



Helping People with disabilities since 1965

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Autism Awareness



Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum disorder" that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. There is no known single cause for autism, but increased awareness and funding can help families today.

In February 2007, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued their ADDME autism prevalence report. The report, which looked at a sample of 8 year olds in 2000 and 2002, concluded that the prevalence of autism had risen to 1 in every 150 American children, and almost 1 in 94 boys. The issuance of this report caused a media uproar, but the news was not a surprise to ASA or to the 1.5 million Americans living with the effects of autism spectrum disorder. Nonetheless, the spotlight shown on autism as a result of the prevalence increase opens opportunities for the nation to consider how to serve these families facing a lifetime of supports for their children.

Currently, ASA estimates that the lifetime cost of caring for a child with autism ranges from \$3.5 million to \$5 million, and that the United States is facing almost \$90 billion annually in costs for autism (this figure includes research, insurance costs and non-covered expenses, Medicaid waivers for autism, educational spending, housing, transportation, employment, in addition to related therapeutic services and caregiver costs).

(Autism Society of America) <http://www.autism-society.org>

What is Asperger's Syndrome?



What distinguishes Asperger's Syndrome from autism is the severity of the symptoms and the absence of language delays. Children with Asperger's may be only mildly affected and frequently have good language and cognitive skills. To the untrained observer, a child with Asperger's may seem just like a normal child behaving differently. They may be socially awkward, not understanding of conventional social rules, or show a lack of empathy. They may make limited eye contact, seem to be unengaged in a conversation, and not understand the use of gestures.

One of the major differences between Asperger's Syndrome and autism is that, by definition, there is no speech delay in Asperger's. In fact, children with Asperger's frequently have good language skills; they simply use language in different ways. Speech patterns may be unusual, lack inflection, or have a rhythmic nature or it may be formal, but too loud or high pitched. Children with Asperger's may not understand the subtleties of language, such as irony and humor, or they may not recognize the give-and-take nature of a conversation.



Another distinction between Asperger's Syndrome and autism concerns cognitive ability. While some individuals with autism experience mental retardation, by definition a person with Asperger's cannot possess a "clinically significant" cognitive delay, and most possess average to above-average intelligence.

Autistic and Overlooked

By Linda H. Davis

As people around the globe acknowledge World Autism Awareness Day today -- proclaimed by the [U.N. General Assembly](#) last December -- it is important to consider an aspect of this devastating disorder that has been curiously and persistently neglected: the lifelong care of autistic adults.



While greater media attention on autism is certainly welcome, virtually all coverage of autism in recent years has focused on a cure or on the education of young autistic children. You would think that, like children in a fairy tale, autistic children never grow up. Yet parents are getting old, tired and ill caring for their adult children. And they are doing it while state and federal budgets, already lean, are getting perilously thinner. How is society going to pay for the permanent care of millions of our citizens? What kind of lives are we going to give them? How are we going to support their families, many of whom care for their children into adulthood as they themselves wear down?

The explosion in autism is striking: A disorder on the autism spectrum is diagnosed in roughly one in every 150 American children. Assuming that that rate holds, by 2016, less than a decade from now, the number of American adults (those 22 and over) with autism is expected to be nearly 1.5 million. The costs to society and to American families will be staggering.

Though many Americans are familiar with the 1997 Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, which mandates a free and appropriate education until age 22 for children who have disabilities, few seem to know or care that there is no similar legal mandate for them after age 22. As states struggle to serve their most vulnerable citizens while dealing with budget cuts at all levels, the number of Americans with disabilities swells.

My own family is a case in point. Two years ago, at age 53, I learned I had an incurable form of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. In an instant, my life expectancy was reduced to an additional seven to nine years. Suddenly, our plans to keep our autistic son, Randy, living at home with us indefinitely looked highly risky. When we sat down with our case manager from the state Department of Mental Retardation and requested an eventual residential placement for Randy -- through my sobs -- we were told that the agency would need six months' notice.

