



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Support Autism awareness this month during a community walk around Rizzuto Park

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. April 14, 2023

| ISSUE: **AUTISM, AUTISM AWARENESS, AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH, COMMUNITY EVENTS, ADDABBO**

Phil "Scooter" Rizzuto Park

**Meeting point at the corner of
95th Avenue & 125th Street**

**12 p.m. to 2 p.m.
Rain or Shine**

Participants will walk four times around the park to help raise awareness of Autism and other developmental disabilities.

April is Autism Awareness month, and State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. is partnering with Community Board 9 for a community walk event to support those with autism and other developmental disabilities this month.

Everyone is invited to participate in the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Walk on Saturday, April 29, from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. During the event, participants will meet at the

corner of 95th Avenue and 125th Street where they will proceed to walk around the perimeter of Phil “Scooter” Rizzuto Park/Smokey Oval four times. The walk will take place rain or shine.

Along the route River Fund will have snacks and juice to give out, Heart of Gems will also be handing out snacks, and the Trinidadian and Tobagonian USA group will pass out small slices of pizza and mini cheese sandwiches for the walkers. Bena Homecare Agency will provide an autism backdrop for photos, and EmblemHealth will have a table set up to help sign up families that might need health insurance.

“Autism can come in many different forms and affects each person with it differently, so because of that, each person with Autism — and the families and loved ones that care for them — require different levels and types of care,” Addabbo said. “That is why it is vitally important that we are out here raising awareness for Autism Awareness Month. However, we are also walking to raise awareness of other developmental disabilities that impacts so many lives right here in Queens, let alone across the country and the world.”

Autism is a complex brain disorder that often inhibits a person’s ability to communicate, respond to their surroundings, and form relationships with others. According to the CDC, in 2020 more than 5.4 million adults in the U.S. — or 2.2 percent of the population — are on the autism spectrum, and using data from 2020 the CDC estimates that 1 in 36 children in the U.S. will be diagnosed with autism in 2023.

“As the mother of a son with Autism, I am personally excited to have Senator Addabbo sponsor this walk with Community Board 9,” Algreto said. “This is not just a walk, but being able to also engage and speak with participating families and hearing about their struggles and need for more equitable and fair services for people with special needs. We are also very excited for the participation of other elected officials and their support. We encourage folks

to come out and join us in support of this great cause and keep this awareness going.”

“I would like to thank the partners of this great event, including Community Board 9 and its Chair Sherry Algreto who was instrumental in helping to plan the walk, as well as River Fund, the Trinidadian and Tobagonian USA group and Heart of Gems,” Addabbo added. “I also want to give thanks to my colleagues in government for coming out and supporting this amazing cause.”