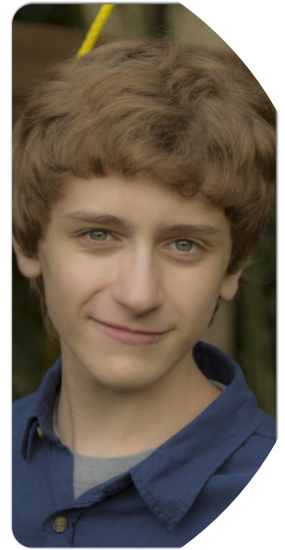


AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

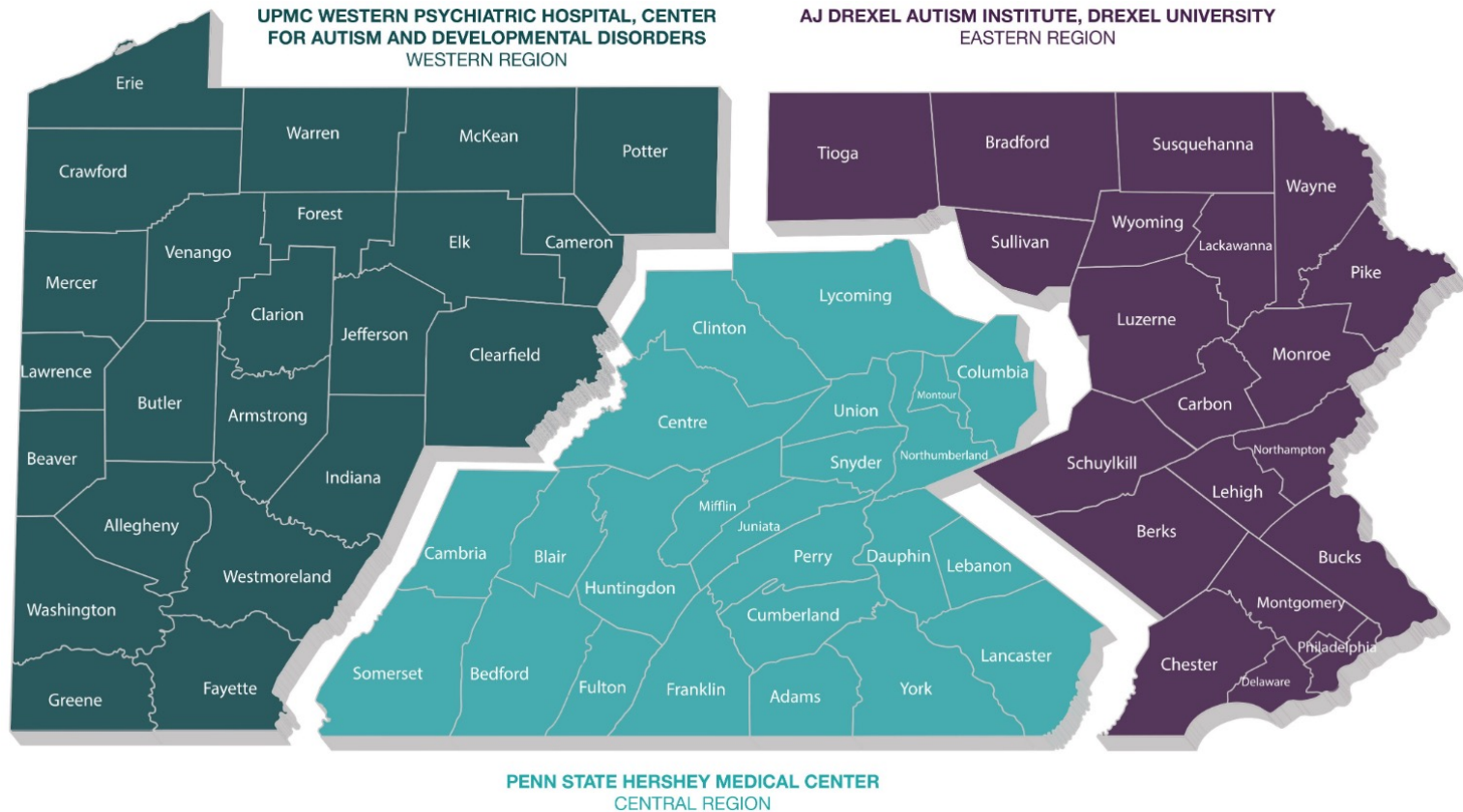
Presented by:
Kate Hooven, MS,
Justice Project Coordinator
ASERT Collaborative

