

## ***How do I cope with a crisis and who do I go to for help?***

Individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) can have medical, neurological, behavioural, and mental health issues that may result in difficult or even crisis situations. Despite our desire to keep things calm – sometimes things can get out of control. It's important to be aware and alert to the early warning signs that things might be getting out of hand or that an individual is unable to stay in control or is at risk of hurting themselves or others. The following steps can be taken to create a general safety plan:

- **Prevention.** Make a list of the people, places, and things that cause certain behaviours that can lead to a crisis situation. Also write down and be aware of any warning signs that the individual is becoming distressed. Think about all of the places in which your child needs to be protected. This probably includes home, school, friends' homes, community centers, etc. Then, be sure to evaluate them for safety and to put preventative measures into place in each area. These safety measures/plans can be included in the individual's formal documents: for example, an Individual Program Plan (IPP) or Individual Service Agreement (ISA).
- **Give your child a form of identification** (wallet card or bracelet) with contact names and numbers listed. Make sure your child always wears or carries this identification, especially if wandering could be a concern. Or, purchase a child locator and clip it to your child's shoe, belt, etc.
- **Coping Strategies.** Make a list of calming strategies that help your child to cope. Consult with your team of professionals on strategies to manage problematic behaviours, thoughts, and moods.
- **Circle of Support.** Make a list of friends and family members to contact. Include family and community members who come into daily contact with the individual. Keep in mind school personnel, care providers, neighbors, extended family, etc. Make sure you have contacted each person and discussed your most pressing concerns about the individual's safety.
- **Contact Help.** Create a list of professionals and agencies to contact if you need to discuss concerns or if you need to put a safety plan into action.

## RESOURCES

The Resource Centre (a Sinneave Family Foundation initiative) does not endorse or guarantee the exhaustive, complete, accurate or up-to-date nature of information provided and does not assume any risk for the outcome of information or referrals provided.

### **The Ability Hub**

Contact a resource ambassador at The Ability Hub for a free Emergency Identification Card. This can be used for quick identification of medical and support needs of an individual with ASD.

	<b>Emergency Alert ID</b> Calgary Police Service Diversity Unit	
	<b>Name: Koala Bear</b> Individual with: ASD DOB: January 1, 1998	
Address: 24 Eucalyptus Lane		Phone: 403-555-1010
Emergency Contact: Fuzzy Bear (Father)		cell: 403-555-0101
Other Contact: Soft Bear (Mother)		cell: 403-555-0011
Agency Contact: The Ability Hub		Phone: 403-210-5000

**Phone:** 403.210.5000  
**Address:** 300, 3820 – 24th Avenue NW, Calgary, AB T3B 2X9  
**Email:** [ambassador@theabilityhub.org](mailto:ambassador@theabilityhub.org)  
**Website:** [theabilityhub.org](http://theabilityhub.org)

### **Children's Cottage Society**

A variety of programs to prevent abuse and neglect: support services, respite programs, crisis nurseries, and parent education. They provide crisis respite for parents of children up to age 12.

**Phone:** 403.283.4200 or 403.233.2273 (24/7 Crisis Line)  
**Address:** 204, 2120 Kensington Road NW, Calgary, AB T2N 3R7  
**Email:** [admin@childrenscottage.ab.ca](mailto:admin@childrenscottage.ab.ca)  
**Website:** [childrenscottage.ab.ca](http://childrenscottage.ab.ca)

### **Kids Help Phone**

Free, anonymous and confidential counselling service available 24/7 for youth 20 years and under. Both online and phone services available.

**Phone:** 1.800.668.6868  
**Website:** [kidshelpphone.ca](http://kidshelpphone.ca)

### **Alberta Health Services – Mobile Response Team**

A multi-disciplinary team which offers crisis intervention, prevention, urgent psychiatric assessments, trauma response and mental health education within Calgary. The mobile response team is accessed through the Distress Centre.

**Phone:** Distress Centre: 403.266.4357 (Help), Professional Referral Line 403.297.2940  
**Email:** [mobileresponse.team@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:mobileresponse.team@albertahealthservices.ca)  
**Address:** Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre, 1213 - 4 Street SW, Calgary, AB T2R 0X7  
**Website:** [albertahealthservices.ca/info/service.aspx?id=432](http://albertahealthservices.ca/info/service.aspx?id=432)

### **Calgary Distress Center**

Provides crisis support, professional counselling, and referrals to social services at no cost.

**Phone:** 403.266.HELP (4357)  
**Address:** 300, 1010 - 8th Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T2P 1J2  
**Email:** [help@distresscentre.com](mailto:help@distresscentre.com)  
**Website:** [distresscentre.com](http://distresscentre.com)

### **Canada Mental Health Association (CMHA)**

Offers mental health interventions, education, and support for caregivers. Fees based on a sliding scale, and no one is refused due to financial reasons. They also have an 8 week Capable Carers (Psycho-Educational) Group for family & friends of adults with a mental illness.

**Phone:** 403.297.1700  
**Address:** 400, 105 – 12th Avenue SE, Calgary, AB T2G 1A1  
**Email:** [info@cmha.calgary.ab.ca](mailto:info@cmha.calgary.ab.ca)  
**Website:** [cmha.calgary.ab.ca](http://cmha.calgary.ab.ca)

## Dial 211

211 is a telephone service run by the United Way, Distress Centre Calgary, The City of Calgary and Inform Alberta, that helps connect individuals to a variety of social services and programs. This referral services connects you to resources for finding food, finding work, paying bills, and accessing education, health care, child care services, legal supports and more. This service is free, confidential, and operates 24/7.

**Phone:** 2-1-1

**Website:** [211alberta.ca](http://211alberta.ca)

## PACT Police and Crisis Team

Joint initiative Alberta Health Services (AHS) and Calgary Police Service (CPS); pairs a CPS officer with an AHS clinician (social worker, registered psychiatric nurse or registered nurse) to provide crisis intervention, urgent psychiatric assessments and professional consultations.

**Website:** [albertahealthservices.ca/info/service.aspx?id=1050105](http://albertahealthservices.ca/info/service.aspx?id=1050105)

## Calgary Police Service

Vulnerable people and those who care for them can register with the Calgary Police Service Vulnerable Person Self-Registry. Register online at [www.calgarypolice.ca](http://www.calgarypolice.ca) and enter the key word, Self-Registry, in the search function.

**Phone:** 403.266.1234 (Non-Emergency Line)

**Address:** 5111 – 47th Street NE, Calgary, AB T3J 3R2

**Email:** [cps@calgarypolice.ca](mailto:cps@calgarypolice.ca)

**Website:** [calgarypolice.ca](http://calgarypolice.ca)

## Suicide Prevention

Call the suicide prevention number if you, or someone you care about, is feeling hopeless or thinking about suicide.

**Phone:** 1.800.784.2433

## Living Works

Provide a number of suicide prevention courses for participants 15 years and older. The workshops are open to anyone with an interest in suicide prevention.

**Phone:** 403.209.0242

**Toll Free:** 1.888.733.5484 (in NA)

**Address:** 119, 807 - 42 Avenue SE, Calgary, AB T2G 1Y8

**Email:** [info@livingworks.net](mailto:info@livingworks.net)

**Website:** [livingworks.net](http://livingworks.net)

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