

Annual Report

April 2021 - March 2022

Doing the most good for

the most people with autism

Our mission to provide solutions for the needs of all autistic people remains centered on strategic priorities that cross the life span. As we look to the future, we will continue to accelerate solutions, research, innovation and advocacy that impacts the quality of life of people with autism. We will leverage our assets to extend and convene the work of others to further support our community and continue to embody our core principles of diversity and inclusion both in and outside the organization.



Increasing global understanding and acceptance

Our work to build more inclusive communities is core to creating a world where all people with autism can reach their full potential.



Being a catalyst for life-enhancing research breakthroughs

By leading faster implementation of best practices and informed autism research, we work to bring more personalized healthcare and treatments for all.



Increasing early childhood screening and timely intervention

With a focus on high need, underserved populations, we are providing more families with increased access to screening tools and intervention resources.



Improving the transition to adulthood

We are helping adolescents with autism create a fulfilling path forward by finding their purpose through employment, education, community and housing opportunities.



Ensuring access to reliable information and services throughout the life span

We are committed to being the go-to trusted resource for autistic people at every life stage and level of need.



Embodying the principles of equity

We embrace diversity, equity, access and inclusion in all that we do, both within the autism community and in our own organization.



Dear

friends and colleagues,

Today, autism is considered a major public health concern in the United States, but it is a major social concern as well. Over the years, prevalence has continued to rise. And while we believe that this growth is a sign of progress in part driven by our awareness and advocacy efforts, it reiterates the urgent need for continued autism research and services across the life span. Studies show that autistic people face disparities in age of diagnosis and access to quality healthcare, employment and housing opportunities. This is particularly evident in underserved and under-resourced communities. In addition to limitations around basic needs, many people with autism continue to face cultural stigma and social alienation.

This annual report focuses on impact. Every day, we work to positively impact the lives of people with autism and their families. We strive to create lasting change. We aspire to open minds and hearts for a more diverse and inclusive world. We envision a world that gives all autistic people the opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential.

We know that early diagnosis is critical to best outcomes. We offer access to an online autism screening tool, and our Autism Response Team helps to guide families, caregivers and individuals towards a reliable diagnosis. Further, we provide nearly 50 Tool Kits and Roadmaps on a variety of topics, as well as a comprehensive Resource Guide to assist in finding the most relevant information and services after a diagnosis. These offerings supported hundreds of thousands of people over the course of the year.

Evidence also shows that early planning is critical to an autistic adolescent's success in adulthood, so we made lowering the age of transition planning a state advocacy priority. This year, we succeeded in lowering the required age in two more states, Nebraska and Florida, bringing the total number of states with an early transition age to 35. But planning is only successful if there is opportunity. For that reason, we held 18 Pathways to Employment events, identifying the need to grow opportunities for autistic adults in the workforce by engaging over 5,000 job seekers, employers and service providers.

We continue to recognize that there are great disparities in the availability of care in different areas of the United States and globally. For this reason, we are thrilled to support the World Health Organization (WHO) in launching the Caregiver Skills Training (CST) program. This no-cost program teaches caregivers day-to-day skills that foster the growth of children with autism and other developmental disabilities. The program has been piloted in more than 30 countries across the globe and has now been introduced in a virtual eCST format, providing access in areas where services are limited or non-existent.

These are just a few examples of our impact, and there are many more in the following pages.

This year, we also made important investments in our senior leadership. Recognizing the critical and growing importance of services and supports to the autism community, we created new roles and promoted Arianna Esposito and Lindsay Naeder to run Lifespan Services and Community Impact, respectively. Andy Shih became our Chief Science Officer after 20 ground-breaking years at the organization. Finally, we welcomed Kelli Seely as our new Chief Marketing Officer, joining us with a stellar background at Special Olympics and other leading nonprofits. These investments position us exceptionally well for the future.

As we move forward, it is a time for optimism and for growth. We are energized by the unfaltering commitment to our mission from our supporters, volunteers and staff. You inspire us to think beyond what we have done and where we have been; to what we can do and how far we can go.

With deepest gratitude,

Keith Wargo *President & CEO*

Brian Harper

Chairman, Board of Directors



Creating a more

inclusive world

We work to increase the public's knowledge of the diversity of strengths and challenges of people across the spectrum. Together, we are helping to foster positive change and build a more mindful and accepting society.



