

The Arc Tank^{2.0}

AUTISM LAW ENFORCEMENT EDUCATION COALITION (ALEC): PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FIRST RESPONDERS



LEADER & PRESENTER:

Captain Bill Cannata
ALEC Coordinator for The Arc of South Norfolk
789 Clapboardtree Street
Westwood, MA 02090
skagan@arcsouthnorfolk.org
Presented by: Capt. Bill Cannata and Sgt. Ryan Roettger
Requested funding amount: \$45,000

INTRODUCTION

ALEC is a program that offers specialized trainings to first responders. The goal of the ALEC program is for first responders to hear directly from other first responders who have personal and professional experience with individuals with autism and to provide additional tools to use in assessing the risk of a situation. Led by former Fire Captain Bill Cannata, the program increases communication between parents within the community and first responders, increasing their ability to interact effectively with individuals with autism. This program promotes safety and reduces risk of injury for individuals with autism.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

ALEC was developed by parents of The Arc of South Norfolk's Family Autism Center in the 90s and has grown to be a national program. Autism is estimated to occur in one out of every 68 births. ALEC training is needed to protect and communicate with people in this fast growing segment of society. This program teaches responders what autism is, what the behaviors/characteristics are, how to communicate properly with these individuals to avoid unfortunate situations, and give tips to ensure safe outcomes. The program is tailored to each arm of the public safety and law enforcement arena and has received exceptional response from the 40,000 professionals trained to date. All trainers are family members of someone diagnosed with autism and a professional in the emergency/law enforcement field. ALEC has partnered with ASET (Autism Safety Education & Training) to start training in local schools — most specifically, educators, school administrators and staff throughout New England.