I am going to The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, Connecticut, one of the only museums of its kind in the whole state! The Museum is a large, white building with tall glass windows and two floors full of amazing works of art to see. I might even see works of art outside of the Museum in the Sculpture Garden.
Social Narrative for an Independent Visit to The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

The Aldrich is located on Main Street. When I arrive, I may see other people entering the Museum, driving or parking their cars, walking their dogs, riding bicycles, or strolling down the sidewalk.
When I come to the front door, I will see some signs with information about my visit and a reminder to wear my mask. Once I enter, I will be asked to sanitize my hands and will then visit the Front Desk.
I can always find a friendly face at the Front Desk. If there are other visitors checking in, I may have to wait in line for a minute or two until I can begin my visit. The Front Desk is where I can check-in and hear more information about what I can expect to see in the Museum today.
I will be reminded to maintain social distancing in the Museum and not get too close to anyone I did not come with today. The Museum has one-way walking traffic, so I will see signs with black arrows that will help me know what direction I should be walking in.
I can find more helpful Aldrich staff, called Museum Attendants, throughout the Museum. Museum Attendants wear mostly black or dark blue clothing and are very friendly. I can ask them questions about the artwork on view, the artists, or the Museum, and they can help me if I get lost or overwhelmed.
When I am at the Museum, I have to remember not to touch the artwork. I might find signs, ropes, or labels around the artworks that remind me. I also have to remember to stay socially distanced from any visitors I did not come with today.
Social Narrative for an Independent Visit to The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

I might see works of art right next to the Front Desk or in the Atrium (what the Aldrich calls their lobby space) of the Museum.
Near the Front Desk, there is a large room called the Leir Gallery. Here, I may see paintings, sculptures, drawings, or other works of art.
There are a number of other spaces and galleries at The Aldrich Museum where I can visit and explore different types of artwork.
Further down in the back-left corner of the Atrium, I can find a room called The Studio with all of the lights turned off where videos are playing. These videos may have sound in the form of music or talking that plays through speakers. There are no Museum Attendants in this room, so if the sounds are too loud for me, I can let someone know and wait just outside of the glass doors.
I will notice that the water fountains are currently closed, with caution tape as a reminder.
Social Narrative for an Independent Visit to The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

If I need to go to the bathroom at any point, I can find them behind the Front Desk on the first floor. If I have any trouble, one of the Museum Attendants will be happy to help guide me there. In the bathroom just above the sinks, I will see a colorful poster with fun facts about the Museum that I can read while I wash my hands.
Social Narrative for an Independent Visit to The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

Right near the bathroom doors behind the Front Desk, I will also see a TV screen that shares information about the Museum’s past.
To go upstairs, I can take the steps in the Atrium or use the elevator.
If the weather is nice outside, I can walk into the Sculpture Garden. Usually there are sculptures outside, and it is a calm, outdoor place to relax.
Sometimes the Museum can feel busy and loud. The Front Desk can help me find a quieter gallery or space if I am feeling anxious. I can also always call the Front Desk before I arrive to learn about quieter times to visit.
When I am ready to leave, I can share with any family or friends that I came with that I am ready to go. We can return to the Atrium and back through the front door we entered. As we leave, we will walk past The Shop. The Shop is an exciting place to purchase one-of-a-kind artworks, books, catalogues, postcards, and more! We cannot touch anything in The Shop right now, but if there are items that I am excited about and would like to buy, I can let the Front Desk know.
I had a great visit, and I am always welcome to visit again! If I have any questions or suggestions, I can reach out to aldrichedu@thealdrich.org.