

## JAMES PROJECT



Research from Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) found that two-thirds of 15 to 18- year-olds who are autistic, but not intellectually disabled, either drive or plan to drive. One-third get licensed by age 21. Some attend post secondary education’ and some work full-time or part-time. Some walk to school. While others may ride public transportation. Autism is not always visible. Thus, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and many other U.S. law enforcement agencies are currently providing autism training and educational materials for their workforces. This training program was developed by Anita Tillman whose son has autism. The “invisibility” of autism added to his risk of unsafe interactions. The James Project was developed with this in mind.

No matter how old our children are, each story heard on the news stirs the same fear in parents: Will my child be taken advantage of while interacting with others? What would happen to my child in a police encounter? A child may have autism or another disability that makes a caregiver worry even more. This is unacceptable

With the James Project, we strive to use research to address the social, educational, and treatment concerns of self-advocates, parents, autism professionals, caregivers, first responders and police. “Applying” research to answer questions of daily concern to those living with autism defines our goals and program objectives. Applied autism research is “practical research that examines issues and challenges those children and adults with autism and their families face every day is unprepared for a police encounter.

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