



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Neil D. Breslin

April is Autism Awareness Month

SEN. NEIL D. BRESLIN April 1, 2018

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World Autism Awareness Day is Monday, April 2, 2018

Since the 1970's, April has been designated by the National Autism Society as National Autism Awareness Month. What's more, the eleventh annual World Autism Awareness Day is Monday, April 2, 2018. You can show your support by wearing light blue and by participating in autism-friendly events and educational activities to increase understanding and acceptance and foster worldwide support.

More than 3.5 million Americans currently live with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and

most recent estimates by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that an average of 1 in 68 children in the US have an autism spectrum disorder. Additionally, autism is almost 5 times more common among boys (1 in 42) than among girls (1 in 189).

According to the Autism Society, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental disability; signs typically appear during early childhood and affect a person's ability to communicate, and interact with others. ASD is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum condition" that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees.

Some of the behaviors associated with autism include:

- delayed learning of language;
- difficulty making eye contact or holding a conversation;
- difficulty with executive functioning, which relates to reasoning and planning;
- narrow, intense interests; and
- poor motor skills' and sensory sensitivities.

Recognizing the early signs of autism is vital to helping children and their parents understand the disorder, and how to effectively take action. Research indicates that the earlier a child is diagnosed, the sooner he/she can benefit from a specialized approach to treatment and education. These measures include improved language, social, and adaptive functioning, and a reduction in inappropriate behaviors

Please know that there are many valuable resources to help you and your family members. Visit the NY State Online Autism Resource to learn about many support services for individuals with ASD and their families. You may also want to check out the website Autism Speaks for a list of New York's community and support networks and local autism organizations.