



LIVE CHAT: Raising awareness of autism days after tragic death of Owen Black

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The accidental death of 8-year-old [Owen Black](#) is heart-wrenching for some, and also offering a chance to raise awareness about autism.

Authorities say Owen, who was autistic, wandered off while his parents were sleeping. The family was vacationing at Needle Rush Point Condominiums in Perdido Key.

Owen disappeared on Friday and was found two days later just a half-mile away from where he went missing. Escambia County, Fla., Sheriff David Morgan was choked up as he discussed Owen's death, and said that it was just an accident.

Joining us in a live chat Wednesday at 1 p.m. will be Bama Hager, Ph.D., and Anna McConnell, LCSW, MPH.

Hager is the parent of a 13-year-old son with autism. She lives in the Birmingham area and works at the Autism Society of Alabama as the policy and program advisor. Hager's Ph.D. is in the area of clinical child psychology. Hager serves as co-chair of the Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council established by Gov. Bob Riley and maintained by Gov. Robert Bentley.

McConnell is the state autism coordinator with the Alabama Department of Mental Health and works with the Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinator Council. She worked as program manager at the Autism Society of Alabama for five years before moving to her role as the state coordinator.

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