



“What To Do During a Traffic Stop” Mock Traffic Stop Program

According to a recent study by the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia’s Center for Injury Research and Prevention, 1 in 3 teens with autism has their driver’s license. Assuming they remain licensed drivers well into adulthood, 30% of individuals with autism are driving. It is a typical reaction for anyone to feel anxiety when they see that police car light up behind them. Drivers begin to wonder, “Am I in trouble?” “What did I do wrong?” It can make slowing down one’s brain difficult in that moment and think about what they need to do. And for individuals with developmental disabilities, it can be even more difficult to manage stress and subsequent reactions.

PFA’s mock traffic stop program teaches individuals the steps to take to have a safe interaction during a traffic stop. This program is fully inclusive and is open for **all drivers and passengers of all ages** with or without developmental disabilities.

Registrants are highly encouraged to view our webinar that details the steps outlined in our “PFA Tips: What to Do During a Traffic Stop” (<https://pathfindersforautism.org/traffic-stop-resources/>). During the mock traffic stop event, each participant will have the opportunity to be in their cars, and while driving/riding in the parking lot, practice being pulled over by a police officer, in a marked car, with lights and sirens. The officer will be able to provide real-time critiques, tips and suggestions. Each participant will be given a Traffic Stop Kit consisting of:

- A printed copy of “PFA Tips: What to Do During a Traffic Stop”
- An envelope to hold the person’s registration card, insurance card, disability disclosure card (if applicable), and a copy of the PFA Tips article
- A laminated card and visor clip to attach to the driver’s side visor with the top five instructions of what the driver needs to remember to do during the traffic stop
- Disability disclosure cards (if applicable)

In addition to learning the basic steps of a traffic stop, this is also a rapport building opportunity for both the officers and participants as they interact in a friendly, non-crisis environment. PFA has been teaching law enforcement agencies throughout Maryland since 2012. While our training team includes instructors with developmental disabilities, it is important for officers to have ongoing interactions with many individuals as each person is unique. Many individuals with and without developmental disabilities have openly expressed they are afraid of police. Events such as our mock traffic stops afford them opportunities to talk with officers which can help lower their anxieties when in the presence of law enforcement during other times or circumstances. A goal is to have the individuals who initially may have feared police, now see them as people they can contact when they need help or feel unsafe.



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MOCK TRAFFIC STOPS





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What To Do During a Traffic Stop *In the News*

Story Links

Before the Badge: PG Police Recruits Learn Traffic Stop Safety From the Community

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtCJGQdtICI>

Taking the trauma out of traffic stops

<https://www.wmar2news.com/local/taking-the-trauma-out-of-traffic-stops>

People with disabilities practice traffic stops with Frederick deputies, nonprofit

https://www.fredericknewspost.com/news/crime_and_justice/people-with-disabilities-practice-traffic-stops-with-frederick-deputies-nonprofit/article_a81b83d8-1324-5d21-94ce-e3a5b578aceb.html

Frederick County Deputies host traffic stop practice for those with disabilities

<https://www.dcnnewsnow.com/news/local-news/maryland/frederick-county-deputies-host-traffic-stop-practice-for-those-with-disabilities/>

Trauma out of traffic stops: Developmentally disabled learn how to react to police

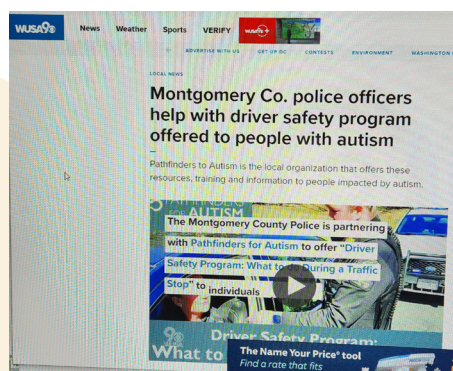
<https://www.wmar2news.com/news/local-news/taking-the-trauma-out-of-traffic-stops>

A mock stop

https://www.somdnews.com/independent/news/local/a-mock-stop/image_c182a178-413b-5d0f-a749-9807b91f842d.html

La Plata Police Department Unveils New Autism Awareness Vehicle in Partnership with Pathfinders for Autisms

<https://smnewsnet.com/archives/502116/la-plata-police-department-unveils-new-autism-awareness-vehicle-in-partnership-with-pathfinders-for-autisms/>





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Montgomery County Police Offering Driving Safety Program for Drivers with Autism/IDD

<https://mocoshow.com/blog/montgomery-county-police-offering-driving-safety-program-for-drivers-with-autism-idd/>

MoCo Police ASD IDD Traffic Stop Training

<https://mocoshow.com/blog/montgomery-county-police-offering-driving-safety-program-for-drivers-with-autism-idd/>

MCPD teaches autism community to be safe drivers

<https://www.fox5dc.com/video/1137795>