We are fortunate that Randy is able to work in our community, albeit with supervision. When he turns 22 this summer, he will begin a job while living at home. But because of budget cuts, our area office of the Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation, which is to fund Randy's work program, lacks the money for transportation. For us, transportation is a minor issue. It's the big picture -- who will love and care for Randy after his father and I are gone -- that keeps me up at night.

Linda H. Davis is the author, most recently, of "Charles Addams: A Cartoonist's Life" and is president of the nonprofit SAGE Crossing Foundation.



Thank you for your dedication!

Staff April & May Anniversaries



17 years

Diane Cariveau-Clark

6 years

Terra Lawrence
Jeanne Malinosky

5 years

James Shaw
Michael Hougardy

4 years

Cecelia Ortiz
Dotty Jeronimo
Cynthia Ozuna
April Beach

3 years

Carmen Ellingsworth
Erin Clarke
Cole Haberman

2 years

Alicia Figueroa
Megan Cannon
John Heimark
Forest Foster
Maritza Ayala
Juditha Robledo
Natalie Dotzauer
Earl Stires

1 year

Karen Cheledinas
Oliver Oliver
Trista Chavez
Nichole Chavez
Desiree Bunnell
Daniel Eason



April & May Birthdays

3/3 Kenneth Kiesel
3/5 Alonso Rojas
3/5 James Martinez
3/9 Gabriela Lupersio
3/12 Nathaniel Laux
3/15 Angela Anaya
3/22 Nicole Crume
3/22 John Heimark
3/23 Delayna Schneider
3/23 Dalziel Dyson
3/24 Kristl Miller
3/24 Mischaela Mathews
3/25 Vennessa Nunez
3/28 Misty Gonzales
3/29 Rachell Potts
3/30 Juditha Robledo



4/2 Susan Mashburn
4/2 Audri Cantu-Yoerger
4/4 Nadine German
4/4 Jeanne Malinosky
4/5 Kristy Houk
4/8 Noel Gonzalez
4/12 Amy Mohler
4/16 Matthew Harshman
4/24 Sara Ebinger
4/25 Angelia Deckard
4/25 Maria Vazquez
4/25 Randi Wright
4/26 Michael Hougardy
4/26 Lisa Perry
4/27 Bary Hunt
4/30 Corrina Rew

1st Aid & CPR Training



Every month
1st Wednesday 9am
3rd Wednesday 1pm



**Timesheets
are Due by 9 am**

Monday
4/28 & 5/12

Employment



Employment should take advantage of the individual's strengths and abilities. Temple Grandin, Ph.D., suggests, "jobs should have a well-defined goal or endpoint," and that your "boss must recognize your social limitations." In *A Parent's Guide to Asperger Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism*, the authors describe three employment possibilities: competitive, supported, and secure or sheltered.

Competitive employment is the most independent, with no support offered in the work environment. Individuals with Asperger's Syndrome may be successful in careers that require focus on details but have limited social interaction with colleagues such as computer sciences, research or library sciences. In supported employment, a system of supports allows individuals to have paid employment in the community, sometimes as part of a mobile crew, other times individually in a job developed for the person. In secure or sheltered employment, an individual is guaranteed a job in a facility-based setting. Individuals in secure settings generally also receive work skills and behavior training, while sheltered employment may not provide training that would allow for more independence.



The Grand Quiz and Awareness Show

The percentage of people with autism who are under the age of 18 is,

- a. 40% b. 60% c. 80% d. they are making all this up

According to the Center for Disease Control, what is prevalence of autism in the United States?

- a. 1 in 10 b. 1 in 75 c. 1 in 150 d. they are making all this up

Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are.

- a. A group of developmental disabilities caused by a problem with the brain.
b. Colors
c. Look the same for everyone who is diagnosed
d. Different for each person

People with ASD can,

- a. Work in the community
b. Live in apartments
c. Own their own home
d. Have relationships with others
e. Go to baseball games
f. Win the NCAA bracket

Last month's winners: Sheri Powers, Elmview Vocational Services
Dotty Geronimo, Yakima Supported Living

As always, send your answers to, Bruce

