



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Walczyk

Senator Walczyk Wears a Puzzle Piece Tie For Autism Awareness Month and Adult Autism Awareness Day

MARK WALCZYK April 18, 2023

| ISSUE: **BOW TIE TUESDAY, AUTISM AWARENESS, AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH**



Senator Mark Walczyk is donning a puzzle piece bow tie today in the Capitol to spread awareness for Autism. April 18th is Adult Autism Awareness Day, which is in Autism Awareness Month celebrated throughout the month of April. Today's bowtie aims to recognize those with adult autism as well as youth and adolescent autism as well.

According to Autism Speaks, the CDC reported that approximately 1 in 36 children in the United States is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. Most children are still being

diagnosed with autism after age 4 although autism can be reliably diagnosed as early as age 2. It's common for some to only focus on our youth when it pertains to autism, but according to the CDC, there are an estimated 5.4 million adults in the United States that have autism spectrum disorder. Simply understanding what autism spectrum disorder is and how to help children and adults with autism is an important first step in providing assistance for anyone who has been diagnosed with the disorder.

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“My bow tie today is tied to raise awareness to a lifelong disorder that affects children and adults in a broad range of conditions,” said Senator Walczyk. “Since there isn’t just one autism but several subtypes, it can be difficult to understand the disorder and connect with individuals with autism. It’s important to educate ourselves on the strengths and struggles of individuals with autism to promote inclusion and help those who are differently abled achieve their dreams in life.”

“There is no one-size-fits-all form of approach for autism and we work to provide different options that support children and adults as they find self-advocacy, personal development, and growth,” said Michael Countryman, Executive Director of the Family Counseling Center in Gloversville. “Our staff works with children and their families in partnership with their schools, caregivers, and others to ensure a safe environment that affects positive outcomes no matter the goals the children and their families set.”

“Autism is a vast spectrum of strengths as well as support needs. If you’ve met one person with Autism-you’ve met just one person with Autism,” said Kylie Schell, Director of Encompass Recreation. “Autistic people need a supportive and accepting community in which their strengths are accentuated. Acceptance and inclusion means that those with higher support needs are given equal access and opportunities to belong. True belonging and acceptance can only occur when we create an opportunity to be your true and authentic

self.”

Senator Walczyk represents the 49th Senate District of New York State which encompasses either the entirety or part of Jefferson, Lewis St. Lawrence, Oswego, Herkimer, Hamilton, and Fulton counties. Bow Tie Tuesday is a fun initiative by the Senator to raise awareness to important issues and will be released each Tuesday on his website and social media.