A person with ASD may:

- not be able to understand danger or identify a true emergency
- be unfamiliar with common safety rules and expectations
- have trouble handling disorderly/disruptive situations
- have difficulty understanding questions or instructions
- get confused by figures of speech
- be easily distracted or upset by noises or other sensory input
- not be able to respond quickly or accurately
- repeat words or phrases and/or speak out of context (may seem rude)
- become anxious or withdrawn
- be more interested in physical environment rather than people
- not understand the consequences of actions
- act unexpectedly or compulsively
- not understand, feel, or acknowledge pain
During a 911 call, if you suspect that a person may have ASD:

• use short, simple sentences

• ask straightforward questions to help identify the real danger(s)

• clarify the person’s understanding each time an instruction is given

• don’t speak too forcefully or loudly

• avoid using slang, sarcasm, or complex language

• try to keep the conversation on topic

• pause in between statements to allow sufficient time for the person to formulate a response

• respect the person at all times, no matter how he or she may respond

Get more information about autism and safety at www.childrens-specialized.org