Driving change

Forty-seven percent of parents of children with autism reported first learning about autism through Autism Speaks. A 2022 Harris Poll survey found that our Autism Speaks public service campaigns are **growing** awareness, changing perceptions and giving parents who have concerns about their child's development a way to learn the signs of autism and seek help.

Providing a platform of hope

Many autistic people and their families report feelings of isolation and lack of understanding. Our social community of more than 2.8 million followers on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and TikTok **provides** an environment for support, inspiration and encouragement. This year we shared more than 450 stories conveying hope and understanding from the autism community, a 38 percent increase from the prior year.

Engaging the **community**

Our online calendar of Autism Speaks and external community events gave more than 161,000 people touched by autism access to autism-friendly educational and recreational year-round experiences throughout the country.



A trusted source

Aided more than 1.6 million people through funded services, resources and direct support. With more than 1.9 million monthly page views on autismspeaks.org, people are searching and finding vital information, resources and creating personalized content.



Connecting lives

Helped advance inclusion and understanding during April, World Autism Month. More than 1.6 million people visited our campaign website to find resources and pledge to create a world where all people with autism can reach their full potential.



Informing families

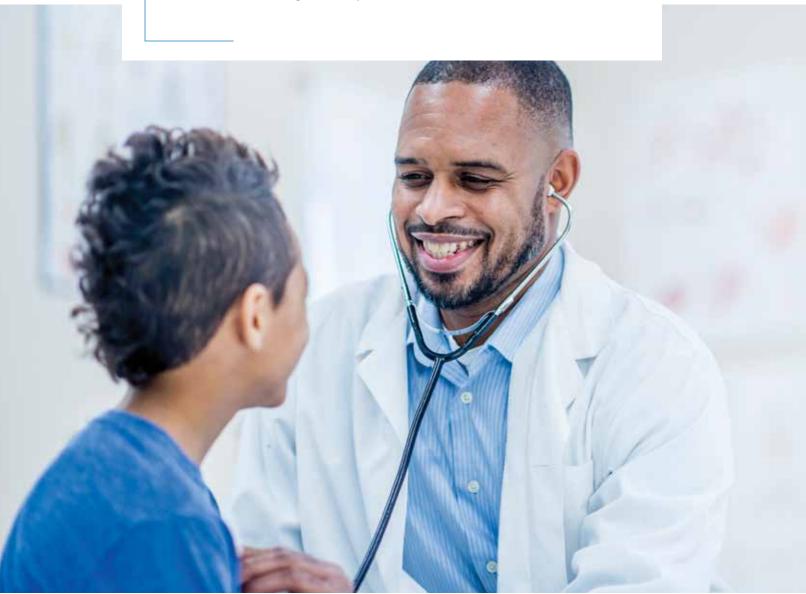
Hosted nationwide advocacy webinars educating 2,100+ people on federal and state policy changes and accessing resources. Conducted monthly trainings for our 425+ Advocacy Ambassadors on how to advocate for and share resources in their communities.



Increasing knowledge through

research

Autism Speaks is committed to providing research that deepens our understanding of autism and leads to more informed clinical knowledge and advancements in diagnosis and personalized healthcare.



Revealing disparities and affecting change

Autism Speaks released the first COVID-19 and Autism Health Report, revealing stark disparities in the health and well-being of autistic people. The findings included greater food and housing insecurity, particularly in minority communities, and a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. This report provided **credible evidence to support collaborative advocacy and public health efforts to secure more funding for COVID-19 relief and provide greater vaccine education** for the autism community.

Expanding care in underserved communities

The Autism Care Network provided clinical services to over 40,000 people across the U.S. and Canada. Through our ECHO Autism clinics, a virtual learning series on topics spanning primary care, mental health, behavioral interventions and more, we have expanded local providers' knowledge of autism and improved access to quality care in underserved communities.

Igniting curiosity, development and progress

More than 30 high-impact peer-reviewed publications were published using data from the Autism Speaks MSSNG database, the world's largest whole genome sequencing database on autism. Many of these discoveries identified autism-related genetic variants, giving families the information they need to seek more personalized care.



PATH to Discovery

Progressed in the implementation of the PATH to Discovery research initiative, strengthening workflows with Autism Care Network sites to capture more diverse biologic and phenotypic information that will be used to develop personalized care solutions in the clinic.



