



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Addabbo: “April Is Autism Awareness Month

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### *Urges Increased Awareness, Advocacy and Understanding of Autism and Its Effects*

**Queens, NY, April 8, 2013 – NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo , Jr.** (D-Howard Beach) wants all New Yorkers to know that April is Autism Awareness Month and he is encouraging everyone to learn more about autism and its effects on a growing number of children, adults, and their families. “This past weekend I participated in the ribbon-cutting / grand opening of the newly renovated New York Families for Autistic Children (NYFAC) autistic services building in Howard Beach. This opening was symbolic of the priority we need to put on funding and protecting those services that assist the children and families dealing with autism,” Addabbo stated.

In the 1970s the National Autism Society designated April as National Autism Awareness Month in order to highlight the growing need for awareness as more attention became focused on autism spectrum disorder diagnoses.

“Autism is a disorder that affects an increasing number of New Yorkers and can be very hard to understand,” said Senator Addabbo. “By dedicating the month of April to raising autism awareness, we increase the ability of parents and caregivers to properly identify the signs and give children and adults with autism 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 Centers for Disease Control, just three decades ago only 3.5 children out of every 10,000 were diagnosed with autism. However, more recent rates indicate 1 in every 50 children are affected.

As of October 2010, according to the NYS Education Department's Office of Special Education Programs, among school-age students between the ages of 4 and 21, **22,284** have autism in New York State while **8,886** are autistic in New York City. These numbers are the students who are receiving special educational services in New York. It is essential for those families dealing with children or adults who have autism but are not enrolled in school to learn about the programs and services that will be very beneficial to them. To find out more, go online to:

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sedcar/goal2data.htm#2010>

Recognizing the early signs of autism is vital to helping children and their parents understand autism spectrum disorder and how to effectively take action. Research has indicated that the earlier a child is diagnosed, the sooner he/she can benefit from a specialized approach to treatment and education.

Senator Addabbo concluded, "As our understanding of autism grows, I encourage everyone to commit to support increasing awareness in order to ensure that those with autism are provided with opportunities for specialized education programs leading to mainstreaming in school, so that they realize their dreams and potential."

For more information about autism, visit <http://www.autism-society.org> and [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/index.html). Queens families can also visit the New York Families for Autistic Children Web site for additional information at [www.nyfac.org](http://www.nyfac.org).

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