

World Autism Awareness Day

April 2, 2024

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a type of neurodivergence.

ASD is characterized by challenges with social interaction, communication, and repetitive behaviors. It is relatively common, with an estimated prevalence of around 1 in 54 children in the US.

However, many individuals with autism, especially those with milder symptoms and women, are not diagnosed until adulthood. Many adults with autism may face difficulties finding and maintaining employment, are at a higher risk for experiencing anxiety or depression, and may require support as they transition to independent living.



Learn more about ASD at <https://autisticadvocacy.org/>

Learn more about disability protections at ohr.dc.gov.



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How to Talk and Write About Autism

When talking or writing about people with autism, it is important to approach the topic with patience, respect, and understanding. Focusing on the individual's strengths, preferences, and unique experiences allows us to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment that is free from bias and discrimination. The below examples are suggested inclusive language; when speaking to a particular individual or group it is best to use the language they chose to refer to themselves. When in doubt, simply ask.

Use This

Neurotypical

Support/
Adjustments

Uses alternative
communication

Person with autism
(person-first
language)*

Stress
response

*Some in the
community may prefer
identity-first language
(e.g. autistic person)

Avoid This

Special
needs*

Asperger's*

High/low
functioning

Suffering from/
afflicted by

Tantrum/
Meltdown

*These terms are considered
outdated.

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