Autism Spectrum Disorder & ASO

1-888-AUTISM-1 (288-4761)

www.AutismSocietyOregon.org
ASO’s Mission

To provide resources, education, advocacy and support for individuals and families impacted by autism
My Sons:

On YouTube: KhAnubis
What is Autism?

A difference in brain development that affects:

➢ **Communication** (verbal and nonverbal)
  - 30-40% nonverbal
  - Even verbal may process language differently

➢ **Social interaction**

➢ **Restricted interests & repetitive behaviors**

➢ **Sensory Issues**

Wide variety of presentation:

**EVERY PERSON IS DIFFERENT!**
Basic Facts About Autism

- One in 59 children is affected.
- Lifelong developmental disorder
- Early intervention is important ... but it’s never too late!
- Genetic link - can run in families
- More common in males (about 5 times more common)
- Frequently occurs with other diagnoses (Co-diagnosis = 86%)
How Does Autism Present?

Autism is a spectrum disorder, meaning that it can range in severity and won’t be exactly the same in any two people on the autism spectrum.

How a person presents CHANGES due to a variety of reasons, including development, circumstances, and treatment.

“Circular Spectrum” Credit to Rebecca Burgess
What Causes Autism?
Incidence Rate of Children with Autism

2018: 1 in 59  (1.7%)
2014: 1 in 68
2010: 1 in 110
2006: 1 in 150
1994: 1 in 2,500 (0.04%)
Social Impacts

• **Over 80%** of children with ASD experience difficulty making and keeping friends

• **Only 25%** of children with ASD are reported to stay calm and in control in the face of a challenge, as compared to 65% of children without ASD.
Myths About Autistic People:

1. All are savants (Rain Man) or have an Intellectual Disability

2. Don’t have feelings, empathy, or a sense of humor

3. Don’t want friends/romance

4. Are miserable and suffering

5. Are violent and a danger to society

6. Only boys are autistic!
Truth:

Every person with autism is a unique individual.

Everyone has different needs, wants, abilities, strengths, lifestyles and goals.
MELTDOWNS v. TANTRUMS

Behavior in the Absence of Effective Communication

Tantrum: A goal-driven behavior designed to persuade the adult in charge to give in to the desires of the child.

Autistic Meltdowns: A response to being overwhelmed
- Sensory overload
- Too many choices
- Not being able to pull up an answer
- Being “stuck” in an emotion

What Helps: Prevention, Empathy, Time

AUTISM SOCIETY
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism
Oregon
SAFETY

• 1/3 of children with ASD wandered off from a safe environment in the past year.

Attraction to water = drowning is the leading cause of death in children on the autism spectrum

Source: AWAARE.org
Wandering Defined

Wandering is the tendency of an individual to try to leave the safety of a responsible person’s care or a safe area, which can result in potential harm or injury.

– Includes leaving the home, school or classroom or in the community

– Challenges with social and communication skills and safety awareness, makes wandering a particularly dangerous behavior.

*Wandering occurs across all settings, under every type of adult supervision*
AGE

• Nearly half (49%) of children with autism engage in wandering behavior after age 4

• Compared to NT siblings:
  – age 4-7: 46% of ASD vs. 11% of NT sibs
  – ages 8-11: 27% of ASD vs. 1% of NT sibs
WHY?

Either get to something or away from something.

Gravitate towards items of interest: water, a road sign, a merry-go-round in the park, a car, or just enjoy exploring.

Or, may want to escape an environment if certain sounds or other sensory input becomes too much.
STRATEGIES: Plan, Prevent, Teach

• Learn about the child! What are their attractions and triggers?

• Close supervision – Look for signs that the child may wander off before it happens (although constant close supervision is unrealistic)

• Keep information about the child up-to-date
  – Take a picture, have a description

• Talk with parents about what’s in place and what could be added to increase the child’s safety
  – Visuals, social stories or appropriate language to communicate the dangers of wandering
Supporting People on Spectrum

➢ Circumstances:
  • Sensory issues – consider the environment!
  • Anxiety /Transition points

➢ Behavior is communication!

➢ Language supports
  • visuals, literal language, slow down

➢ Won’t vs. Can’t

➢ Make time for breaks – for you and for them
Golden Rule: R-E-S-P-E-C-T

- Be **CALM**.
- Be **PATIENT**.
- Give them **SPACE**.
- **OBSERVE**. **LISTEN**.
- Allow **EXTRA TIME** for a response.
- If unsure, **ASK**.
- **EMPATHY**.

- Do **not** expect eye contact
- Do **not** touch or hug without permission
- **Avoid** sudden changes
What is ASO?

- Established in 1981
- State affiliate of Autism Society of America
- Serving the entire state of Oregon
- Address needs throughout the lifespan and across the autism spectrum
- 501(c)(3) – donations are tax-deductible; and all donations remain in Oregon
TAKE A BREAK ON ASO!

➢ Provides an evening out to parents of children on the autism spectrum:
  • $25 gift card to restaurant, 2 movie tickets, $56 to respite provider

✓ State-wide
✓ No waitlist
✓ Participate once a year

New: Adult “Take a Break”
Community Events

➢ WORKSHOP SERIES:
  • Transition to Adulthood Series
  • Law Enforcement Training

➢ Presentations

➢ Water Safety Program

➢ Resource Tables

➢ Community Inclusion Events
  • Family Swimming Events
  • Free Expressions Art Workshops
  • Spring Celebrations, Halloween, Autism Friendly Santa

For more information, see our online Calendar of Events, Facebook page, or sign up for our E-newsletter
Support:

➢ Support & Activity Groups throughout State:
  • Parents, Grandparents, Siblings
  • Children, Girls, Teens, Adults on spectrum
  • Online support networks
  • On website: Support Groups by region

➢ On-line Resource Guide:
  • From therapists to camps to hair cuts!
  • On website: under Resources / Professional Directory
Awareness/Acceptance:

April is Autism Awareness Month!

• Autism Walk in Portland – April 26, 2020
  • Supporting Oregon’s autism community
  • Walks in Astoria, Albany, and LaGrande too!
Autism Acceptance

Autism Acceptance is actively offering autistic individuals the supports they need to be fully included as valuable and valued members of our families, schools, neighborhoods and our community.
How Can We Help?

www.AutismSocietyOregon.org
888-AUTISM-1 (or 288-4761)

Tobi Rates, Executive Director
info@AutismSocietyOregon.org
503-636-1676