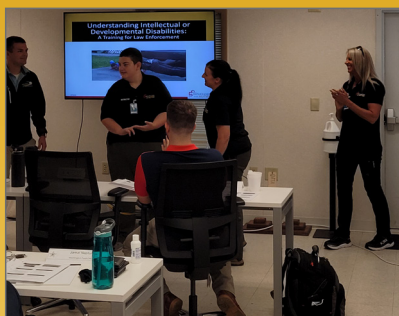




# First Responder Training Program

Understanding Autism and Other Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

In Maryland, 1 out of every 43 children is diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and 1 out of 6 are diagnosed with some type of developmental disability. It's not a question of IF you're going to have interactions with individuals with disabilities – it's really WHEN, and HOW FREQUENTLY.



## We have different curricula specific for each audience:

- Patrol Officers
- Corrections Officers
- Fire/EMS
- Investigators/Detectives
- Interrogators
- Hostage Negotiators
- Special Operations
- Child Advocacy Centers
- SROs
- Parole & Probation Officers
- Dispatchers
- State's Attorneys/Public Defenders

## Training Objectives

- Recognize characteristics of unusual behavior to determine if someone has ASD/IDD and discuss behaviors that can easily be misinterpreted as threatening or aggressive
- Learn strategies for communication/language processing and de-escalation
- Understand the impact of sensory issues
- Identify wandering and elopement risks and learn search strategies
- Review reasonable accommodations

## Our Training Team

Our lead team includes certified police training instructors who are also parents to individuals with developmental disabilities. Our team is also comprised of instructors who have ASD/IDD themselves as their perspective and experiences are a critical element to the class.

## Our Curriculum

You can't arrive on a scene and make a diagnosis, and we will never expect you to. So, our curriculum focuses on functional ability (rather than specific diagnosis) that incorporates the most prominent developmental disabilities law enforcement and first responders may encounter.



We present different cases such as an elopement case, domestic disturbance, driving incident, misinterpreted behaviors, and crime victim. We also include experiential exercises to simulate characteristics such as language processing disorder and sensory overload.

*"I received nothing but positive comments from our personnel regarding your training both on the substance of the material and on the way it was presented. The attendees enjoyed that **it was interactive, informative, and kept their attention.** They felt the information was very relevant and beneficial to them as it was **specifically tailored to help them in their jobs as law enforcement** and not presented as a broad, generic presentation with general information. The attendees **now feel more confident responding to and handling calls for service that involve people with ASD/IDD.**"* - Sgt. Brian Woodward, Training Services Supervisor, Frederick Co. Sheriff's Office





# Safety Training Program

Understanding Autism and Other Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

**P**FAs offers an array of industry trainings, community-based workshops and initiatives to promote safety practices and safer interactions between professionals, caregivers and individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or other Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (IDD). Each curriculum is designed to address the specific information most critical to a particular job and audience.

## Trainings for Professionals

**Our professional trainings cover the characteristics of ASD/IDD as they relate to communication strategies, sensory issues, social interaction and behavior; de-escalation techniques; reasonable accommodations; and other job-specific relevant information.**

- Law Enforcement
- Corrections
- Fire/EMS
- Child Protective Services (CPS) / Adult Protective Services (APS)
- States Attorney / Public Defenders / Attorneys General
- Judges
- Court Clerks
- State Treasury Agents
- Search and Rescue Dog Handlers
- Dispatchers
- Child Advocacy Centers
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

We also have a team of self-advocate co-instructors that are available to supplement any training given by department staff.

## Trainings for Self-Advocates

### • Community Safety

This training brings local police together with teens and adults with ASD/IDD. The training provides opportunities for law enforcement and self-advocates to engage in activities that promote positive interactions as well as discuss basic community safety. We can offer this training in a variety of settings using various methods, including *Be Safe* and our Driver Safety Program: What to Do During a Traffic Stop.

## Trainings for Caregivers

### • When They Wander or Run Away

This workshop addresses reasons why individuals might elope and offers safety preventive measures caregivers can put into place. Some parents believe that technology is their only solution, but we explain why parents need to address multiple aspects of elopement. We share our Safety Kits and explain how each tool can benefit families. If their child goes missing, we detail what information will be most beneficial to the responding police.



### • Promoting Positive Interactions with Law Enforcement

At Pathfinders for Autism, we have been training law enforcement on how to best interact with individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities since 2012. As a part of PFA's continuing commitment to promoting positive relationships between those with disabilities and the law enforcement community, we feel there is a need for a holistic approach to this critical conversation. We assemble a panel of law enforcement officers and self-advocates to discuss tips to help ensure everyone's safety.

**To view PFA's Safety Resources, please visit [pathfindersforautism.org/resources/safety/](http://pathfindersforautism.org/resources/safety/)**