 dispatch, EMS, schools, and healthcare systems through online learning, live workshops, and train-the-trainer models.
3. **Research-to-Practice Integration:** Translate autism safety research into accessible briefs, toolkits, and applied guidance, while partnering with universities to pilot and evaluate real-world interventions.
4. **National Safety Standards and Tools:** Develop and distribute evidence-informed safety standards and toolkits for schools, public safety agencies, healthcare systems, housing providers, property managers, and families, including emergency protocols and technology-integrated resources.
5. **International Collaboration and Resource Development:** Share evidence-based materials globally while adapting resources to meet unique cultural and geographic needs.

“Safety is a shared responsibility,” said Fred Miller, longtime public safety expert and NASC Founding Board Member. “By training professionals and increasing public awareness, NASC is helping communities better understand autism and respond more effectively in critical moments.”

NASC’s work serves autistic individuals of all ages and the people who support them, including families, educators, healthcare providers, public safety professionals, and community stakeholders across the United States.

The organization’s mission extends beyond crisis prevention to include mental health, trauma prevention, and long-term well-being for autistic individuals and their families.

“Autism safety is not just about emergencies,” said NASC Founding Board Member Dr. Suzanne Rybczynski. “It’s about creating communities and environments where autistic individuals can live, learn, and thrive safely. NASC is bringing long-overdue national attention to risks that families have been navigating alone for far too long.”

All NASC resources are developed in collaboration with interdisciplinary experts and individuals with lived experience and are made freely accessible to the public.

About the National Autism Safety Council

The National Autism Safety Council (NASC) conducts national education, training, research, and

public awareness activities focused on preventing injury, trauma, victimization, and premature death among individuals with autism spectrum disorder. NASC serves autistic individuals across the lifespan along with families, caregivers, educators, healthcare providers, public safety professionals, and community stakeholders nationwide.

To learn more, visit: autismsafetycouncil.org.

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