Funding best-in-class autism research

Our global, peer-reviewed grant program awarded over \$1.6M in funding supporting the innovative ideas of next generation autism science leaders working to develop models of care for autistic people across the spectrum.



Informing research with real-time data

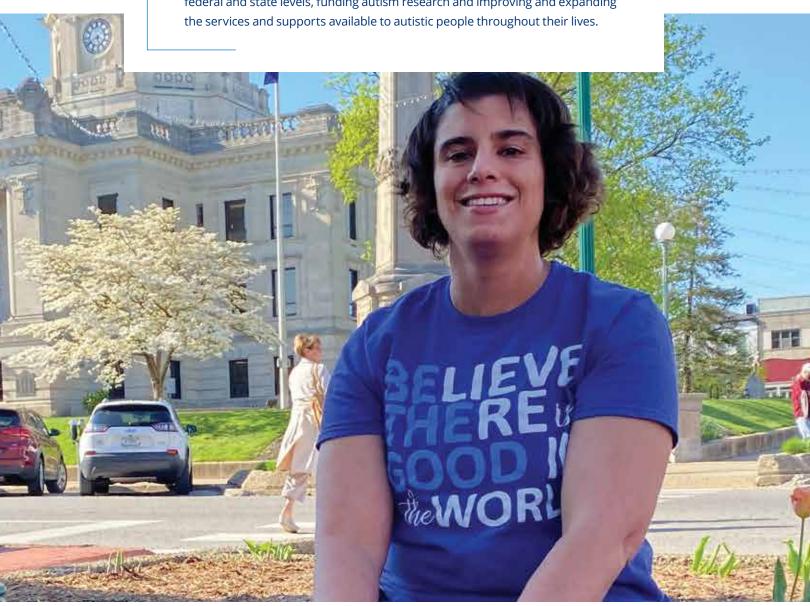
Grew the amount of patient and caregiver data collected by the Autism Care Network by 45 percent, allowing for the development of more data-driven research and clinical best practices.



Impacting lives through

advocacy

We protect the rights of autistic individuals. Through advocacy and collaboration, we support efforts to ensure that billions of dollars each year are dedicated at the federal and state levels, funding autism research and improving and expanding the services and supports available to autistic people throughout their lives.



Moving people to action

Autism Speaks helped secure a record 107 U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators to sign letters to congressional leaders in support of autism research funding in appropriations legislation. The legislation represents the most robust call to date for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to invest in autism research to **positively impact specific gaps in life span issues, health disparities and co-occurring conditions.**

Building a path forward

Evidence shows that early planning is critical to an autistic adolescent's success in adulthood, so we made lowering the age of transition planning a state advocacy priority. This year, two states succeeded in lowering their required ages to 14 in Nebraska and 12 in Florida. **These legislative wins for earlier transition planning empower parents with the knowledge they need to prepare their autistic teens for the future.**

Increasing access to care

State by state, we're improving public and private health insurance coverage of medically necessary care for people with autism. Oklahoma removed discriminatory age, dollar and hour limitations in its coverage for autism therapies. Oregon renewed its state autism insurance law through January 2030. Our dedicated efforts help secure continued equitable access to care for autistic people.



Taking it to the Hill

Hosted a virtual Advocacy Forum and Hill Day to share policy solutions and perspectives from diverse communities with members of Congress. A total of 190 individuals from 30 states and Washington, D.C. participated to strengthen their autism advocacy skills and meet with over 153 congressional offices.



Raising our voice

Increased Advocacy Ambassadors by 14 percent, enlisting 425 volunteers from 47 states and D.C. With over 439 legislative meetings, we're voicing autism priorities across the nation.



