



IDEAS FOR RAISING AUTISM AWARENESS IN YOUR SCHOOL

Here is a list of activities your school can do to raise awareness and acceptance of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Help us raise awareness and financial support for your local affiliate of the Autism Society:

- Be a **TEAM CAPTAIN** at the **Autism 5k Run and Walk** on June 17, at Lock 3, Downtown Akron (go to www.AutismAkron.org/run-walk for more information)
- Attend or volunteer at one of the local events happening in April

Post facts about autism on large puzzle pieces around the school or talk about them in the morning announcements:

- 1 in 68 kids have autism
- More boys than girls are born with autism
- Autism is a disability that makes it hard to talk to other kids
- Having autism makes it hard to know how to play with other kids
- Something like lights and noises bother some kids with autism more than they might bother you
- Everyone is different, being different is not a bad thing, we are all different
- Kids with autism look just like you and I do
- Kids with autism like to have friends they just don't know how to make them
- Kids with autism have feelings just like you and I do

Post things that kids can do on large puzzle pieces (template in packet) around the school:

- Learn about kids with autism
- Talk to your parents about autism
- Say hi to kids with autism
- Be a good role model and defend them against bullies
- Invite a friend with autism to play or to your birthday party
- Sit with a friend with autism at lunch

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Put on the Puzzle! The Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon is the most recognized symbol of the autism community in the world. To purchase the Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon for your shirt, car, locker or refrigerator, email us info@autismakron.org.

Ask the School Library to set books about Autism out on display through April

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Andy and His Yellow Frisbee by Mary Thompson
Russell is Extra Special by Charles Amenta, III
Captain Tommy by Abby Ward Messner
My Best Friend Will by Jamie Lowell and Tara Tuchel
Ian's Walk-A Story about Autism by Laurie Lears and Karen Ritz
The Autism Acceptance Book by Ellen Sabin
Tobin Learns to Make Friends by Diane Murrell
Taco's Anyone by Marvie Ellis and Jenny Loehr
Keisha's Doors by Marvie Ellis
Nobody Knew What to Do: A Story about Bullying by Becky McCain
A is for Autism by Jennifer Bloink

MIDDLE-HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Of Mice and Aliens by Kathy Hoopman
Buster and the Amazing Daisy by Nancy Ogaz
Lisa and the Lace Maker by Kathy Hoopman
Wishing on the Midnight Star by Nancy Ogaz
Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night by Mark Haddon
A Spot of Bother by Mark Haddon
Clay by Colby Rodowsky
Haze by Kathy Hoopman
To OZ and Back: A Bones and Duchess Mystery by Alexandra Eden
A Wizard Alone: The Sixth Book in the Young Wizards Series by Diane Duane
The Wright and Wong Mystery Series by Laura J. Burns and Melinda Metz

Tips for Being a Friend to Someone with Autism

Celebrating National Autism Awareness Month

Understanding autism starts at a young age, and there is no greater place than the classroom to start. Understanding autism and how to interact with people with autism comes from being exposed to them, and being taught how to treat and talk to someone with autism. Children naturally want to be helpful. Give them that opportunity by encouraging them to be a buddy to someone with autism. It is up to teachers and parents to teach children about differences, acceptance, and understanding. Here are some ideas on how to get started.

- People are born with autism and while they look just like you and me, autism changes the way their brain works.
- Some people with autism talk and others do not. Just because they cannot talk doesn't mean they don't have anything to say.
- Nobody knows what causes autism, but we do know that a person with autism will always have autism.
- Kids with autism are the same as other kids in a lot of ways. They like birthdays, swimming, and having friends.
- Being kind and compassionate is one of the best things you can do to help someone with autism.
- Here are a few ways to be a friend:
 - Playing games they like to play.
 - Talking to them like you would any other kid.
 - Giving them a high five when you're having fun!
 - Sitting next to them in the lunchroom.
 - Visiting them at their house.
 - Inviting them to your house.
 - Show them what to do so they can imitate you.
 - Being a buddy to them on the playground.
 - Walking with them to the next class.
 - Supporting them with kindness and understanding.
 - That's awesome! Thank you!

Have students write what they know about autism or how they think they could be a friend to a student with autism.