



The Wallet Card: Helping People with ASD Communicate With Police

THE CORAL GABLES POLICE DEPARTMENT recently introduced The Wallet Card, a one-of-a-kind partnership between the Disability Independence Group (DIG), the University of Miami/Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (UM-NSU CARD), and our Police Department. This card is a free tool for teenagers and adults who have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and is designed to help them communicate clearly with law enforcement and first responders.



Coral Gables Interim Police Chief Ed Hudak



tool, please visit our Police Department web page at www.coragables.com or visit the Disability Independence Group website at www.justdigit.org. There, you will find an informative video about when and how to use the wallet card, showing three different scenarios in which the card brings clarity to interactions between people with ASD and law enforcement. All the actors in this video are living with ASD and all of the police in the video are actual Coral

Gables Police officers. It is narrated by Lt. Bart Barta, who devotedly represented our department in this noble effort, and Haley Moss, a young woman with ASD.

The uniqueness of the Wallet Card is that each card is individualized for the owner of the card and the specific issues that they would like the police or a first responder to know about them. In stressful situations, it is common that people with autism have difficulty communicating. This card will bring clarity of understanding between law enforcement and persons with disabilities. The Wallet Card also has a Biodot that can indicate the stress level the person with ASD is experiencing.

Through proper identification and education, our Coral Gables Police officers can better address real life interactions with persons with disabilities to avoid misunderstandings. This is just another example of the Coral Gables Police Department's commitment to "serve and protect" the Coral Gables community, which is made possible thanks to this unique partnership.

You'll be proud to know that this program is set to help thousands of families affected by ASD. From the professional law enforcement perspective, our agency is taking the lead in this initiative and we are happy to share this knowledge with other police jurisdictions as well as the autism community throughout the world. Since announcing The Wallet Card in late January, the Coral Gables Police Department has been contacted by other law enforcement agencies throughout the country and by organizations as far away as Australia.

CGPD is also asking drivers to remove items from the center consoles and glove compartments of their vehicles that may contain personal information such as address, vehicle insurance or vehicle registration. This is the first place thieves look not only for valuables, but to access residences and steal personal identity. In case of any suspicious activity anywhere, any time, the Coral Gables Police Department wants to know: call 305-442-1600. Help us fight crime and make Coral Gables a safer city.

If you know of somebody with ASD that would like to take advantage of this free