Holding strong

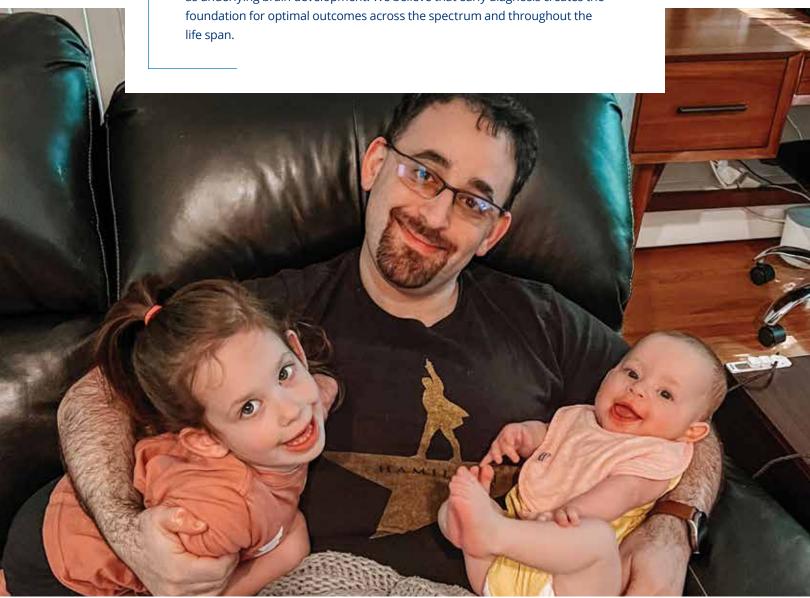
Led the regulatory charge for creation of a new benefit to serve thousands of Medicaid-enrolled children in Texas, New York and Illinois who previously did not have access to all evidence-based autism therapies. In 2021, Texas became the 50th state to implement its Medicaid autism services benefit.



Improving lifelong

outcomes

Identifying autism early can make a lifetime of difference. Timely interventions have been shown to improve learning, communication and social skills, as well as underlying brain development. We believe that early diagnosis creates the foundation for optimal outcomes across the spectrum and throughout the life span



Closing the diagnosis gap

Over 482,000 people accessed the autism risk screening questionnaire through our website in response to Autism Speaks and Ad Council public service campaigns. **The initiative proved successful in aiding families, especially in minority populations, to learn the signs of autism and take action.**

Learning through child's play

With the leadership and expertise of Autism Speaks, the World Health Organization launched an online, interactive Caregiver Skills Training program (eCST). The free program enables parents to build their autistic child's communication, engagement and behavior skills through in-home daily living and play. **Autism Speaks and our global partners are now providing parents, who had limited or no access to care, an opportunity to support and improve their child's development.**

Expanding our reach

We successfully championed the development and introduction of the Autism Family Caregivers Act to authorize \$50 million in grants for 25 caregiver skills training sites in at least 15 states. **If passed, the** legislation will provide caregivers in underserved areas with evidence-based strategies to support the physical and mental well-being of children with autism as early as possible.



Personalizing care

Our online My Autism Guide portal connected more than 22,000 families with information and resources personalized to their needs to better support their loved ones. Our online Resource Directory also expanded access to care, helping 650,000 people find providers and services by state, life stage and level of support.



Navigating an autism diagnosis

Over 42,000 copies of our 100 Day Tool Kits for young and school age children were downloaded in English and Spanish, helping families of newly diagnosed children to navigate their first 100 days with trusted, reliable information and resources.



Increasing opportunity

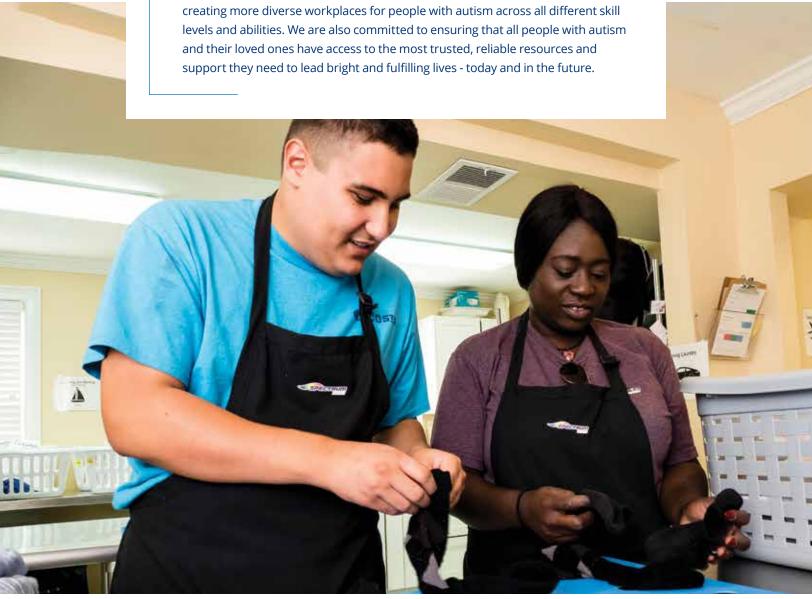
Successful advocacy efforts to change the licensing law enabling independent practice for Board Certified Behavior Analysts in North Carolina will help people with autism in the state more easily access medically necessary behavioral therapy. Before this law, BCBA limitations resulted in long waiting lists and reduced access to treatment, particularly in rural areas.



