



## April is Autism Acceptance Month

# Supporting neurodiversity and the whole person

Autism Acceptance Month celebrates the unique strengths of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) while promoting understanding and support for their needs. ASD affects 1 in 36 children and an estimated five million adults in the U.S. Many face co-occurring mental and physical conditions, requiring holistic care to support their overall wellbeing.

### Why acceptance matters

Acceptance creates opportunities and builds a sense of belonging. When individuals with autism are accepted and supported:

- **Early intervention becomes possible.** Diagnosing autism early enables access to therapies, such as Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), that improve communication and social skills, promoting independence and meaningful connections.
- **Barriers are broken down.** Approximately 85% of adults with autism are unemployed or underemployed. Increased awareness and support can help overcome employment, education and healthcare challenges, opening pathways to success.

### Why co-occurring conditions matter

Co-occurring conditions often significantly impact the lives of individuals with ASD.

- **Physical health conditions**, such as gastrointestinal issues, epilepsy and sleep disorders, affect approximately 50 – 70% of children with ASD.
- **Mental health conditions**, like anxiety, depression and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), impact up to 80% of adults with ASD.

Addressing these co-occurring conditions in tandem with ASD improves quality of life, strengthens relationships and promotes greater independence.

### How you can make a difference

- ✓ **Learn:** Educate yourself about autism and co-occurring conditions.
- ✓ **Advocate:** Promote participation in schools, workplaces and communities.
- ✓ **Amplify:** Celebrate the strengths and perspectives of individuals with ASD.

Together, we can create a world that embraces neurodiversity, fosters acceptance and empowers individuals with ASD to thrive.



Scan the QR code to visit your member website for more information.