



ASM Membership	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual/Family Member	\$ 25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$ 25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional	\$ 150.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Agency/Organization	\$ 200.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime	\$ 1,500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Donation	\$
Total:	

### Mission Statement

*The Autism Society of Maine provides education and resources to support the valued lives of individuals on the autism spectrum and their families.*



Autism Safety Trainings

First Responders  
and Criminal Justice  
Professionals

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Information about the individual on the Autism Spectrum

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Male/Female \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Diagnosis \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOU:

Individual on the Autism Spectrum    Parent/Family Member    Professional

Method of Payment

Check

Visa

MasterCard

Purchase Order # \_\_\_\_\_

Membership includes:

- ASM Lending Library
- Scholarships for Conferences
- Access to Annual Family Retreat Weekend and Summer Camp

This program is sponsored by DHHS

**AUTISM SOCIETY OF MAINE**

72 B Main Street  
Winthrop, ME 04364

Phone: 1-800-273-5200  
Fax: 207-377-9434

E-Mail: [asm@asmonline.org](mailto:asm@asmonline.org)  
[www.asmonline.org](http://www.asmonline.org)

Revised 9/22

National Autism Society  
[www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)



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## Autism Society of Maine's "Autism and First Responders" Training Program

**Fact:** Autism Spectrum Disorders affect an estimated **1 in 44 persons**; it is the fastest growing developmental disability (Autism Society of America).

**Fact:** Persons with autism and other developmental disabilities are **7 times** more likely to come into contact with law enforcement authorities (Dennis Debbaudt, 2002) and are more than **10 times** more likely to become a victim of crime. (U.S. Dept. of Justice, Office of Crime Victims)

**Fact:** Among the leading causes of unnatural death for persons with Autism are drowning and positional asphyxia due to being restrained in a prone (facedown) position.

**Fact:** Half of the autism population wanders from a safe environment, and about 90% of wandering deaths involve drowning (71%) or being struck by a motor vehicle (18%)

**Fact:** Persons with Autism often display behaviors that can easily cause a law enforcement officer to misinterpret their conduct or behavior as suspicious, non-compliant, or threatening, such as: lack of eye-to-eye contact, processing delays when being asked questions, invasion of body space, and self-stimulating (stimming) behaviors.

In 2003, recognizing the above noted issues, the Autism Society of Maine embarked on a mission to educate law enforcement, fire/rescue, EMS, and other first responders about Autism Spectrum Disorders. Dennis Debbaudt, a Florida-based law enforcement professional and father of a young man with Autism, has been the trail blazer in this mission. Inspired by his efforts, starting in early 2004, the Autism Society of Maine developed a training program which was approved by the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. Since that time, hundreds of police and correctional officers, state game wardens, firefighters, EMT's, and search and rescue workers, dispatchers, homeland security airport screeners, and other first responders have received the training. Since 2005, every BLETP (Basic Law Enforcement Training Program) class of police cadets has received the training, as well as every officer completing CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) training across the state.

### About the program

The training program typically consists of a 2 hour (or shortened version to suit the individual department needs.) block of instruction, that includes a power point presentation with videos, and often an individual with autism as well, who shares their personal experiences with police encounters.

During the course of the program, participants will learn:

- What Autism is- a history of the disorder, a discussion of how common it is, as well as the common characteristics shared by many on the Autism Spectrum.
- Specific characteristics that can create unsafe situations and challenges for law enforcement and other first responders are discussed in detail, such as: sensory issues (sensitivities to touch, sound and vision), processing delays, insistence on routine and predictability, social and communication challenges and difficulties posed in interviewing scenarios.
- In-depth discussion on the most common crisis situations involving persons with Autism, such as elopement and wandering issues, "suspicious behavior" calls, incidents at schools, and other situations where persons with autism are coming into contact with law enforcement.
- Discussion on preventing, recognizing, and safely responding to meltdowns, as well as arrest techniques and officer safety issues.
- Issues relating to persons with Autism as vulnerable victims.
- Fire safety/EMS issues .
- Ideas on creating community partnerships to improve outcomes, including incorporating voluntary registration programs, where family members can complete forms which provide vital information for first responders in case a crisis occurs. Many local and county agencies are utilizing these forms. The Maine Department of Public Safety has also incorporated a form into their dispatch system, see: [www.maine.gov/dps/bec](http://www.maine.gov/dps/bec)

### About the instructor:

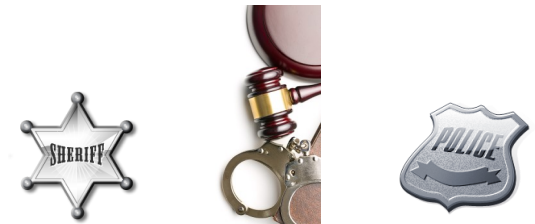
Matt Brown recently retired from a 26-year career as a state and federal law enforcement officer. He has been an Autism Information Specialist with ASM for almost 15 years, and has a young, adult son with autism. Matt has trained over 7,000 first responders from Maine to California, and has provided consultation to law enforcement officials from Canada, Ireland, Scotland and Australia. He has been a subject matter expert and instructor at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy since 2005; has provided support for persons with autism involved in the criminal justice system, and has formed ASET- Autism Safety Education & Training, to partner with the Autism Society of Maine, to provide training on Autism to first responders across the U.S.

The Autism Society of Maine will provide this training free of charge to any interested law enforcement agency. To request a training session for your department, contact the Autism Society of Maine at 1-800-273-5200.

To reach Matt Brown directly about the training program

Email: [mattbrown3805@gmail.com](mailto:mattbrown3805@gmail.com)

If it is an ongoing crisis situation, call crisis 888-568-1112, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.



Visit the Autism Society of Maine Law Enforcement page:

[http://www.asmonline.org/programs\\_law.asp](http://www.asmonline.org/programs_law.asp)

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