Securing a

brighter future

Autism Speaks is committed to delivering solutions that showcase the unique capabilities of teens and adults impacted by autism. With an unemployment rate as high as 85 percent for autistic people globally, our employment initiatives are creating more diverse workplaces for people with autism across all different skill and their loved ones have access to the most trusted, reliable resources and



Innovating for change

Partnering with the HeroX crowdsourcing platform, Autism Speaks sponsored a challenge to generate the most innovative ideas for a more accessible employment platform for autistic job seekers. Submissions were received from seven countries. Three novel proposals were identified for further evaluation and investment to **reduce traditional employment barriers and lead to more inclusive workplaces for people with autism.**

Building productive lives

Through our Workplace Inclusion Now (WIN) initiative, we hosted 18 virtual Pathways to Employment events which reached over 5,200 people. Over 6,000 jobseekers across the country accessed our Navigating Your Differences in the Workplace course. We believe that hiring individuals with autism is a smart business decision, and we remain committed to our goal to create 1 million pathways to employment and leadership opportunities by 2025 through a collaborative Delivering Jobs campaign.

Empowering independence

Strategies to help autistic adults identify challenges, become self-advocates, navigate the employment journey and decode housing options are invaluable resources. More than 24,000 people accessed our three newly published digital Roadmaps including the Roadmap to Self Empowerment, Roadmap to Meaningful Employment and the Housing Roadmap (built by autistic adults).



Promising results

Awarded \$240,000 in local grants to 54 community providers across 28 states serving autistic people with social and educational experiences, including camps, swim lessons and computer skills. The grants will enhance the lives of an estimated 20,000 people of all ages across the spectrum.



Answering the call

Connected by phone, email and chat to more than 87,000 people, including people with autism, families, providers and healthcare professionals. Through our Autism Response Team, we are providing critical guidance, tools, resources and support to the autism community in need.



Connecting our community

Increased membership in our closed Facebook groups by 45 percent to over 10,000 constituents under five main topics: Adulting on the Spectrum, Employment WINS, Navigating a New Diagnosis, Transition to Adulthood and Voces des Latinas de Autism Speaks.



Embodying the principles

of equity



Nosotros estamos aqui para ayudar

Autism Speaks and the Autism Response Team added three new bilingual English- and Spanish-speaking team members, **increasing access to translated resources, materials and trainings** for our Spanish-speaking constituents. We are here to help.

Ensuring equity

Thanks to the work of Autism Speaks and community advocates from across the country, Congress passed the American Rescue Plan, including \$3 billion in funding for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These critically-needed funds are intended for early intervention and special education services for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities and their families to help **recover from the impact of COVID-19.**

Listening and learning

Elevating the scope and influence of leadership volunteers nationwide, Autism Speaks created Executive Leadership Councils in 14 locations. With volunteers from diverse backgrounds and experiences, including corporate executives, self-advocates, service providers, family members and more, this enriched structure enables Autism Speaks to **better serve our community and open new doors.**



Increasing support

Added 17 new translated resources, enhancing our support to the Spanish-speaking community. These resources were downloaded more than 25,400 times.



Sharing our stories

Supported Autism Speaks team members in the creation of four Employee Resource Groups, enabling a safe and open forum to share experiences, learn from others and be recognized.



'Voces latinas de Autism Speaks'

Hosted the first Facebook Live event in the Voces Latinas de Autism Speaks group to share Spanish translated resources, including our 100 Day Kit for parents of newly diagnosed children. Over 100 participants attended and nearly 500 people streamed the video following the session.



