



# It Takes Two

## Wandering What You Need to Know



### Who is at Risk?

Individuals with Autism, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD), and Alzheimer's or related dementias.



### What is Wandering?

- Leaving a safe area or caregiver.
- Also known as elopement or bolting.



### Where: Common Locations

- Near water (pools, ponds, lakes).
- Near traffic, in wooded areas, or familiar places like schools or parks.



### When Does Wandering Happen?

Wandering can occur at any age and can happen within seconds, often during transitions or chaotic situations.



### Why Does Wandering Occur?

- **Communication Barriers:** Difficulty expressing needs, feelings, or ideas
- **Sensory Seeking:** Drawn to calming or stimulating environments (e.g., water)
- **Sensory Avoiding:** Escaping overwhelming or chaotic settings
- **Stress Response:** Fight, flight, or fright reactions may trigger wandering



Autism  
Society



The Arc

For people with intellectual  
and developmental disabilities





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# Create Your Wandering Emergency Plan



**1. Identify/Assess:** Identify potential triggers for wandering and ways to increase safety.



**2. Make a Plan:** Develop a safety plan to use in case of an emergency.



**3. Implement:** Follow the plan as practiced.



**4. Fine Tune/Adjust/Modify:** Continue to monitor the individual for changes and keep information up to date.



## Explore Tools and Resources to Keep Your Loved Ones Safe

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