



# Handy Handouts®

Free, educational handouts for teachers and parents\*

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## April is for Autism Awareness!

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Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability which refers to several conditions that until recently were diagnosed separately including: autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder and Asperger syndrome. ASD is characterized in varying degrees, by difficulties in social interaction, communication, and repetitive behaviors. People with ASD may communicate, interact, behave, and learn differently from most other people. Each individual with autism is unique. Many people with ASD have exceptional abilities in visual skills, music, and academic skills. Some may have an intellectual disability while others have normal to above average intelligence. Some persons with ASD may require significant help in their daily lives while others can live independently.

In April, many families, communities, and organizations celebrate National Autism Awareness Month to raise awareness about autism and promote advocacy for people with ASD. Understanding the signs and basic facts about autism is the first step to awareness.

The signs of ASD begin early during childhood and typically last throughout the person's life. Some signs include:

- no babbling or gesturing by 12 months
- not saying single words by 16 months
- not pointing to objects to show interest/not looking at objects when another person points at them
- avoiding eye contact
- repeating or echoing words or phrases in place of normal language
- repeating actions over and over again
- having trouble adapting when a routine changes
- having unusual reactions to the way things smell, taste, look, feel, or sound
- having loss of any language or social skills they once exhibited

Understanding basic facts about autism can promote understanding and acceptance of persons with ASD.

Did you know...

- Autism affects 1 in 68 children and 1 in 42 boys
- Autism is one of the fastest-growing developmental disorders in the US

- There is no medical detection or cure for autism
- Autism costs a family \$60,000 a year on average
- ASD occurs in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups but is 4.5 times more common among boys than among girls
- Early diagnosis and intervention can reduce the lifetime cost of care by 67 percent

How can you help?

- Put on the Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon – It's the most recognized symbol of autism. Show support for people with ASD by wearing the ribbon.
- Consider doing the Autism Speaks Walk. There are walks in many states during the month of April.
- Help your community host *Light It Up Blue* where buildings around the globe shine bright blue lights in honor of individuals and families affected by autism.

For more information about autism, visit these websites:

[www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)

[www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)

[www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org)

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/index.html>

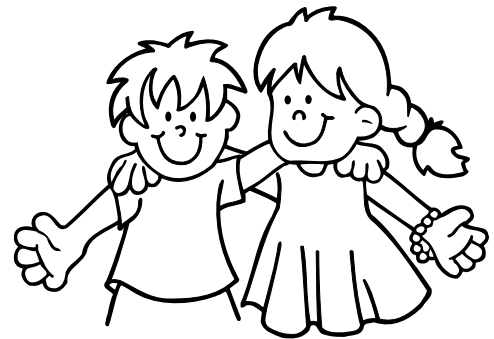
SOURCES:

[www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)

[www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)

[www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org)

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/index.html>



More FREE Handy Handouts®, go to [www.handyhandouts.com](http://www.handyhandouts.com)

## Helpful Products

The list of Super Duper® products below may be helpful when working with children who have special needs. Visit [www.superduperinc.com](http://www.superduperinc.com) and type in the **item name or number in our search engine**. If you're viewing this Handy Handout on a computer, click the links below to see the product descriptions.

*Sensory Diet Fun Sheets*

[Item #SDC-100](#)

*MagneTalk Turns & Topics*

[Item #GB-46](#)

*What Do You Say.....School*

[Item #GB-241](#)

*The Question Challenge Card Game*

[Item #QCC-100](#)