[**HOW TO ENCOURAGE KIDS TO HOLD YOUR HAND**](http://www.andnextcomesl.com/2015/11/how-to-encourage-kids-to-hold-your-hand.html)

Wandering, bolting, and running away are all commonplace for kids with autism. And it's scary, especially in busy places like parking lots or airports. For most kids, taking their hand is enough to keep them close to you, but it's not always that easy with a child with autism.

My son rarely likes to hold hands when in busy places. However, there are instances where it is absolutely necessary for him to hold my hand in order to keep him safe. He doesn't wander like he used to, thank goodness, but it is easy enough for him to slip into his own little world and tune out his surroundings. And if he does that, he has zero concept of danger.

One day, it dawned on me why he might be pulling his hand away or letting go.
 **I wondered if he was truly aware that he and I were even holding hands**. I didn't believe he was, so I decided to try something random to draw his attention to our hands.

It was that day that I discovered the **one trick to get kids to keep holding your hand while walking**. This trick should work with all kids, not just those with autism.

**The trick is to turn it into a game that encourages them to focus on their hands**.

First, I squeezed his hand tight, applying some deep pressure to his hand. While I did that, I said, "Squeeze." Then I loosened my grip and repeated. I then asked him to copy my pattern. So he went, "Squeeze, squeeze" while squeezing my hand as tight as he could.

Next, I introduced a forwards and backwards motion to the game. I would move our hands out and say, "Tick" and then move our hands back and say, "Tock," just like a clock. He copied the pattern back.

As we walk, I alternate between squeezes, ticks, and tocks and he copies the pattern back. Sometimes we speed up the patterns and sometimes we slow them down.

But, more importantly, his hand remains in mine as we cross busy parking lots or walk through crowded places. And he stays safe.

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