

Advocacy & Impact Packet



The
connection
is you.™

Our mission is to create connections, empowering everyone in the Autism community with the resources needed to live fully.

Our vision is to create a world where everyone in the Autism community is connected to the support they need, when they need it.

Autism Society

101 The connection is you.™

Founded in 1965, the Autism Society is the nation's leading grassroots Autism organization representing people with Autism and their families.

Our network annually supports **over half a million people.**

34k people attended support groups across the country.

204k+ people attended affiliate events across the country. This support allows affiliates to connect with more members of the Autism community.



Our network fielded over **133k phone calls, emails and support inquiries.**

Five core services: advocacy, education, information and referrals, support, and community.



Approximately 70 affiliates across 33 states.



1.2 million people visited the Autism Society of America website for information, resources, and community supports.



Successfully engaged advocates to send 600+ letters to Congress to take action to ban electric shock devices.

Get connected to the support you need, when you need it.

Everyone deserves to live fully. At the core of the Autism Society's work is our goal to influence meaningful change in support of the Autism community.

Support the Autism Society of America:

- Make a donation at AutismSociety.org/donate
- Planned giving, make the Autism Society a beneficiary in your will
- Host a peer-to-peer fundraiser
- Donate your insurance policy, a vehicle, or stock
- Contribute through your workplace giving option



Affiliate Network

The Autism Society relies upon the tremendous work and support of our nationwide affiliate network. Get connected to your local affiliate today.



Advocacy

The connection is you. Get involved today and make your voice heard with our public policy efforts.



Education

Access educational resources, referrals and supports to empower the Autism community to live fully.



Support


Contact the Autism Society's National Helpline to speak with a trained Information & Referral (I&R) Specialist at 800-3-AUTISM (800-328-8476), or email us at info@autism-society.org.

Get connected to affiliates, advocacy, education, and support at www.AutismSociety.org


State Advocacy Impact




 **Approximately 70 affiliates across 35 states** working on coordinated policy initiatives.

 Constant communication with **30 affiliates in 15 states** monitoring state policy.

Shares policy updates with 68,000 people per month through a bi-weekly newsletter, Capitol Connection.

 **3 bills passed that Autism Society influenced** in Connecticut, Ohio, and South Carolina.

 **Advocates utilize our Action Center to send thousands of letters to legislators** across the Country on important community issues.

State Advocacy Toolkit shared with 70k people.

Monitored 100 state bills during the 2023 session.

80+ meetings with state legislators.

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State Advocacy Goals



Through our nationwide network of 70+ affiliates, the Autism Society engages with state and local government agencies, school systems, and local non-profits that provide direct services to the Autism community. The Autism Society supports affiliates to build capacity, develop coalitions, provide resources and training, and advocate for legislative goals and strategies that will ultimately help individuals with Autism and their families participate fully in their communities.

The information below outlines various state legislation efforts related to essential services and supports for the Autism community.

Increase access to Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS)

Goal: Expand access and transparency for the Home and Community-Based Medicaid waivers.

- Support HCBS providers and the direct service workforce, like [IL SB 2026](#) and [NV SB 511](#) (budget bill).
- Increase access to waivers, like [MD HB 1149](#).
- Expand efforts to address housing and mental health support access, like [PA HB 849](#).

Restraint and Seclusion

Goal: Promote and support state legislation that prohibits the use of seclusion and limits the use of restraint in schools.

- [IL HB 0219](#)
- [Model bill toolkit](#) put together by the Alliance Against Seclusion and Restraint.

Wandering

Goal: Promote and support legislation and policies that reduce accidents that result from wandering.

- Amend existing adult missing alerts to include the Autism Community [KS SB 287](#).

Vaccine Access

Goal: Ensure all vaccines are accessible to the Autism community.

- Ensure the COVID-19 vaccine remains affordable for individuals, as [MA HD 4175](#) and [MA S 681](#) proposes.
- Expand those who are qualified to administer vaccines, such as [KS SB 131](#) and [MI SB 219](#).

Indiana

The Autism Society of Indiana advocated for these bills last session and will continue advocating for them as we approach next session.

- [House Bill 1342](#), or the Direct Care Professional Registry.
- Expand Access to Healthcare.
- [House Bill 1213](#), or the Community Integration Habilitation Waiver.
- Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities.
- [House Bill 1559](#), or the Employment of Individuals with Disabilities Bill.

Autism Society and the Aging and Disability Vaccination Collaborative

The Autism Society of America can help you increase vaccination rates and improve outcomes in your network.

The Autism Society believes that improving the vaccination experience is a critical step towards achieving more equitable healthcare for people with Autism and all neurodiverse individuals.

With support from the CDC and the Association of University Centers on Disabilities, the Autism Society launched the Vaccine Education Initiative (VEI) to address systemic barriers to care and promote vaccine education, confidence, and access.

In 2023, the Autism Society became a proud partner of the Aging and Disability Vaccination Collaborative (ADVC), to increase access and uptake of vaccines with a focus on aging, BIPOC, Hispanic, LGBTQIA+, and rural populations with Autism and other disabilities.

The Autism Society is dedicated to Health Equity. Through the VEI, we are working to address systemic barriers to care and promote vaccine education, confidence, and access.

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The Autism Society is seeking healthcare and community partners who are interested in increasing vaccination rates and improving the vaccine experience. Partners will receive training and support from the Autism Society and its trusted national network of affiliates.



Healthcare Training

The Autism Society provides healthcare professionals with accessible vaccination training to increase understanding of diverse communication, sensory, cognitive, and social needs. That knowledge benefits all members of the community.



Accessible Vaccination

Become an accessible vaccination partner using Autism Society strategies and resources, including vaccine kits. Work with us to track COVID-19, flu, and other routine vaccinations. Technical assistance is available in person or online.



Don't wait! This is a grant-funded opportunity ending in April of 2024. Contact us today and help build a more accessible, inclusive, and healthier tomorrow.

For more information on the VEI or the ADVC, please contact vei@autism-society.org