ASERT PA *autism.org*



What is ASERT?

Autism Services, Education, Resources and Training



Role and Purpose of ASERT



Bring together local, regional, and statewide resources



Support (not replace) existing community efforts and activities



Develop innovative projects based on data, community need, and commonwealth priorities

Characteristics

- Autism has **no physical characteristics**
- Autism is a **complex, spectrum** disorder



SOCIAL-COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES/DIFFERENCES

Difficulty making friends

Difficulty expressing emotions

Challenges Starting or Maintaining Conversation

Scripting

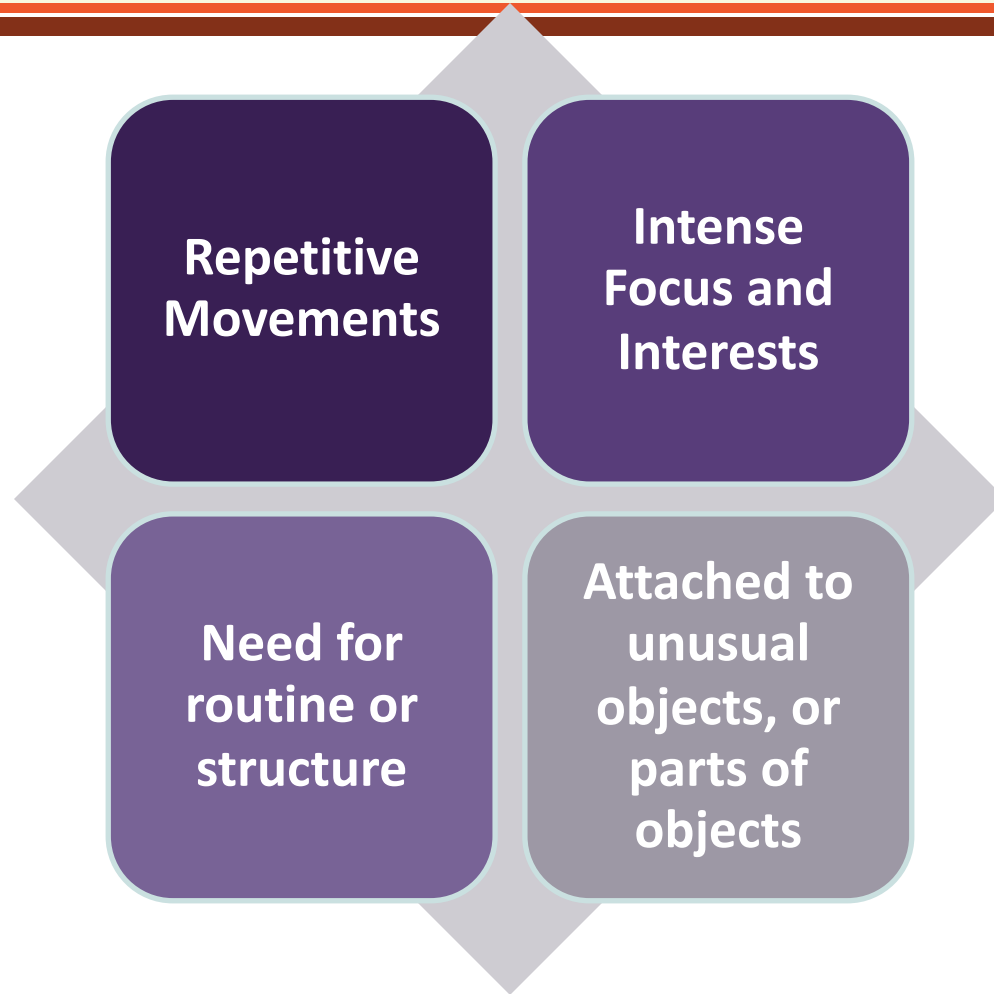
Echolalia

Language delays



Difficulty making eye contact

RESTRICTED OR REPETITIVE BEHAVIOR



SENSORY SENSITIVITIES & SUPPORTS

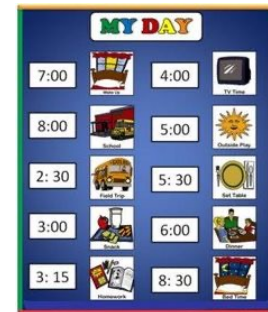
Sensory Sensitivities

- Temperature
- Lighting
- Noise levels
- Physical boundaries
- Scents or odors
- High tolerance for pain



Tools & Supports

- Visual schedules
- First- then boards
- Sensory objects or fidget toys
- Avoid quick movements and loud noises
- Do not touch, unless absolutely necessary



SIGNS OF POSSIBLE OVERSTIMULATION

Flapping

Pacing

Rocking

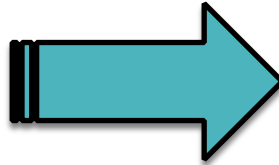
Scripting

Loud
Verbalizations

OVERSTIMULATION CAN LEAD TO...

- Tantrums/Meltdowns (e.g. yelling, flapping)
- Eloping (running away)
- Self Injurious Behavior (biting self, hitting head)
- Aggression

SAFETY IS THE GOAL



A better understanding will help prepare you for interacting with individuals with autism to better support them and their families.

