



April 2, 2009 is World Autism Awareness Day

The Sudbury & District Chapter of Autism Ontario was re-established over two years ago by a small group of dedicated volunteers. Our primary goal is to educate the members of our community about autism. We hold workshops throughout the year featuring guest speakers from across Ontario. Attendees include family members, teachers, educational assistants and post secondary students. We charge a nominal registration fee, offer free childcare and provide a lunch. Topics covered include: Positive Behaviour Interventions, Sensory Issues, Educational Advocacy and How to Build Friendships for Individuals with Autism.

We are a dynamic group of volunteers who share the Autism Ontario vision *Acceptance and opportunities for all individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders*. An Adult Issues group has been formed to address the community services or lack there of that teens and adults with autism require. Volunteers are available to do guest speaking engagements or to serve as a guide to newly diagnosed families based on personal experiences.

New statistics show that Autism Spectrum Disorders now affect 1 in 165 children in Ontario. Chances are in your life you will come across someone with ASD. This year our chapter's focus is on *awareness and fundraising*. **April 2, 2009 is the 2nd annual World Autism Awareness Day**. Please take the time to review this package of information. We hope you support our awareness campaign by doing an article about autism. We are available by phone or email if you have any questions.

Yours truly,

Rick Grylls
Volunteer Fundraising and Awareness Lead
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Upcoming Community Awareness Events:

1. Nickel Belt MPP France Gelinias will be reading a letter from Autism Ontario-Sudbury & District Chapter to the Ontario Legislation on April 2, 2009 and presenting a silicone wrist band to each member that says "Autism Ontario – See the Potential"
2. An Autism Ontario Awareness Booth will be set up on April 3rd at the Legion Fish Fry in Falconbridge from 3:30 – 7:30pm
3. The retirement party for Rick Grylls will be held as a fundraiser on April 17, 2009. Proceeds to Autism Ontario-Sudbury & District Chapter

Media Information Package

World Autism Awareness Day April 2nd 2009

On December 18, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 62/139, which declares April 2nd as World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) in perpetuity.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is one of the most common developmental disabilities. More children will be diagnosed with autism than diabetes, cancer and AIDS combined. Autism is a complex developmental disability that usually appears during the first three years of life: it is the result of a neurological disorder that impacts the development of the brain. People with autism typically have difficulties in verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions, and leisure or play activities. Each person with ASD can have a wide range of abilities and disabilities, of which can change over time.

It has been estimated that over 67 million people world wide live with autism. Recent studies by Canadian researchers show that as many as 1 in 165 people have ASD, with males being four times more likely to be affected than females. In Ontario, there are an estimated 80 000 individuals with autism, 20 000 under the age 20. It can be found in people from all races and cultures.

On the occasion of the 2nd World Autism Awareness Day we are thankful for the work being done to improve the lives of 80 000 Ontario citizens living with autism and their families. In the development of community leisure activities, hiring practices and programs it is important to have access that allows full participation of citizens living with disabilities.

Autism Ontario is a not for profit, charitable organization that was founded in 1973. Members are connected through a volunteer network of chapters across the province of Ontario. They share common goals of providing information and education, supporting research, and advocating for programs and services within each community.

Autism Ontario is a strong voice for individuals with ASD. We work to ensure that every individual with autism is provided the means to achieve quality of life as a respected member of society. We are a leading source of information on Autism Spectrum Disorders. Autism Ontario is dedicated to increasing public awareness about autism and the day-to-day challenges faced by individuals with ASD, their families and the professionals with whom they interact.

Background

cited from

www.autismontario.com

click on **Together For Autism** (right side of page)

click on www.worldautismawarenessday.org (middle of page)

click on **About World Autism Awareness Day** (top of page)

United Nations Resolution 62/2007

On December 18, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 62/139, tabled by the State of Qatar, which declares April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) in perpetuity. Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, Consort of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, supported the campaign for a World Autism Awareness Day through the current 62nd UN General Assembly Session, garnering consensus support from all United Nations Member States.

This UN resolution is one of only three official disease-specific United Nations Days and will bring the world's attention to autism, a pervasive disorder that affects tens of millions. The World Autism Awareness Day resolution encourages all Member States to take measures to raise awareness about autism throughout society and to encourage early diagnosis and early intervention. It further expresses deep concern at the prevalence and high rate of autism in children in all regions of the world and the consequent developmental challenges.

World Autism Awareness Day shines a bright light on autism as a growing global health crisis. WAAD activities help to increase and develop world knowledge of the autism epidemic and impart information regarding the importance of early diagnosis and early intervention. Additionally, WAAD celebrates the unique talents and skills of persons with autism and is a day when individuals with autism are warmly welcomed and embraced in community events around the globe.

By bringing together autism organizations all around the world, we will give a voice to the millions of individuals worldwide who are undiagnosed, misunderstood and looking for help. Please join us in our effort to inspire compassion, inclusion and hope.

Other websites with information about April 2nd World Autism Awareness Day

<http://autism.about.com/b/2008/03/15/april-2-is-autism-world-awareness-day.htm>