

Driving & Transportation

with Autism

Driving can be a large source of anxiety for a lot of people. There are a lot of steps in obtaining a license, a plethora of things to remember and pay attention to in the act of driving. Motor coordination, visual stimulation, multi-tasking, and decision making are skills that are utilized during driving. These things can make it difficult for those with ASD who experiences challenges in these areas. Despite these challenges, Autistics can become independent drivers.

Independent drivers can look different. For example, it may look like an individual driving within a range of their home; a particular route that is easier to navigate; or driving anywhere on their own. These take skills that come with practice. Getting comfortable with driving can start with as small of steps as the individual needs. For example, Autistic individuals can start small with verbalizing directions to the driver; sitting in the driver's seat to familiarize themselves with all the items that will be utilized while driving; or familiarize themselves with maps or GPS.

Not everyone follows the rules of the road while driving. It is important that this is known. While we want to believe everyone can follow the rules, it is not realistic. People will come across an individual merging without utilizing their blinkers, others may speed, others may utilize their phones while driving, etc. It's important to point these drivers out to ASD individuals as they are learning how to drive. This way, the Autistic driver can recognize these unsafe drivers and driving behaviors.

Resources

- <https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/blog/how-autism-can-affect-driving>
- <https://rehab.thenextstreet.com/diagnoses/driving-with-autism-spectrum-disorder>
- <https://www.emy.com/studio/autism-resources/driving-and-teaching>
- <https://www.carautismroadmap.org/driving-and-asd-determining-readiness/>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5767541/>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8095704/>
- <https://mn.gov/autism/basic-needs/transportation/>



I want to drive but don't know where to start



Teaching Driving Skills

When teaching driving skills, its best to first assess if you or your child/adult is ready and able to drive. There are two resources that provide assessments that include how the individual is adaptable, flexible, distract-able and need any accommodations when driving. Starting small and giving step by step instructions is the most helpful way to begin the learning process. For example, instead of stating start the car, go over the steps of starting the car. Taking the keys, putting them in the ignition, turning the key until the car rolls over, etc.

Courage Kenny

Your ability to drive may be affected by visual, cognitive, physical or medical challenges, developmental or physical disability, changes due to aging, or mental health issues. Whether you are a new or an experienced driver, a driving assessment and training may help you remain independent on the road.

<https://account.allinahealth.org/services/583>

To schedule an appointment at any of our locations please call 612-262-7855 or email us at CKRIDrivingService@allina.com.

Adaptive Experts

We provide professionals that are state licensed Occupational practitioners with expertise as licensed driving instructors. Because of the very specific needs of our clients, it is our firm belief that it is imperative to provide both medical expertise as well as driver education. Our expert staff are available to consult with clients and specialized dealers to facilitate the process of obtaining and successfully driving a modified vehicle.

<http://www.adaptiveexperts.com/mn.html>

Serving the Twin Cities and all of Minnesota please call 651-324-0791

