Accessible Customer Service for Emergency Responders
An Emergency Management Ontario E-Learning Utility

Autism Video Transcript

Bruce McIntosh, Father & Autism Advocate: Well, Cliff has autism, he was diagnosed shortly before his 3rd birthday. Fortunately, he is verbal, he speaks, he's overcome a lot of those challenges. But still has some trouble behaviourally and with the social skills. Those are sort of the three parts of autism. Right now he's having a great deal of trouble with aggression. He has a limited range of responses to what he feels are challenging situations. We were very, very worried and my wife phoned the police as a preventative measure. And so when the police officer opened the door, and he'd been told by my wife that Cliff has autism. When he opened the door to the car, Cliff promptly swung sideways in the seat that he was in and proceeded to put both feet straight into the policeman's chest. And I was aghast, you don't do that. Well the policeman was remarkable, he just closed the door of the car and with a remarkable sense of humour, said "so much for that plan," and we had a discussion about what to do next.

Liz Cohen, Mother & Autism Advocate: Some of the challenges that Joey faces every day, are around communication primarily. Of course every parent's nightmare if he was being abused in some way. We have to watch very carefully with Joey because he wouldn't be able tell us if something were happening. And another thing to know that's pretty important is a lot of them have sensory dysfunction, sensory challenges, they might, for example, not like the feeling of clothing, or the labels in their clothing, so they might take their clothing off and walk around outside in the winter. People with autism don't feel pain the way that you or I might feel pain, so you see injuries often with someone with autism. A third of people with autism have seizure disorders, (humming) if you have a seizure you might fall down and get bruises. Things like that happen. And some of them sing really well.