

Autism Justice Center

Focused on Empowerment, Advocacy, and Justice

The Challenge: A Rising Need

An estimated [5.4 million adults](#) in the U.S. are Autistic. Autism is common, yet individuals with Autism and others with developmental disabilities confront discrimination, affecting vital areas such as housing, healthcare, employment, education, and the criminal legal system. The Autism Justice Center stands as a beacon of hope and support for Autistic individuals, their families, and advocates.

Our Unique Position

With 70+ affiliates nationwide, the Autism Society is strongly positioned to lead advocacy and education efforts nationwide. To assist our grassroots approach, we created an Autism Justice Center Task Force. Our task force includes individuals with Autism, researchers, lawyers, and professional advocates. Members of the task force lend their personal and professional expertise to individuals and families facing daunting issues such as housing insecurity for an Autistic adult and legal proceedings in criminal courts. We are committed to inclusivity, representing the voices of all in the Autism community, including those in Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, individuals of various gender and sexual identities, and immigrants.

Focused Initiative: Criminal Legal System

Our initial focus is the criminal legal system. Autistic individuals find themselves entangled in the criminal legal system too often due to manifestations of their disability. Examples include having a mental health crisis because of sensory overload, a non-speaking student resorting to biting to express frustration, and inappropriate social or online interactions. This leads to heightened police interactions, disproportionate school discipline,

and over representation in jails and prisons.

Our goal is to break this cycle.

Our Multi-Faceted Approach

The Autism Justice Center uses various strategies, including direct advocacy, education, and litigation support. We are developing resources for legal professionals so they may better represent and support Autistic clients. We work closely with the Autism Society's Public Policy team on legislative initiatives, and with our National Programs team on training first responders and other safety initiatives.

The Future of the Justice Center: A Call to Action

The Autism Justice Center aspires to be a pioneering force. Challenges like securing affordable housing, workplace accommodations, and the troubling frequency of violent law enforcement encounters, especially for Autistic individuals who identify as BIPOC, demand our attention and action. We aim to expand our capacity to meet these pressing needs.



Your Role in Shaping a More Just Future

Your support can make a tangible difference. Help us raise public awareness, educate lawmakers, and transform lives. Support this endeavor by making a financial commitment to the Autism Justice Center. Together, we can create a world where every Autistic individual can thrive without bias or barriers.



Support the
initiative – make a
donation [here](#).