

AUTISM AWARENESS

UNDERSTANDING AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER



WHAT IS AUTISM?

- Autism, or autism spectrum disorder or ASD, refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication. According to the Centers for Disease Control, autism affects an estimated 1 in 59 children in the United States today.

THERE IS NO ONE TYPE OF AUTISM, BUT MANY.

- We know that there is not one autism but many subtypes, most influenced by a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Because autism is a spectrum disorder, each person with autism has a distinct set of strengths and challenges. The ways in which people with autism learn, think and problem-solve can range from highly skilled to severely challenged.
- Some people with ASD may require significant support in their daily lives, while others may need less support and, in some cases, live entirely independently.

THE AUTISM AWARENESS RIBBON

The puzzle pattern reflects the complexity of the autism spectrum. The different colors and shapes represent the diversity of the people and families living with the condition. The brightness of the ribbon signals hope, hope that through increased awareness of autism, and through early intervention and access to appropriate services/supports, people with autism will lead full lives able to interact with the world on their own terms.



AUTISM SYMPTOMS AND WHAT PARENTS & EDUCATORS SHOULD LOOK OUT FOR

- Issues with Social Communication:
 - Spoken language
 - Gestures
 - Eye contact
 - Facial Expressions
 - Recognizing Emotion
 - Gauging Personal Space
- Restrictive and Repetitive Behaviors
 - Repetitive body movements
 - Repetitive motions with objects
 - Staring at lights or spinning objects
 - Ritualistic behaviors Narrow or extreme interests in specific topics
 - Need for unvarying routine/resistance to change

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- Donate to Autism Speaks or a local program
- Start a fundraiser to promote awareness and raise money for research
 - Ex.) Race, Bake Sale, 5K
- Become an advocate for those that suffer with ASD
- Become a Partner through Autism Speaks Organization.