SAFETY CONCERNS

WANDERING/ELOPMENT

- 48% of children with an ASD attempt to elope from a safe environment, a rate nearly four times higher than their unaffected siblings.
- More than one third of ASD children who wander/elope are never or rarely able to communicate their name, address, or phone number.

RESTRRAIN & SECLUSION

- Currently there is no federal law that prohibits the use of restraints that restrict breathing, and locked seclusion, in public and private schools.
- A 2009 Government Accountability Office (GAO) investigation reported that thousands of students with disabilities have been physically injured and emotionally traumatized as a result of restraint and seclusion.

Some of the Dangers of Restraint & Seclusion Include:

- Increased aggression
- Bodily Injury
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Increased Phobias
- Sleeping Problems
- Depression/Withdrawal
- Decreased Appetite & Malnutrition
- Anxiety
- Humiliation
- Loss of Dignity

BULLYING

- 63% of children with ASD, ages 6 to 15, have been bullied at some point in their lives.
- 47% of parents reported that their children with ASD had been hit by peers or siblings.
- 50% of parents reported that their children with ASD were scared by their peers.
- 7 STEPS TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST BULLYING

1. Start the Conversation
   - Help your child understand the difference between appropriate and inappropriate treatment from classmates; and encourage them to share their feelings.

2. Develop a Plan
   - Bullying can affect a child’s learning environment. Your child’s IEP can be a helpful tool in combating bullying. Identify prevention and intervention strategies.

3. Teach Tolerance
   - Teach students about the effects bullying has on others and encourage them to celebrate differences.

4. Increase Awareness and Acceptance
   - Increase awareness and acceptance through education. Some parents find that if classmates understand a child’s disability, they may become allies or be more accepting.

5. Encourage Self-Advocacy
   - Teach your child to advocate for themselves to the best of their abilities. Teaching self-advocacy can be included in your child’s IEP.

6. Learn Your Rights
   - Most states have laws concerning bullying, and some have specific laws regarding bullying of children with special needs. Knowing them can be useful in the event of a bullying incident.

7. Speak Up
   - Whether a child is being bullied, or is the one doing the bullying, if you see or know something, say something.

SOURCES:
- National Autism Association: Safety Facts
- Autism Speaks: 7 Steps to Take A Stand Against Bullying
- Autism Speaks: Combating Bullying
- PACER