TIPS & TRICKS



Use visual schedules

Have a quiet room/space

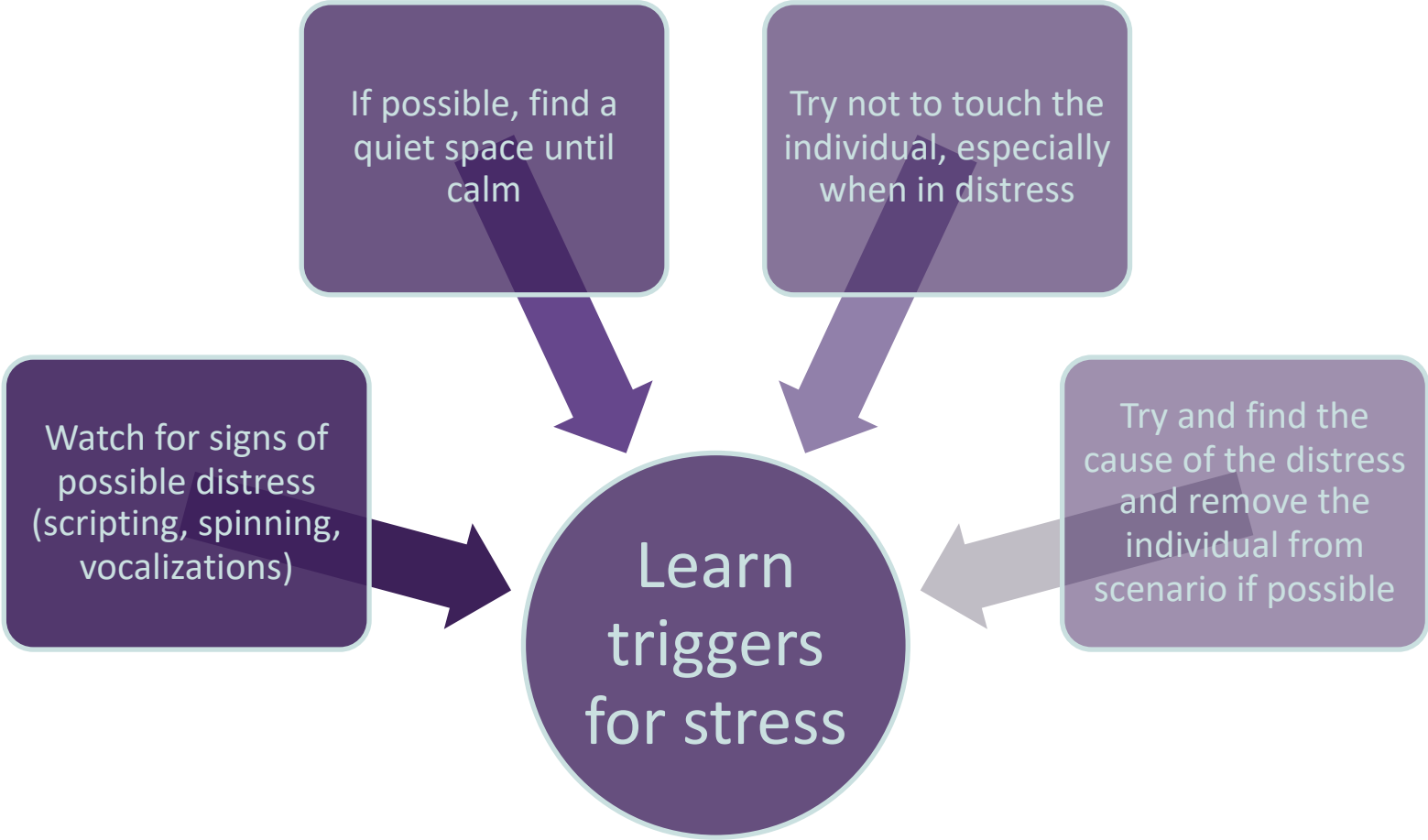
Use a motivational system

Have communication strategy in place

Be mindful of triggers and escalating behaviors

Give alternative, replacement activities

STRATEGIES FOR MONITORING BEHAVIOR



Understanding Autism in Interviewing

Do not dismiss non-verbal individuals

Do they use a communication device

Presume competence

Include someone who is familiar with them in interview

Interviewing Continued

Determine how the individual communicates
(verbal/gestures/device)

Use the individual's words (especially if they use a communication device)

Build trust and rapport/caring attitude

Use visuals

Take breaks

Timing of the interview is important

Ensure the physical space is conducive to sensory needs

Avoid Infantilization

Use same interviewer every time

Wandering

Types

- Goal-Directed Wandering
- Other
- Fleeing/Bolting

Strategies

- Alert local law enforcement/EMS about individual's wandering
- Alert neighbors and local businesses
- Enroll child/adult in swim lessons
- Explore areas of fascination in a safe, supervised way
- Create visuals such as stop signs by all doors

PLAN

PLAN Prepare, Learn, Advise, and Notify

When confronted with an emergency situation, an individual with autism can become overwhelmed and frightened which may cause them to react to the situation in a way others cannot understand. ASERT has come up with a PLAN that will help the autistic individuals, their family and emergency responders stay safe in an emergency if they Prepare, Learn, Advise and Notify. Visit paautism.org/PLAN for more details.

P



- Develop a PLAN in case of an emergency.
- Make sure the individual with autism has some type of identification on them at all times.
- Create a document of information as noted below regarding your child and place it in your home where it will be easily found by emergency service personnel.
- Practice various emergency situations with the individual with autism to help them be prepared in case of an emergency.
- Practice various scripts an individual with autism may use in certain emergency situations.

L



- Find out where your local emergency service personnel are located.
- Learn what you need to do to ensure all local emergency service personnel know there is an autistic individual residing in your home.
- Inquire about which hospital your child or adult with autism would go in case of an emergency in your home and take your child there so they are familiar with the location and understand the people are trying to help them.
- Learn the proper language used by emergency personnel and familiarize your child with this language.