A commitment fueled by pride, love and a profound evidence of faith in what we can

achieve together

Autism Speaks Walk continues to be the world's largest autism fundraising event dedicated to improving the lives of people with autism. For nearly 20 years, our Walks have brought together people with autism and their families, friends and providers in a network of friendship and support. Our success is the result of committed individuals who are making a difference with every step they take. Undeterred by the continued effects of the pandemic or an uncertain economy, our generous supporters raised \$7.5 million across 68 cities nationwide. Our deepest gratitude to them all.

top teams

| Team Katz (Los Angeles) | \$239,640 | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|--|--|
| Team Topping (Los Angeles) | \$114,350 | | |
| Ryan Arenson (Chicago) | \$61,857 | | |
| Jack Garchik's Crew (Palm Beach) | \$61,857 | | |
| Christian's Crusadors (Palm Beach) | \$ 51,135 | | |
| Team Salvatore (St. Louis) | \$ 50,745 | | |
| Bergelectric (San Diego) | \$ 50,000 | | |
| Jake's Journey (Charlotte) | \$ 46,575 | | |

| Team BenJoe (San Francisco and North Bay | 45,107 |
|--|--------------|
| Team Christopher (Connecticut) | \$ 42,463 |
| NYC Department of Sanitation (New York City) | \$ 41,235 |
| Ante4autism4michael (Columbus) | \$ 33,741 |
| Team CG and Friends (Los Angeles) | \$ 28,289 |
| Chicago Trading Company (Chicago) | \$ 25,331 |





Funding our **mission**

We're on a mission to provide solutions to enhance the lives of all people with autism and to help them reach their full potential. With the help of passionate supporters, an incredible team and an amazing community, we continue to drive our mission forward.





Thank you to our corporate supporters!

We are so grateful to the following generous companies for their continued dedication and commitment to our work. **They are the fuel that powers our mission.**



Ashbritt partnered with Autism Speaks on the development of the Autism Friendly Vaccine Experience Tool Kit, creating an autism-friendly experience at vaccine site locations in Florida and Virginia.



BMO Financial Group continues to be a cornerstone partner supporting My Autism Guide and the Autism Response Team in Canada.



Charitable Adult Rides & Services (CARS) remains a valued supporter of auto, boat or other motor vehicles to benefit Autism Speaks.



Cherry Hill Programs has delivered experiences since 2015, including Santa and Easter Bunny visits for families of children with autism and other special needs.



Chuck E. Cheese hosted Sensory Friendly Sundays for our community and held an annual autism awareness campaign where guests could round up their purchases to the nearest dollar benefiting Autism Speaks.



Computer Integration Technologies, Inc. (CIT) named Autism Speaks their charity of choice and have received Autism Speaks' Autism Friendly Designation.



Costco continued to help ensure the future of the Autism Response Team (ART) through funding focused on data and technology call center improvements.



Dental Corp continued to support Autism Speaks Canada's top priorities like community grants.



Frito Lay furthered their inclusion journey by participating in Autism Speaks Workplace Inclusion Now™ (WIN), an evidence-informed employment initiative co-developed by autistics.



Genentech provided funding for healthcare-related meetings, patient education and outreach with our Transition Roadmaps: Accessing Services Across the Life Span program. They also supported the Roadmap to Self-Empowerment, with translation to Spanish.



Great Wolf Lodge participated in World Autism Month by donating a portion of April lodge reservations to Autism Speaks.



Greensource continued supporting the autism community with autism-inspired apparel, sold locally at Walmart and online, where a percentage of each item's retail price was donated to Autism Speaks.



Home Depot offered specially packaged blue light bulbs for supporters to "Light It Up Blue" in celebration of World Autism Month.



Jet Support Services, Inc. furthered their inclusion journey by participating in Autism Speaks' WIN program and local events in the Chicagoland area.



Lee Container was the first pilot site for the Autism Speaks WIN program. Lee Container also funded a public service campaign in support of our collaborative Delivering Jobs campaign to create a pathway to one million jobs by 2025.



NFP Canada contributions are helping to develop financial literacy resources for the autism community in Canada.



PWC supported the development of Navigating Your Differences In the Workplace, a digital course designed for autistic job seekers and employees and part of WIN.



Quadrant Biosciences is supporting the Autism Care Network to develop a platform to accelerate the translation of research findings to practice.

SAMSUNG

Samsung Canada conducted its 8th technology campaign donating over 5,350 devices to individuals, schools and service organizations across Canada.

Schroders

Schroders supported a number of Autism Speaks' programs including WIN, ART, Pathways to Employment and local Walks in New York and New Jersey.



