

Supervision Strategies

Supervision Types

When caring for children or dependents with autism who are known to wander or elope, supervision must match the individual's level of risk. For some, standard supervision may be enough, such as checking in frequently and setting clear boundaries. But for those at heightened risk of running off, heading toward water, or entering unsafe areas, hypervigilant supervision is essential.



Xavier can become overwhelmed by certain sounds and has bolted before. At school and on field trips, a 1:1 aide closely supervises him and stays positioned behind him during transitions and outings for safety.



William was overwhelmed at a party and needed a quiet area. His mom's best friend agreed to closely monitor him on rotation with two other adults.

Supervision Roles & Considerations

Teachers, babysitters, relatives, and other caregivers all play a critical role in supervision. One designated adult should maintain constant visual contact, staying within arm's reach when risk is higher. In daily routines, this may mean a teacher walks behind the group during transitions or a babysitter stays close during outdoor play.

Supervision During Vulnerable Times

Certain times are especially high-risk: parties, gatherings, vacations, outings, school transitions, overnight stays, and new moves. These busy, unfamiliar settings create distractions, and when everyone assumes someone else is watching, no one truly is.

Children or dependents with autism may choose not to join group activities, and that's okay, but one clearly assigned adult must provide direct, vigilant supervision at all times.



While his cousins played frisbee at the park, Josef chose to engage with the slide instead. His aunt supported his preference by allowing him to play on the slide freely and at his own pace.