A



- Advise your child to not put their hands in their pockets.
- Advise emergency service personnel if the individual with autism is verbal and/or will respond to his or her name being called.
- Advise emergency service personnel of any aversions or anxieties they may have, such as strangers, bugs, dogs, etc.
- Advise emergency service personnel of any sensory sensitivities they may have such as loud noises, smells, being touched, etc.
- Advise emergency service personnel of any interests or special objects the individual with autism may have that could help them relate and/or motivate them.
- Advise if there are repetitive behaviors the individual may resort to in times of stress or as a way to calm themselves.
- Advise if there are any particular methods that help calm the individual when stressed or overwhelmed.

N



- Notify police and all emergency personnel that you have an individual with autism living at your residence and include the address along with any other home addresses they frequent with regularly.
- Notify neighbors, family, and friends of your PLAN in case you are not present in an emergency.
- Notify emergency service personnel if your child has a favorite hiding place or spot they go when they are nervous or overwhelmed.
- Notify emergency service personnel about any communication devices that may be necessary such as iPads, PECS, etc.
- Notify emergency service personnel if the individual with autism has any type of tracking device.
- Notify emergency service personnel and neighbors if wandering/elopement is a concern.
- Make sure that a trusted individual with the best of all their abilities throughout the entire emergency.

paautism.org/PLAN

Prepare

Learn

Advise

Notify

JUSTICE RESOURCE COLLECTION

Are you looking for resources about autism and justice system?

Justice Resource Collection 



pautism.org/justice

- ASERT Justice Trainings
- Social Stories
- Other Resources

Social Stories: The Law

The Law, Part 1: What is the Law

Laws are rules I have to follow.



Many of these laws are in place to keep me safe.



Police Officers make sure I follow the laws and keep me safe



Sometimes laws are not followed on purpose.



Sometimes laws are not followed by mistake.



This is called breaking the law.



ASERT PA autism.org
bringing autism resources together.

Pennsylvania's leading source of autism-related resources and information.
877-231-4244

The Autism Services, Education, Resources and Training Collaborative (ASERT) is a statewide initiative funded by the Bureau of Autism Services, PA Department of Human Services.

ASERT Social Stories

How to make your own social story

Other Social Stories

Social Stories for Adults

SUPPORT GROUP MAP

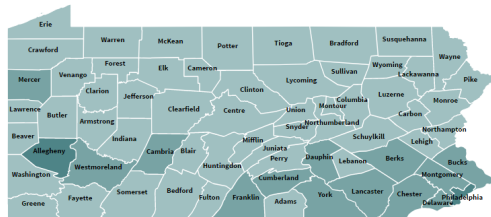
Are you looking for support groups for siblings, participants and families or self-advocacy groups ?

Support Groups

Like 20 Tweet 166 Post 4 Email 0 Share 1

Support and self-advocacy groups are one way for individuals and families to stay connected to each other, and ASERT is pleased to provide information to help you locate an active group in your region. There are many different types of groups for individuals, parents, and siblings currently operating in Pennsylvania. Use the map/dropdown below to find the in-person and online groups, organized by county.

Click county below to view the county support groups **OR** Select county **Select county**



Legend
0-9 10-15 16-25 26-35

paautism.org/supportgroups

Clickable map by county

Online groups

In-person groups



Key Signs of Autism: A Guide for Justice System Professionals

-  Lack of Eye Contact
-  May Appear Stubborn/Resistant
-  Flapping, Flicking, Spinning
-  Scripting Words, Phrases, Noises
-  Sensitive to Touch
-  Processing Delays

Have a question about autism?
Contact the ASERT Resource
Center at 877-231-4244.





Website: www.PAautism.org
Email: info@PAautism.org

ASERT is funded by the Bureau
of Autism Services, PA
Department of Human
Services



Website: www.phillyautismproject.org
Email: phillyap@Drexel.edu

The Philadelphia Autism Project is
conducted in partnership with the
Department of Behavioral Health
and Intellectual disAbility Services
(DBHIDS).

