



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Neil D. Breslin

## April Is Autism Awareness Month

NEIL D. BRESLIN April 3, 2012

### Senator Breslin Urges Awareness and Advocacy

(Albany, NY) Senator Neil D. Breslin (D-Delmar) recognizes April as Autism Awareness Month and encourages New Yorkers to learn more about autism and its effects on children and their families, as well as what can be done to help the cause.

Since the 1970s, April has been designated by the National Autism Society as National Autism Awareness Month in order to highlight the growing need for concern and awareness about autism. Only recently, however, has autism become a national focus as rates have skyrocketed.

“Autism is a disorder that affects many children and families, however, for most people it is a disorder that is very hard to understand,” said Senator Breslin. “By dedicating the month of April to raising awareness, we increase the ability of parents and caregivers to properly identify the signs of autism and give these children the proper attention they deserve.”

Autism is a neural development disorder. Indicators of the disorder include impaired social interaction and communication, as well as restricted and repetitive behavior. According to the Center for Disease Control, just three decades ago only 3.5 children out of every 10,000 were diagnosed with autism. However, current rates indicate 1 in every 110 children is

afflicted.

Recognizing early identification signs of autism in children is vital to helping children and their parents understand the disorder and how to effectively take action. Research has indicated that the earlier a child is diagnosed, the sooner they can benefit from one of the specialized approaches to treatment and education.

The senator continued, “As our understanding of autism grows, I encourage us all to commit our support to continue increasing awareness to ensure children with autism are provided with the opportunities to realize their dreams and potential.”

Senator Breslin was the proud sponsor of the first of its kind legislation to pass both the Senate and Assembly here in New York that required insurance companies to cover treatments for autism. Although this particular piece of legislation was vetoed, a subsequent and similar bill ultimately was signed into law.

For more information about autism, visit [www. autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org) and

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/index.html).