Snip-its Houston's eight franchise-owned locations received Autism Speaks' Autism Friendly Designation, and are trained to provide inclusive customer service and a welcoming environment for all guests.



SPB Hospitality's nine restaurant brands hosted an autism awareness and fundraising campaign supporting World Autism Month where customers donated to Autism Speaks in-restaurant.



Stanley Black and Decker continued to support Autism Speaks' efforts to create a more inclusive workplaces, including a program to support community colleges on their inclusion journey through WIN.



T.J. Maxx has helped advance our work to support the autism community for nearly two decades. In April, customers in-store nationwide showed their support by donating to Autism Speaks at the register.



Truist Foundation powered a Small Business Inclusion Program, making it possible for 31 small businesses to start or enhance their inclusion journey by participating in Autism Speaks' Autism Friendly Designation Program and WIN.



Wellington Management's generous donation supported our work and programs in local communities.



White Castle hosted a round-up fundraising campaign where customers rounded up their change in support of Autism Speaks!



Wilson Sporting Goods continued their Love the Moment on-field product line promoting a message of inclusion, acceptance and understanding for people on the autism spectrum.



Autism Speaks Canada has continued to collaborate and address the needs of

the autism community across North America. Our shared vision is creating a world where autistic people can reach their full potential.

Increase understanding

We shared lived experiences of 35 autistic Canadians and their families from coast to coast to coast in our Life on the Spectrum campaign, documentary and Spectrum Spotlights. Our documentary elevates participatory filmmaking and multimedia storytelling to increase understanding and acceptance of autistic Canadians. It received an overwhelmingly positive response with a 94 percent like ratio, an 11.8 percent increase over previously published videos.

Life-enhancing research

Autism Speaks Canda became members of the Digital Technology Supercluster and the Autism Sharing Initiative (ASI) funded by the Government of Canada and led by DNAstack. The goal of the ASI is to facilitate the **sharing of consented healthcare data between researchers** through the first of its kind, federated model.

Reliable information and services

We launched My Autism Guide (MAG), a free online tool for **faster**, **easier access to personalized information**, **resources and supports across the life span**. Our Autism Response Team (ART) responded to twice the inquiries received compared to last year.



Expand capacity and respond to current needs

Funded nearly \$400,000 in community grants to 14 projects across 6 provinces and territories focusing on mental health and social engagement opportunities for autistic people and their families.



Support inclusive employment

Partnered with Spectrum Works to connect autistic candidates with employers focused on inclusive hiring through a virtual job fair. More than 1,200 autistic job seekers, over 40 service providers and 19 employers attended the event.



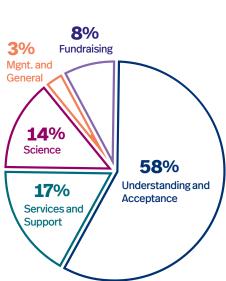
Timely access to intervention

Distributed over 350 Samsung devices and Chromebooks to individuals and service providers across Canada. This program had a profound impact on facilitating access to remote learning and education during lockdowns.



Financials April 2021 - March 2022





FUNDING SOURCES

| Total | \$ 95.0 M |
|---|-----------|
| Events | \$ 5.2 M |
| Walk Program/Corporate Partners | \$ 16.2 M |
| Major Gifts, Grants and Other Contributions | \$ 27.7 M |
| Donated and In-kind Goods and Services | \$ 45.9 M |

YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK

PROGRAM SERVICES

| | Total | \$ 82.2 M |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------|
| Science | | \$ 13.0 M |
| Services and Support | | \$ 15.7 M |
| Understanding and Acceptance | | \$ 53.5 M |

SUPPORTING SERVICES

| | Total | \$ 10.7 M |
|------------------------|-------|--------------|
| Management and General | | \$ 3.2 M |
| Fundraising | | \$ 7.5 M |

NET ASSETS

TOTAL NET ASSETS

at March 31, 2022 **Total \$ 49.7 M**

To view Autism Speaks' complete audited financial statements please refer to our website *autismspeaks.org/about-us/annual-reports*.

Included in the Funding Sources and *Your Dollars at Work* are donated and in-kind goods and services totaling \$45.9M, primarily related to media and related services, \$45.3M supporting our program services and \$0.6M relating to fundraising efforts.



Leading the way

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impacting communities



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