

# Family Services Overview

*Autism Speaks Family Services is committed to connecting and empowering individuals with autism and their families with resources and information to address the challenges associated with autism throughout the lifespan. Among others, Family Services initiatives and resources include:*

## Autism Response Team

The **Autism Response Team** is dedicated to answering calls and emails in both English and Spanish from individuals around the country looking for resources and guidance. In 2015 alone, **ART** had over 51,000 contacts! Specialists are available to help with specific topics including financial assistance, adult services, education and more.

## Resource Guide

The **Autism Speaks Resource Guide** is a nationwide database that contains over 75,000 resources and provides individuals and families with local resources that service a variety of needs from early intervention through adult care. It is searchable by state or by zip code, resources are organized in over 70 categories. The **Resource Library** contains thousands of books, magazines, apps, safety products and more.

## Transition and Adult Services

Autism Speaks is committed to expanding opportunities and services for the growing number of young adults and adults with autism in areas related to housing, employment, postsecondary education, community living, transition and more.

## Tool Kits

Autism Speaks has created over 40 tool kits, including our very popular **100 Day Kit** for newly diagnosed families, on topics ranging from transition issues and financial planning to challenging behaviors and toilet training. The various tool kits, available free of charge, have been downloaded over 700,000 times!

## Grants

Autism Speaks has grant programs for service providers and families. Grants fund services in the areas of education, recreation, technology and young adult/adult services. Program funding is also awarded to provide scholarships for swimming and water safety lessons, postsecondary education and summer camps. Grants are also available for financially disadvantaged individuals and families during times of unplanned hardship. The grant programs vary by year.

## Safety

Autism Speaks' efforts to promote safety in the autism community include providing training, education and resources for first responders, people with autism and their families, and partnering with the **National Center for Missing and Exploited Children** on autism wandering incidents. In addition, Autism Speaks grant programs have funded swimming and water safety lessons, home safety technology, locating devices and more.

## Outreach

Regional staff disseminates information in local communities to service providers, community groups and others interested in learning more about autism and Autism Speaks initiatives. Events include town halls, safety fairs, awareness presentations, airport training sessions and more.